

The Compassion Network Wiki-Canon

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Advice for Monastics

A Sequel by Ru Jin of the Ming Dynasty

A Reprint of the Preface to *Advice for Monastics*

Everyone is replete with the perfect, bright and singular nature. Glimpses of false thought lead us suddenly to transmigration. Those with great compassion rescue and pull up those stagnating and drowning in the sinking flow. There are many expedient practices that practitioners may do to restore their inherent nature. Of course, it is most important to set our goals first, and secondly, to apply our effort. Those who cannot direct their efforts toward their goals are often trapped in over-achievement or under-achievement, failing to return to middle-ground.

Those who are great vessels of the Dharma ride on the wheel of their original vows, appearing in the world for the sake of those who have lost the Treasury of the eye of the proper Dharma. [The compassionate ones] may act as some harsh and hot clamp or hammer, or raise angry fists and shout mightily. With lightening speed they do so, hence [practitioners] have no time to cover their ears. They shape the [practitioners] by stewing and smelting them. They completely expose them, then stretch them and have them figured out. They may even speak the Dharma for them, visit them, instruct the assembly for them, warn them, exhort them, and offer them mottos in order to push them and force them ahead, to encourage them with reward, or to entice them with guidance.

How tremendous are their vows to propagate the Dharma! How deep their sympathy for living beings! It is not without reason that this book, *Advice for Monastics*, was compiled. It is like the great sun in the beautiful sky above, impartially shining upon all. Those with cataracts in their eyes are unjustifiably skeptical, thus complicating things.

This book includes fair treatises by Gold Wheel Lords of Worlds and verses of praise by past philosophers and Confucians. Some may think that transmissions occur directly by pointing to it or one-on-one; it is devoid of words. In fact, any use of language goes against the traditions. These individuals must be told firmly: “The spiritual mind is dynamic and free, it is like sparks that fly when rocks are banged together, or like lightning. One may be granted life or death, capture or release with no effort at all.” This type of direct teaching is only meant for those with superior faculties. Those who are average or inferior are not able to understand this.

Hence, these masters guide them to the four [sagely] realms as if planting various flowers so that they reach the ultimate state of non-obstruction among phenomenon. Making

them understand that there is not a single dharma to discard, and nothing is inappropriate. Is that not the case of awaking to the noumenon that is one while its applications in terms of phenomenon are boundless? Hence, [this compilation] is the standard by which masters may use to teach provisionally when the time is right.

Meditator Jin of Jia He published this book so that everyone may, with these words see phenomena, with phenomena see noumenon, with noumenon see the mind, and with the mind see one's inherent nature, restoring one's inherent nature. Here is a similar parallel: One sees the moon because of the finger; one forgets the finger because of the moon. One forgets the moon because of forgetfulness. One forgets the forgetfulness that had one forgetting.

These two series of parallels are merely addenda [to the idea]: phenomena and noumenon interpenetrate and dualities are nonexistent. There is no difference between these three—the mind, the Buddha, and living beings.

If monastics understood this principle, there would not be any need for these warnings and advice.

A spring day in March, the second round of Gen Ying, the Sixth Year of Cheng Hua
A preface by *Sramana* Jing Long of Empty Valley, Mt. Qing Ping of Wu Lin

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Humans are born in their physical bodies based on karma and are inevitably dragged down by their bodies. A body is a combination of a multitude of conditions, including discharges by one's parents. Although it is supported by the four elements, the elements themselves often cancel each other out. Impermanence, old age and sickness do not make appointments with us. We may be alive in the morning but pass away at night, and in a matter of a moment, head to a different world. Just as spring frost and morning dew disappear all of a sudden, a body is just like a tree by the shore or vines climbing a well. Just as each thought passes quickly, life passes in a matter of moments. It could be another incarnation with the next breath. So how can we let it pass in vain?

We [monastics] do not take care of our parents and have abandoned our relatives. We do not make a country secure and we do not govern states. We have given away our assets and inheritances. We have left our hometown and neighbors, and reported to our teacher with our heads shaved. We diligently do the internal work of counteracting thoughts and externally propagating the virtues of no fighting. We have escaped the secular world in the hopes of transcendence. How can we call ourselves *bhikshus* when we have only started on the precepts? Resident monastics consume food and other necessities provided by donors, without a second thought about the source of these donations, claiming that

accepting them accords with the Dharma. Monastics take and eat the offerings then gather to chat about useless things in society. Such pleasures are fleeting. They do not realize that happiness is the cause of suffering.

For countless eons, our minds have pursued sense objects without reflecting. Time flies and our offerings have been rich and plenty; furthermore, we continue to be intensely interested in donations and enjoy them frequently. We never question such interests and never forsake offerings despite so many years. We accumulate much and maintain illusory materials. As our teacher [Shakyamuni Buddha] commanded, *bhikshus* are to use the precepts to prohibit and encourage themselves along the spiritual path. *Bhikshus* should adorn themselves with spiritual advancement and never have too much of the Three Necessities. People too often ceaselessly indulge in the tastes of these offerings as the days go by while wisps of grey cover their heads.

Newer students who have not heard of such principles should ask the many people who already know. Do not think that monastic life values pursuits of food and clothing. The Buddha established the *vinaya* earlier to inspire and to shed light on [life]. New students need to learn the etiquette of comportment so that they are as pure as icy snow in their actions, prohibitions and avoidance of transgressions as they restrain their thoughts. Detailed adherence to regulations eliminates all improprieties. Not having been in the company of a banquet of *vinaya* teachings, how can one truly understand the meanings of the superior vehicle? They go through their lives in vain, unfortunately, and regret it only when it is too late. For those without a good grasp of the teachings, they will find it impossible to understand this amazing path.

Though they become senior in rank and elder in age, they just become arrogant with nothing inside. Unwilling to draw near good friends, they are proud but do not know the law. Lawless, they speak loudly and recklessly, with no respect for seniors, peers or juniors. They are no different in monastic gatherings--getting up and leaving as soon as they are done with their meal and creating a cacophony with their dishes and bowl. Coming and going, they have no manners and do not seem like monks at all. In their various movements of rising and sitting, they disturb others. If we do not observe the minor rules and etiquette for these actions, with what will we use to restrain ourselves?

The newcomers have no one to model their actions after. When others first make observations about these novices, they then claim that they are monks from the wild who have not heard of the teachings of the Buddha; hence their conduct are always unrefined and crude. The lawless monks who hold such lax views are probably people who were lazy and gluttonous when they were novices. They followed their past patterns in the world, and eventually became rude and crude. Before they realized it, the world turned into wilderness; before they realized it, they have become old and decrepit, and they still do not know anything. It is as if they merely face a wall when confronted with a problem. They have no words that can help the newer students who ask questions. If they do have something to say, their words are not drawn from any Buddhist text. When slighted, they scold the new students for being impolite. They are impolite, hateful and speak out of anger. They are like people who are sick and bedridden, trapped and oppressed by a

multitude of misery. They ponder anxiously from day to night. Their future seems oblique and they do not know which way to head. Only at that point do they begin to regret-- but like drilling a well when feeling thirsty, how is that useful?

They regret not having cultivated earlier and that they had made so many mistakes by their old age. At the time of departure, they become frightened and nervous while [their consciousness], like a sparrow, breaks out of its shell in flight. Their consciousness follows their karma like one burdened with debt. Stronger karma will tug at consciousness first. Among a flurry of thought, consciousness will lean into and fall toward the heavier thoughts. They think continuously about the murderous ghost of impermanence while they are unable to extend their lives as time does not wait. They cannot avoid becoming reborn in the realms of humans, gods or the three [evil] paths. They will reincarnate in this manner for so long, we cannot even name the number of eons.

The thought of this so saddens me; grief is so overwhelming that my heart is in pieces. So how can I remain silent and not pass on these warnings? I only hate the fact that we are all born during the Dharma Image Age, hence so far away from the time of sages such as Ji. [Nowadays], people are unfamiliar with the Buddhadharmā and are mostly lazy. I offer my myopic views in the hopes of clarifying some things for future generations. If you do not get rid of your arrogance, you will have a hard time escaping the wheel of life and death.

The so-called “monastic life” is about traversing the path of transcendence. Monks’ minds and looks are different than that of laypeople. Monks may make the sagely lineage prosper and flourish, shake and stop demonic armies, repay the kindness of four types of beings and rescue those in the three realms. Monastics who do not do the above only pretend to be monks. The speech and actions of such monks are absurd and lax. They vainly enjoy sincere donations without advancing one step farther than where they were years ago. They pass their lives as if in a trance. With what will they pay at the time of death?

Furthermore, monks look awesome. They enjoy such special results derived from their roots of goodness in the past. How can they just give that away? For those who do not value their time and practice vigilantly, they do not have the causes to achieve meritorious effect. How can we just waste this lifetime of ours? Not to mention that to do so does not improve our karma for the future.

But what do we hope to transcend? Ponder over this day and night. If so, how can we just dismiss our practice and let time elapse? We hope to become Buddhist leaders, prophets and mirrors for the future. Practicing in this way all the time, we will certainly receive some not-so-small miraculous response. When we speak, we should reference texts. Our conversations ought to be based on historical facts. We ought to stand upright and carry about us an air of dignity and ease. We ought to have good friends with us when we travel so that our ears and nose are kept clean [i.e. kept from indulging in sense pleasures]

at all times. While in residence, we should select companions who will always allow us to encounter what we have not encountered before. Therefore, it is said, “My parents gave birth to me but my friends bring about my accomplishments.” To be near good people is like traveling in the mist, though our clothes do not get wet, it is moistened. To emulate those who are mean will only develop evil knowledge and views in us and create evil day and night. When such people close their eyes at death, they will face the consequence of plummeting into evil realms.

Honest words are always harsh on the ears. How can we keep such advice near and dear to the heart? [If you follow my advice,] you will rinse your mind clean and nurture virtue while you live without claiming merit and name for yourself. You will be able to conserve energy and cease to be a part of any shouting matches.

If we wish to meditate, study Buddhism and the expedient practice of sudden transcendence, then we must correspond with the esoteric teachings and study their essence in-depth. Select that which is profound and awaken to our true source. Ask our predecessors extensively and draw near good friends. It is difficult to access the profundity of this school, so students must use their minds with care. If we gain sudden insights into the proper source, that is a good start along the stages of transcending the senses. This shatters the 25 existences¹ within the Triple Realm. We know all dharmas within and without are untrue; all dharmas are created from the mind; all dharmas are merely false labels.

With such insights, we would not need to cobble using our mind. As long as we are not attached to objects, how would objects hinder us? Let the nature of Dharma flow and do not sever it or sustain it. Whether in listening or looking, take all the sense objects in as if it were normal. Do not exert ourselves in a way that interferes with our minds. If we were like this in stillness and movement, then we are indeed worthy of wearing monastic robes. By doing so, we are also repaying the kindness of the four types of beings and rescuing those in the three [evil] realms. If we can do so without retreating in life after life, Buddhahood is certainly to be expected. By doing so, we become the guest who goes to and fro throughout the three realms, a role model for others. This teaching [of meditation], is most wondrous and mysterious. As long as we are sincere in our practice, we will not lose out.

Average people who are not ready for sudden transcendence may just focus on the Teaching School, familiarizing themselves with texts and search for the meaning therein, chanting and propagating to convert newcomers, and repaying the kindness and virtues of Buddhas. That way, time is not wasted. [Average people] should apply these lessons and maintain composure while moving and being still. They are then considered carriers of the Dharma. Do you not see that vines gripping pine can climb thousands of feet? We only reap remarkable benefits due to such a supreme set of circumstances. Cultivate sincerely and observe the precepts of eating [before noon] without complaining or transgressing. These are the supreme causes leading to supreme effects in life after life. Do not let our days pass in a blur the way most average individuals do. It is a pity to let time slip by. Without trying to advance, we only waste the donations provided and

disappoint those four categories of individuals to whom we owe grace. When such debt increases, sensual objects are likely to block the mind so that it stagnates and people will slight us and deceive us. As the ancients said, “You are a man and so am I. I shall not look down on myself and retreat into the background.” Otherwise, we will have wasted our time joining the monastic order, letting our life go by in vain and reaping no benefit.

We hope to be determined and open by looking up to those who are of a higher caliber and avoid going along with those who are base. I hope monastics will remain determined with their resolve, setting an ambition that is unique and vast. Aim to match our behavior with those who are noble and lofty rather than those who are mediocre and mean.

We must be determined to end [the cycle of birth and death] in this life. We determine our own resolve, not others. We should let cease our thoughts and forget external conditions; that way, we will not create dualities with the sense objects. At that point when the mind is empty and the surrounding becomes still, it is only because the mind is stagnating and not flowing. Constantly warn ourselves by reading this text and familiarizing ourselves with it. When faced with tough situations, try to be our own master instead of complying with common social customs. The outcome will be led by karma and will certainly be unavoidable. When sounds are in harmony, their echoes harmonize too. If an object is straight, its shadow is also upright. The law of cause and effect is apparent, so how can we not worry? Therefore the sutras say, “The karma we created will not die after hundreds and thousands of eons. When the causes and conditions meet, we will personally undergo the retribution.” We should therefore know that punishments in the Triple Realm are like stumbling blocks that can kill. We should work hard at cultivating vigorously and not let a day go by in vain. We ought to know profoundly the ills of errors so we exhort each other in our practice. May we be companions in the Dharma for hundreds of eons and thousands of lifetimes. Hence I wrote the following inscription:

This body is an illusion, like a house in a dream, or illusionary objects in space. There is no beginning or end to incarnations. Rising and falling, coming into being here and ceasing there, we become ever weary. Unable to avoid the wheel of the Triple Realm, when will it come to rest? Due to greed and love in the world, the human body materializes based on the skandhas. We acquire nothing from birth to old age. We are confused by fundamental ignorance. Time is precious and death can occur unexpectedly at any moment. We waste this life in vain and are obstructed in lives to come. We move from confusion to confusion due to the six thief-like senses.

Back and forth among the six destinies, we crawl along at a slow pace in the Triple Realm. We ought to visit early on teachers who understand and draw near preeminent ones. Be determined to remove the thorns of our body and mind. How can the multitude of conditions oppress us when the world is itself afloat and illusory? Study the principles of the teachings and let enlightenment be our guidepost. Give away our mind and our surroundings without remembering or recollecting. The six senses are at ease and silent whether we move or remain still. Not a single thought occurs while the myriad phenomena cease completely.

On Respecting Sangha Members By *Dhyana* Master Jiao Gao of Ming Dynasty

Why are people taught to respect monastics? Monastics take for their essence the Buddhas, for their body the Dharma, for their life wisdom, and for their food the bliss of meditation. Monastics do not rely on laypeople, do not manage family businesses and do not mend their looks. Monastics are not greedy for life and have no fear of death. Monastics do not consume heavily seasoned foods.

With the precepts monastics guard their bodies; with *samadhi*, they gather-in their thoughts; with wisdom, they make clear distinctions. Regarding precepts, they clear out their three delusions so that the body is not tainted. Regarding *samadhi*, thoughts and contemplations are proper so that they are clear-headed all day. Regarding wisdom, they emulate virtuous ones, clarify doubts and decidedly overcome them. These are the causes of cultivation; accomplishments based on them are the effects.

Regarding monastics' relationships to creatures, they can be kind, compassionate, based on great vows, and extremely helpful. Their kindness brings peace to the myriad creatures. Their compassion is conveyed in the constant wish to relieve the multitudes from their suffering. Their vow is to see the truth, together with all beings. With the Proper Dharma, they help living beings. The universe cannot take away their supernatural powers when they have accessed them. Ghosts and spirits cannot fathom practices they conduct in secret. They can explain the teachings eloquently and fluidly. They protect the teachings boldly and without a care for their lives. They bear what others cannot bear and do what others cannot do. They maintain proper livelihood and take alms without being ashamed. They reduce their desires, such as by wearing ragged robes, though they do not consider themselves poor.

They do not fight. They may be humiliated, but not slighted. They do not complain. They may be treated the same, but not harmed. They interact with others based on the mark of reality and apply utmost kindness in cultivation. Hence they maintain harmony and can universally respect all beings. They are credible because their words are not false. They sincerely yield to others because they are selfless. The air about them is dignified and their comportment sets standards. People and gods stand in attention as they look on. Monastics can bring blessings to the world and act as a guide in the secular realm. Having forgotten their physical form completely, beasts and fowl do not become alarmed around them. They never give up their reading and recitation, be it winter or summer. For the Dharma, they emerge to travel the world. They consider fame like echo, fortune like particles in the air, material objects like hags in the sun. They do not consider the poor, the sick, the unsightly, and the enslaved lowly. They reside in the Way though they may be deep in the mountains or alone in the valley. Grass is their clothes and bark is their food. They are at ease. They are not seduced by fortune, and they cannot be succumbed with force.

Though they may have rejected kings or ministers' invitations, they do not consider themselves of a high status. When alone, they cultivate the Way to make themselves outstanding. Alone, they are not lonely. When they are in residence with others, they take the Dharma to be their companion. They meet people from all around the globe and yet they do not mingle with them. They may study the twelve types of Buddhist texts in the *Tripitaka*, but they also know the texts of various heretics. They are fluent in various languages and dialects too. Though the Dharmas these patriarchs describe include writings and articles, they practice the Middle Way that is neither emptiness nor existence. They have reached a level where no more study is necessary. Since they are apart from thought, they are pure and true in that there is no more discrimination.

Monastics are the elites among people. Their minds are broad in scope; they are replete with virtue; and their path is a lofty one. They are worthy individuals though not in the way the world defines worthy individuals; they are sages though not in the way the world defines sages. They are sages and worthy individuals who are supreme in the transcendental sense. How can we not respect monastics like this?

Instructions for His Disciples By Dharma Master Yuan of Mt. Gu

With the great Dharma on the decline and being increasingly far away from the time of the Buddha, multitudes don monastic robes, but rare are those who pursue the Way. They consider those who can compete for fame and gain capable, while they consider the circulation of the Dharma child's play. Consequently the practices are difficult to be pioneered while the web of teaching is about to wither. We really need upcoming generations to shoulder this path of practice.

You ought to humbly request the Dharma, purify yourselves and rely on your teachers. In the short-run, establish yourselves so that you are known. In the long-run, change yourself from a common man to a sage. Who else but you can wield fully the Dharma of the Image Age? Therefore, you ought to practice, live up to your words, and be prudent from start to finish. Study diligently and be careful with your behavior. Avoid bad friends like you would avoid tigers and wolves. Serve good friends the way you would serve your parents. Be courteous to your teachers and be willing to die for the Dharma. Do not become conceited over good done; immediately change mistakes made. Maintain humaneness and justness so that you are indeed unaffected. Worry-free and happy while poor and of a low-status, you will naturally avoid disasters and meet with blessings. Why focus on false appearances and ask for fortune to arrive? How can it be the vision of *sramanas* to select days and times to avoid adversities? These are the false customs of secular beings. It is best to try to live up to the standards of worthy individuals and in good cause do not lag behind.

Admire the way the Buddha sought the Dharma in the Himalayas and emulate Sudhana's search for teachers. Let fame and fortune not move you; let birth and death not worry you. To succeed, take one step at a time, start close then move far. Your fame will spread though you do not fish for fame. Multitudes will arrive though you do not call on them.

Your wisdom will be enough to illumine confusion; your kindness will be enough to gather people in.

Impoverished, take care of yourself. Illustrious and influential, take care of the world.

Revive the messages of truth; restore the extinguished torch of wisdom. That makes for a great man, a messenger for the Thus Come Ones. How can we proclaim teachings while behaving like the common men whose filth is boundless? How can we not set ourselves apart from the defiled? How can we not see the fearful consequences of [deviant] views and actions? To this extent, their habits lead them to their demise. At the beginning, they may have been taught to admire saints, but they nevertheless deteriorated to become depraved and unscrupulous. These people are really sad! The *Odes* state, "Everyone starts, but few stick to it until the end." This describes these individuals exactly. How can those above average not take heed?

Furthermore, there are schools of wisdom and precepts, studies of the Mahayana and the Theravadan. However, they are all issued forth from the mind of the Buddhas. The intention of all those teachings is to return to the Dharma Realm. Since we have not understood the overall picture, each is basing it on one's own authority. Those who study the sutras and shastras consider the *vinaya* an item to be abandoned. The *Vinaya* division, on the other hand, treats sutras and shastras as if they were baseless. Those who study the Great Vehicle Dharma try to drown out the Small Vehicle Dharma. Those who listen to the Theravadans look down and hurt the Mahayana Dharma.

People only see different masters praising their own school; hence they become attached and different schools criticize each other.

Do they not know that the meanings of Buddhas' teachings are always integrated? If they understood that point, they would not reject each other. We should support one another and when the conditions are met, we may help those who are ready. Just as the innumerable sects point to the same principles, so all rivers reach the sea and hundreds of ministers administer business all to serve the emperor. The multitudes of flows are not blocked by protecting one sect; not all work will be abandoned to secure one officer.

Originally, when the Dharma King governed, he gathered in and led a wide variety of individuals, so there was an array of political offices. The Theravadan *Vinaya* is like the authority on propriety and sentencing; the Mahayana is similar to the key administrative offices. Cultivating blessings is like working at the transportation department. Writing is like being in charge of the king's words.

Just as hundreds of those in political office work together, various schools of our religion may all actively proclaim. If we really understand this idea, why would we be attached to polarization? We must assess our own talents and try our best to proclaim. It would be best that the quick-witted study. It would be better if the less intelligent focus on a specialty. If so, then although each propagates with one's own style, everyone jointly brings compassionate aid to living beings. Together we return to the sea of harmony and sit on the bed of liberation. This is the true guide for those who are lost, a key instrument in the school of teachings.

To those who are in the role of a teacher: I suspect you do not have much shame or virtue. You may think that you undoubtedly will achieve Buddhahood. If you do not praise yourself, why would you be so arrogant about such petty views and limited knowledge of yours? Why would you slight and slander saints of old and confuse later generations? Though you say you are listening and searching for the truth, you do not improve upon your faults and flaws. Ponder these words if you think there is any truth to it.

Exhortation on Learning I of II (Includes preface)

Average people know that they ought to study but they may be lazy with their studies. Hence I wrote an exhortation on learning.

We cannot be lax about studying, even momentarily. We cannot be apart from the Way for a moment. The Way comes from learning, so how can we be lax about learning? After all, we reach the territory of sages and worthy individuals via the Way. How can we be away from the Way? Ordinary individuals who are not lax about learning will join the ranks of worthy persons; worthy individuals who are not lax will join the ranks of sages. Ran Qiu could have reached the level of Yan Yuan by studying; however, that did not happen because he relaxed along the way. Therefore, it is said that it was not that Ran was incapable. Confucius said, “Those who consider themselves incapable quit halfway. They draw their own limits.” Yan Yuan’s studies could have reached the level of Confucius, but did not because he died at an early age. Had he not died, he may very well have been another Confucius or better because he was not lax with his studies. Therefore it is said, Yan was interested in learning but now, there are no more the likes of him.

Question: Do sages study?

Answer: What kind of a question is that? What kind of a question is that? Since ordinary people and worthy individuals all know to study, why would sages be lax with their studies? As powerful as the heavens are, they can learn to be gentle like the earth so that they will not disturb the four seasons. As gentle as the earth is, it can learn to be powerful like the heavens, hence it can produce gold. *Yang* is about creation but it can learn to kill like *yin*, blowing grass to death. *Yin* is about killing but it can also learn to create like *yang*, hence the vegetable “shepherd’s purse” grows. Heaven or earth, *yin* or *yang*, they learn from one another without being lax, hence forming myriad things. The heavens cannot cover, if it does not learn to be gentle; the earth cannot carry, if it does not learn to be powerful. *Yang* cannot open if it does not learn from *yin*; *yin* cannot close if it does not learn from *yang*. Sages have nothing special other than that they are not lax in the study of the four movements of heaven and earth, *yin* and *yang*. Sages detest laziness.

You might get up from your seat and say, “I am uninformed. Fortunately you inspired me. I would like to hear how the sages learned.” Zhongyong Zi [I, a Banal Man] say, “Sit down, I will tell you. Have you not heard of the quote from the *Book of Historical Records*, ‘If confused people can get rid of bad thoughts, they become sages. If sages lose

their good thoughts, they become confused.” Thus, even when they are in a hurry or in harsh conditions, they always consider the proper Way and learn from it.

Confucius is a great sage who was outstanding among his peers and his kind. There had been no one else like Confucius since humans came into existence. He always asked questions when he entered a temple and learned from the people there. He always chose the right person out of any threesome to emulate, including learning from companions on a trip. When he entered the province of Zhou, he paid visits to Laotze and learned from him. How could a sage like Confucius be less knowledgeable than those at a temple, among traveling companions and with Laotze? He learned from them because sages are afraid of becoming mad if they do not think about the proper Way and learn it. Therefore it is said, “There must be those who are loyal and faithful like Confucius but no one as eager to learn.”

Some argue, “Sages are born knowledgeable, so why bother studying?”

It is said, “Sages are those who are knowledgeable and learn, while average people learn to become knowledgeable.”

Sages and average individuals both succeed because of learning, Confucius said, “A superior man must studyⁱⁱ.”

Zi Lu said, “Mt. Nan’s bamboo is naturally straight because it is not soft. If it is axed to manufacture arrows, such arrows can pierce through rhino hide. According to this, what is there to learn?”

Confucius answered, “Would not the arrows drive in deeper if we add feathers to the ends of those arrows and grind the arrowheads sharper?”

Zi Lu bowed once more, “Thank you for the lesson.”

Sages learn for no other reason than to make the feathered arrowhead of a sharp arrow enter deeper. Hence, how can someone born knowledgeable not learn?

Exhortation on Learning II of II

Someone sagely and worthy will strive to learn. How can those who are worse than sages and worthies avoid learning and yet be human? Learning is like food and clothes. There maybe three different types of people: sages, worthies, and average people; but they are no different in their need for food when hungry, their need for something to drink when thirsty and their need for clothes when cold. How is learning an exception? Only birds and beasts, soil and wood do not need to learn. Unfortunately, fools are not lazy with acquiring meals or deals, but are plagued with being unlearned and being less than a superior man.

Regarding learning, there are people who study in the morning and relax in the evening; there are people who study during spring and relax during winter. If we do not relax with our studies, we would be similar to those who are not lazy with meals and deals. Why worry about not being knowledgeable? Or not being a superior man? It is said that there are complete idiots in the country who cannot tell the difference between beans and wheat, or change to seasons. How can we make sure they learn? Can they be taught?

Answer: People are total idiots because they have no teacher and do not study. If teachers never get tired of teaching, then students who never grow weary of learning would join the ranks of sages. At that point, there is no worry about anyone being unable to tell the difference between beans and wheat. Furthermore, fools know to drink when thirsty, eat when hungry, and dress when cold. Knowing these three things, they are different than grass and wood, how could they not learn? How could they not be taught?

Could not the least intelligent memorize a word a day so that by the end of one month, they have memorized 30 words? By the end of one year, 360 words? Those who are not lazy are nearly erudite after doing this for several years. Furthermore, by replicating one small good deed a day, one will have accumulated 30 good deeds by the end of a month and 360 good deeds by the end of a year. Those who are not lazy after several years are nearly superior individuals. Those who remain fools or petty men are so because they do not change and do not learn. In *the Golden Means*, Confucius lamented with a sigh:

I often see students quit because they are ashamed of being less talented or witty; but I never see anyone stop eating altogether because they are ashamed that they eat less than others. Quit eating and they die, so why be ashamed about a smaller quantity? Those who quit learning are no different than beasts and fowl, soil and wood. Why be ashamed of being less talented or intelligent? To quit our studies because we are ashamed about our talents or intelligence means we should also quit eating because we are ashamed of eating a worse diet than others. Is this perspective not completely wrong? If we were to look at it this way, is it not a big mistake to quit learning?

Every time I think about it, I know my talents and intelligence are far below others, so I do not dare quit learning, just as I know that I cannot quit eating. At the age of 44, although I may be sick and poor, I always have a book at hand. I am afraid of being like soil, wood, or fowl and beasts. I do not dare wish to join the ranks of sages, the famous or the powerful. But even as I pause briefly to stroll the yard or the wilds, I dare not forget my studies in my encounters with sight and thoughts that occur. For example, when climbing a mountain, I think about how to emulate its height; when at the edge of water, I think about how to emulate its clarity; when sitting on a rock I think about how to emulate its solidity; when looking at pine, I think about how to emulate its uprightness; and when facing the moon I think about its brightness. Everything has its strengths and can be teachers from whom we learn. Since we can learn even from a myriad of silent things, how can we not learn from people, who actually speak? Even one possessed with myriad evils must have one strength, which renders him our teacher in that we learn that one strength from him.

Zhongyong Ziⁱⁱⁱ, I say:

There are those in the world who may get what they wish for; there are those who always get what they wish for. Gain is what people seek but may not acquire; the Way is what people will certainly reach as long as

they seek it. Petty individuals are so interested in gain. Though they have sought it countless times and failed countless times, they become even more zealous in its pursuits. Conversely, when superior men seek the Way, they will definitely reach the Way. Those who are intimidated and feel inadequate as they look at the road ahead are making the same mistake that petty individuals pursuing gain are.

Confucius said, “Is humaneness too far away to access? When I want humaneness, it arrives.” This refers to how we get what we want for certain.

Ten Things One Must Learn

By Dharma Master Yun of Jing De Monastery, Gu Su. (Includes preface)

Unpolished jade cannot become a vessel. Individuals who do not learn cannot know the Way. I began studying at the age of 15 and as time went by, old age has arrived. With the passing of years, I am only starting to know my goal. I sigh as I reflect on how I have lost sight of my mission. With the onset of age, I cannot be successful or excel in my studies. Hence I would like to share ten insights that will hopefully help you succeed in your studies and help you propagate the teachings and further glorify them.

No Success is Possible Without Studying

The Nirvana Sutra states, “Anyone who has a mind shall realize *anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*.” Why? All beings have the Buddha nature. This nature is penetrating, clear and still at all times. If you consider it existent, it is formless and nameless. If you consider it void, it is the source of sages’ supernatural powers. Since time immemorial, living beings have not been enlightened but confused, rather. They are covered with afflictions so they leave behind their inherent brightness. Consequently, a multitude of conditions are produced to lead living beings astray and into the six destinies. For this reason, the Greatly Awakened One pitied creatures lost and blind, so he established these Dharmas to study: precepts, *samadhi*, and wisdom. To restore and glorify the Way, we begin with the true that then leads to the false. We regulate multitudes so they cease the false and return to the true. If we believe in and accept the words of the Buddha, compliantly learning from this teacher who is the fast boat that rides on the sea of suffering, we would climb the steps up to the level of sages. Who can exit without passing through this door? Who realizes spiritual attainments without going down this path?

No Learning is Possible Without Taming the Ego

The Dictionary of Words says, “The word ‘I’ refers to the body; it is a name for the self.” *The Avatamsaka Sutra* states, “Ordinary beings are unwise so they are attached to the self.” *The Dharma Flower Sutra* states, “We are arrogant and conceited, obsequious and dishonest.” Due to attachment to the self, we are arrogant and shameless. Unwise, we falsely think highly of ourselves. We do not imitate good people and we do not accept instructions. We do not draw near worthy individuals and we are far from the Way.

Those who wish to seek the Dharma must tame the mind of the self and reflect upon the Way silently and sincerely. We must be submissive and courteous in attending to teachers and elders. We must respect our masters and treasure the Way, attempting to be on par with worthy individuals.

When Kumarajiva started with the Theravadan teachings, he bowed to Bandhudatta as a subordinate would to his superior, which illustrates how a worthy individual pays his respects. When Bandhudatta sought the Mahayana teachings later, he in turn bowed to Kumarajiva. As a superior paying respect to his subordinate, he is being reverent to a worthy individual. Therefore the Zhou Dynasty *Book of Changes* states, "Humility is the handle on virtue." *The Book of History* writes, "Only by not being conceited, the rest of the world will not compete with you on account of abilities. Only by not boasting, the rest of the world will not compete with you on account of feats. Considering oneself worthy is called conceit. Considering oneself achieving feats is called boasting." Yan Zi said, "The higher one's status, the humbler one must be; the more powerful one's office, the smaller one's ambition must be; and the larger one's civil service salary, the more one must give." Zi Xia said, "Be faultlessly respectful and graciously deferential, then all throughout the four seas will become our brothers."

No Dharma is Possible without Selecting a Teacher

Birds that wish to rest must select a forest; people who wish to learn must choose a teacher. A teacher is an exemplar and a gauge for others. Throughout the past and present, numerous are those who are supposed to be exemplars but are not, and those who are supposed to be gauges for others but are not. There are only two types of teachers who are exemplars and gauges. The superior ones' wisdom is vast and thorough and their practices are solid and right, like light in an enclosed room penetrating through the window cracks. The lesser ones understand but their practices are full of flaws, like a criminal who lights up the Way with a lamp. These two types of teachers are both masters who contain the Dharma. Some teachers have few virtues. They are famous despite being ignoble during their time. Many people come to rely on them but they behave foolishly for the rest of their lives.

Dharma Master An of Dong Jing Dynasty became a monk at the age of twelve. Dark and ugly, his teacher looked down on him and sent him to work the fields for three years. Only then did he request his teacher to show him the sutra, *Distinguishing Meanings*. He took rolls of the sutra to the fields with him and read during break. When he returned to his teacher by evening, he had already memorized the sutra. His teacher was shocked and shaved his head. After receiving the Complete Precepts, he traveled to learn. He went to Buddhacinga who thought him a rare prodigy.

If the truly extraordinary stallion did not meet someone who recognizes its abilities, it will just tow wagons of salt with sleepy eyes. Since one is no Be Le, how could he discover a remarkable steed that can run thousands of miles a day? Therefore monastics must observe and select with care. Students should only accord teachers who can train them successfully the rites of bowing to a master. Therefore the *Mt. Nan Vinaya* states,

“Those who become monks out of sincerity are afraid of the numerous hardships associated with the four types of resentment, are weary of the impermanence of the Triple Realm, have parted with their relatives and loved ones and abandoned their deep attachment to the five desires. Those who can do this have truly left the householders’ life.” These monks may then make the Triple Jewel flourish and save and liberate the four types of beings. Their help is most profound and their merit boundless.

How could these monastics propagate the Way if the true teachings were really ruined, the airstreams of wisdom were blocked by fans, laity was to humiliate and slight monastics and the path were taught based on improper Dharma? How could they if teachers had no intention to lead and coax, students had no resolve to follow the teachings and both teachers and students disregard the other so they falsely drift toward despicable states?

No Memorization is Possible without Practice

Memorize good lines and recite them. Kashyapa and Ananda upheld the Treasury of 80,000 Dharmas completely. Preeminent ones who became monks in China and India all memorized at a young age. Buddhacinga of India can recite from memory several million words of Buddhist sutras. Buddhahadra, whose name means Enlightened Worthy One, and several classmates did memorization like it is a job. While it takes a month’s time for others to commit something to memory, Buddhahadra can memorize it in a day. His teacher sighed, “His one day of studies can compete with that of thirty men.” However, even the stupidest of people can memorize one word a day so that over days, months, and years, the merit of such memorization will be great and the content of which will be profound. The Way grows from the minute, why worry that you will not achieve anything?

No Transmission is Possible without Writing

A text is a record. A written record of an event is like a record of people’s thoughts. To prevent what occurs in our lives from being forgotten or lost, we should write and compile, circulating them for future generations. We should personally write and compile writings into books. By doing so, the teachings will not wane and the Way will become ever more fragrant after a long time. For instance, Buddhists compiled sutras and *vinaya* on *pattra* leaves while Confucius deleted and compiled the *Odes* and the *Book of History* on bamboo slips. Without writing, teachings cannot be successfully passed on to the next generation.

Now recall the unobstructed eloquence of Master Zhi Zhe. His spoken words only benefited his listening audience at that time. If it were not for the power of Zhang An’s pen, how could Master Zhi Zhe’s teachings have lasted until today? Hence the preeminent monk Bandhudatta of Kashmir wrote a thousand verses from morning until noon and then recited a thousand verses from noon to evening. We ought to obey the Buddha and write the words down. Just be careful not to imitate laypeople who focus on being consummate calligraphers.

No Eloquence is Possible without Studying the *Odes*

With kind words, those beyond a thousand miles will respond; with unkind words, those beyond a thousand miles will contradict. The *Odes* offer praises and critiques [of social and cultural trends] with smooth-flowing words and rhythmic sounds. “National Customs^{iv}” is down to earth while “Formal Chants” are gentle. The [literary] genius contained in the *Odes* bursts forth with a breath of fresh air; its phrasing is richly textured and its diction is vibrant. If we study it for a long time, then our speech will naturally be elegant. Even if we only begin to recite it, our expressions will not be vulgar.

[Layman] Xi Caochi^v claimed that all throughout the four seas knew him while the monk Dao An replied that his reputation fills all of the horizon. All of a sudden, Yuan Zhan of Chen Liu mocked, “The great imperial Jin Dynasty is now established and people are only interested in themselves or their own families^{vi}. Why do the *sramanas* not grow hair and eliminate the sash, discard the monastic robes of Shakyas and wear silken fabric?” Xiao Long responded, “Embracing *the one* and we are at leisure. Only stillness allows us to reach sincerity, so we cut off our hair, ruin our looks and change our attire. You say I am humiliating myself as I abandon the glory of your kind; but we are all the more noble when we do not wish to be noble; we are all the more content when we do not wish to be content.”

These are the utterances and styles of those brimming with the scent of literary orchids. Though we do not draw near the deaf and secular, we receive lofty and talented individuals. Since the Buddhadharmas are entrusted to kings and ministers, we must study literature to propagate the Way. Zhi Dung^{vii} submitted articles to the northern imperial court and Dao Lin went away to a hermitage after presenting a letter to the emperor. How can anyone with less than outstanding talent influence a king? It is best that we restrict our boorish and uncouth speech because they are ineffectual.

No Proof is Possible without Erudition

The Records of Preeminent Sanghans describes, “Without erudition, we speak without proof.” We should know about the rise and fall of past and present. We should recognize Chinese and Sanskrit words. We should swim in the sea of the *Tripitaka*’s teachings. We should play with the forest of phrases in the six classic texts. We do not speak in vain and we can cite the sources of words. Therefore Xi Caozhi complimented Master Dao An, “You are reasonable and just because you have read widely. You have touched on various books inside and outside of Buddhism. Not only have you traversed the wonderful meanings contained in the Buddhist sutras, but you have also mastered the ability to predict the present and the future with *yin* and *yang* calculations.”

Emperor Zhen Zong invited Lee Zhongrong for a drink^{viii}. Zhongrong got up to excuse himself and said, “‘The public’ and ‘the family,’ please exempt me from these tall drinks.”

The emperor asked, “Why do you call me ‘the public’ and ‘the family’?” Zhongrong answered, “Your majesty, I remember in Jiang Ji’s *Treatise on 10,000 Crucial Opportunities*, ‘Three emperors considered the nation a public asset while five kings treated the nation like a family asset.’ Since your majesty has the virtue of those three emperors and five kings, you are ‘the public’ and ‘the family’.” The emperor was delighted, “Indeed, the emperor only meets with his minister once every millennium.”

The minister averted trouble due to his knowledge of words by the ancients.

No Common Sense is Possible without Experience

Confucius said, “I am no sage but I have a lot of experience. I always have questions when I enter a temple.” We respectfully adhere to the precepts without fault so that we do not miss being saved by the Dharma. “Be vigilant and make no mistakes; do not dismiss the rules and regulations.” Though arhats are sages, they do not know what red salt [i.e. social norms] is^{ix}. Though Fangshuo Dong was a worthy individual, he did not know what ash from *kalpic* fires was^x. The erudite know it but the uninformed are unaware.

Emperor Li acquired a scroll of an ox that appears outside of its gate during the day and within the gate at night. It was a tribute to the imperial court. Emperor Song hung it in the backyard to show all the ministers. No one knew what it was about. The only exception was the Chairman of the Buddhist Association^{xi} who said, “In the Sea of South Japan, when the waters recede and the shores are slightly exposed, the people of South Japan pick up clams and see some of the clams have tear drops on them. They collect the tears and mixed them with paint. The painted objects will be obscured during day and appear at night. Mt. Wuo Jiao was occasionally hit by fiery storms or avalanches where pebbles might fall onto the shore. If one were to add drops of water to them and grind them up to use as dye, the painted objects will be visible during the day but invisible at night.” All the scholars thought this was ridiculous, but the Chairman of the Buddhist Association said, “Please see Zhang Jian’s *Records of Bizarre Oversea Encounters*.” Later Du Gao checked all the books in three different libraries and indeed, saw in an old book from the Six Dynasty, this record. This is the work of erudition and immediate initiative.

No Success is Possible without Friendship

My parents gave birth to me while my friends bring about my success. Hence superior men hold discussions with their friends. They meet friends by writing and enhance their humaneness with the help of their friends. They evaluate and comment on historical figures and discuss the similarities and differences in their opinions, honing and refining one another. Liu Xiaobiao says, “Institute humaneness, polish morality, enjoy your friends’ happiness and pity your friends’ decline. In sharing the same goals, leave some memorable achievements behind for the society-at-large. The storm maybe swift but sounds do not cease; snow and frost may coat but the colors of vegetation persist.” This is

the kind of platonic relationship that worthy and intelligent individuals have, a one-in-a-million occurrence.

Before Dao An of Eastern Jin Dynasty received his precepts, he had met the novice monk Seng Guang at an inn. They conveyed their admiration for one another's magnanimous spirit. Before they parted, they told each other, "Let us not forget to travel together after we both grow up." Later Seng Guang studied the sutras and shastras thoroughly then remained in seclusion at Mt. Fei Long. Dao An went to him and followed him thereafter. They were delighted, saying that their past vows were finally fulfilled then.

Since they read and mused together, they found many more new insights. Dao An [once] commented, "The earlier means of analysis often contradict the principles."

Seng Guang responded, "Analyze the sutras the way you will; but how could you judge whether enlightened ancients were right or wrong?"

Dao An said, "In the propagating and praising of Buddhist principles, we ought to make sure the audience agrees and is pleased. The Dharma drums together resound, how is there an earlier or later?"

Monk Dao Hu, who was also in seclusion at Mt. Fei Long at that time, joined the discussion and said, "We reside in quietude and stay away from the secular world. I often wish to propagate the great Dharma of the mind. How can we be the sole individuals who enter the gate and let the Dharma wheel be at a standstill? We should try our best to propagate Dharma in order to repay the kindness of the Buddhas."

Everyone agreed, "Right!" So they all went out to transform beings.

No Spiritual Power is Possible without Contemplating the Mind.

Vimalakirti said that the liberation taught by all Buddhas must be sought in the minds of living beings. Why? *The Avatamsaka Sutra* of Jin Dynasty states, "The mind is like an artist who creates the Five Skandhas. All things, without exception, are made from the mind. The Buddhas are the mind, the Buddhas are living beings. The mind, Buddhas and living beings—these three are no different." The mind is not only the mother who gave birth to Buddhas but also the source of reliant and proper retributions. Therefore *the Shurangama Sutra* states, "All dharmas are produced as manifestations of the mind. The cause and effect for all dust motes and all worlds materialize due to the mind."

Were we to say that the mind exists, it is rather like the sound of a harp, which is invisible to the eye. Were we to say that the mind is nonexistent, it is rather like the emanation of sound when a harp is played. The wonder is that it is neither existent nor non-existent. Therefore *the Pratyutpannasamadhi Sutra* says, "All Buddhas became liberated via the mind. The mind is pure, hence it is considered pristine. It may wade through the five realms but remain fresh and clean, absorbing none of the sense objects. Those who understand this realize the great Way."

Observe these ten lessons and complete them without becoming weary. Those who are higher in status may practice and those who are lower in status may emulate. In conclusion, this is how the teachings of the Buddhas may be extended to latter generations. If not, the lineage of the patriarchs will end. I hope that future generations will read this and be forewarned.

The Rites of Sitting in Meditation

By *Dhyana* Master Cai, Fo Xin, of Shang Feng

Sitting in meditation means to rectify one's mind, make proper one's thoughts, and cleanse oneself by emptying the mind. Fold the legs into the lotus posture, gather-in one's vision and redirect one's hearing. In an awakened mindstate that is not dull, one will never be drowsy or restless. Even if memories surface, abandon them with all our might. With proper mindfulness, contemplate the place where the mind is quiet and still. That which knows sitting is the mind; that which reflects is the mind. That which knows existence and non-existence, center and periphery, inside and outside is the mind. The mind is empty and yet it knows; it is still and yet it sees. The mind is perfect, lucid, and all-knowing; it is neither annihilated nor permanent. The mind's awareness is clear; it is not false or illusory.

Students nowadays diligently sit but do not become enlightened. They experience problems due to their calculating mind; they may be emotionally attached to deviant views; they may be lost and resist proper causes; and they vainly go through stillness and motion. These are precisely the reasons why they do not become enlightened.

If we focus and become still with one thought, then we will secretly correspond to non-arising. Wisdom will shine pervasively and the mind's flower will suddenly bloom; boundless calculations and attachments will be grounded down to nothing. What has not been known for eons will suddenly become apparent. It is as if we suddenly recall what we had forgotten, or suddenly healed of our illness. We will be delighted knowing that we shall become Buddhas. Right away we shall know that there is no other Buddha outside of our own mind. We can then accord with enlightenment, strengthen our practice and reach certification. The source of these three, practice, certification, and enlightenment, is the same. Our mind reaches the *samadhi* of single-pointedness in understanding and practice. This is also an effortless practice, which can influence sense objects without being apart from the senses and the sense objects. We may reach for them at will, though we designate them hosts and companions. The eye on the universe is pure as the past and present are displayed further for us. Recognizing our true substance, our supernatural abilities will be wielded spontaneously. That is why Vimalakirti said, "Displaying various deportments without giving rise to the *samadhi* of quiescence is just to sit comfortably."

We ought to know that when the water is calm the moon is reflected, or, when the mirror is clean, it is perfectly bright. Practitioners must use meditation as an essential method of

practice. Otherwise, our path of practice will occur on the wheel of rebirth and we will drown in the four realms of births.

Knowing this, I begin to sniffle and my heart aches with pain. I have to break the silence, which is why I wrote this brief article to help you discover the source of truth. If you do not abandon your practice, we may practice and investigate together.

The Rites of Sitting in Meditation

By *Dhyana* Master Ze, Ci Jue, of Chang Lu

Bodhisattvas who study *prajna* must make great vows out of and based on great compassion. Bodhisattvas must diligently cultivate *samadhi* and promise to save living beings. Do not pursue only personal salvation. Let go of the various conditions and put to rest the myriad things so that the body and the mind are one, so that there is no separation between movement and stillness. Check the amount of your food intake so that it is neither too much nor too little. Regulate your sleep so that it is neither restricted nor excessive.

To sit in meditation, sit on a thick sitting cushion in a quiet place, loosen your clothing and belts but appear neat and clean, in accordance with comportment. Sit in the full lotus posture. First place the right foot on top of the left thigh, then left foot on top of the right thigh. Sitting in the half lotus posture is okay too, with left foot on top of the right thigh. Next place the right hand on top of the left foot, left palm on top of the right palm. The tips of the two thumbs touch. The body leans slightly forward. Let it sway left and right a bit. Then sit upright and not lean to the left or right, front or back. The joints of the back, neck and head should support one another like a stupa. Do not be too uptight otherwise you will be anxious and restless. Make sure the ears are parallel to the shoulders, the nose is lined up with the navel, and the tongue touches the roof of the mouth while the lips and teeth touch. The eyes must be slightly open to avoid drowsiness. If you reach *samadhi*, you will experience its strongest effect. Preeminent monks of old who practiced *samadhi* often sit with their eyes open. *Dhyana* Master Yuan Tong of Fa Yun also criticized people for sitting in meditation with their eyes closed, for people think they are in some dark mountain or ghostly cave. The significance behind this is profound. Those who have reached it know.

Once you settle into your posture and your breath is regulated, relax the abdomen. Do not think about anything, whether good or bad. Be aware of any thoughts. Once you are aware, thoughts disappear. After doing this for a long time, you will forget the conditions and your mind will become whole. This is a crucial technique to sitting meditation. I believe meditation is the practice to peace and happiness. People get sick because they do not apply their minds appropriately. If they knew the technique, they will naturally feel light and at peace within the four elements. They would be spirited. They would be clear-headed and the flavor of Dharma would nourish them spiritually. They would be graced with a quiescent joy.

To those who know, meditation is like water for a dragon, mountains for a tiger. To those who do not know, it is also like wind wafting by a fire. Without much effort, they will reap some gain as long as they are willing. However, when there are those who have reached certain heights in their practice, evil also looms large. There might be numerous favorable or adverse states. However, as long as you can maintain proper mindfulness, nothing can obstruct you. *The Shurangama Sutra*, the stopping and contemplating practices of Tian Tai and Gui Feng's *Rites of Cultivation and Certification* all contain clarifications on demonic states. Those who wish to be prepared for uncertainties should not ignore these.

When you are ready to come out of *samadhi*, move slowly and rise evenly. Do not rush. After getting out of *samadhi*, rely on this skill-in-means all the time to protect *samadhi*, as if it were an infant. Then you will easily realize the power of *samadhi*. The practice of meditation is your highest priority. If you do not meditate in peace and contemplate quietly, you will always be perplexed at this stage. Therefore, it is better that the waves are calm when fishing for pearls; otherwise, it would be difficult to secure them while the water is in motion. When the water of *samadhi* is calm and clear, the pearl of the mind will appear on its own. Therefore *the Perfect Enlightenment Sutra* says, "Unobstructed and pure wisdom all come forth from meditation." *The Dharma Flower Sutra* says, "At a quiet place, practice focusing your mind, remain unmoved like Mountain Sumeru." This tells us that we require a quiet surrounding to transcend the mundane and the holy. The power of *samadhi* is necessary to become liberated in sitting and to pass away while standing. Even those who are determined to achieve this in one lifetime worry about letting time slip by, not to mention those who procrastinate, how will they defend themselves against their karma? Hence the ancients said, "Without *samadhi* power, one has to prostrate by the door of death. Once one closes one's eyes, one will return to the void and there wander and roam."

I hope our friends in meditation will read this article three times. May it benefit you and others so that together we realize Buddhahood.

An Exhortation on Meditation

Our understanding must be perfect understanding, otherwise we would have nothing to repay our bright-eyed teachers. Our cultivation must be perfected, shared with companions in the monastery. Beginners' blessings are thin; they are inept in relying upon and being close to others, hence their views and understandings tend to be withered. They are also lazy with their cultivation. Or they think too highly of the states of sages so they give up trying, which is to let their [Buddha nature] down. How could they know anything about auspicious omens and spiritual powers? They do not believe ordinary people can become enlightened. Or they rely on their inherent innocence, and deny cause and effect. They believe these states are outpourings from the heart of the [Buddha nature], hence they do not cultivate in a down-to-earth manner.

This is why Dharma Masters who only have a rough understanding of the teachings do not know the key to them. The pretend meditators do not value this practice. They tend toward the void. There are also meditators who practice to such an extreme extent that their bodies seem wretched and dust seems to be all over their faces. They have none of the three thousand subtle conduct and they lack every one of the 80,000 aspects of comportment. Then there are those who chase after human affairs, manage and discipline their disciples, and visit city centers and markets. They seem to be tainted like average citizens. For the likes of these, monks in the wilds too are teased by farmers, opposed by Buddhists in the metropolitan areas, and shamed by scholars. At the same time, monks in the cities are shamed by Confucians.

This is a fault of laziness. Why not try again? Leave the home of afflictions and sever the net of wearisome sense objects. Drink the breeze and visit flows of the Way, investigate the subtle words of the Canon and seek out people who really know you. Make your mind so clear you reach the echelon of patriarchs; cease your thoughts about different Buddhist sects and vehicles. In a quiet room or in an empty hall, tuck in your meditation robe and sit quietly and comfortably. By the green mountains and blue waters, walk in meditation with your staff at hand. Doubts and stagnation shall disappear like melted ice.

With direct and crystal-clear seeing, how could you not know the ultimate fruition [i.e. Buddhahood] for three *asamkhyeyas*? Fundamentally complete and perfect, why not plant the cause for flowers [i.e. Buddhahood] through a myriad of conduct? For those who have mastered both the Meditation and Teaching Schools, they are like the bright sun lighting up space. Their minds and bodies still, like crystals embodying the sheen of the jeweled moon. This can be compared to grass among hemp, which grows straight without support. This is also like the multitude of flows entering the sea and altogether they are called the celestial lake. Only when we reflect on our past faults do we realize that we have made grave mistakes.

Hope you will remember these earnest words that may grind against your ears. May we be Dharma friends in this and other lives.

Warnings for Oneself

The minds of saints see through everything; silence is the decree of sages^{xii}. Having broken our silence, we should speak according to the teachings of the Buddha. Anything we utter must relate to the words of saints; any ideas we expound should accord with Buddhist texts. This is how we may aid the vehicle of teaching and glorify the Way of the patriarchs. This is how we may help ourselves and others without any wasted effort. If in private, we discuss the politics of the nation, criticize political officials at the county and city levels, discuss the fortunes and misfortunes of our land, the positives and negatives of customs, then we hurt our blessings and do not benefit our resolve for the Way. Not to mention the fact that we even privately discuss the minute affairs of various industries and businesses, neighborhood chats, battles in the outskirts and bandits in the heartland, literature, crafts, clothing and food, and material possessions. We also boast about our

own strengths and conceal others' goodness, expose others' mistakes purposefully and pick out tiny flaws when we chatter about political matters. Such random talks damage our virtue, leaving us only to exhaust donations and leave us too ashamed to face the dragons and gods. The instigation of offenses is enough to drown us out. Why? The fire of suffering flares all around living beings simultaneously, so how can we sit here peacefully and speak of useless things?

End of *Advice for Monastics* Fascicle One

***Advice for Monastics* Fascicle Two**

Inscriptions on Meditation

By *Dhyana* Master Yuan, Fo Yan, of Long Men

The light of the mind shines in emptiness; its substance transcends extremes and comprehensiveness. The light of the mind is like lapping golden waves; it is always in *samadhi*, whether in movement or stillness. When thoughts occur, no need to stop them; when thoughts cease, no need to eliminate them. The mind just rides the crests of waves freely, when does it ever arise or cease? Mahakasyapa demonstrated the extinction of thoughts arising and ceasing.

There are no gaps for the mind as we sit, stand, walk and recline. When practicing *dhyana*, why not sit? When sit, why not practice *dhyana*? Only when we understand this is it called meditation. Who is sitting and what is meditation? For those who wish to meditate, use the Buddha to find the Buddha; but the Buddha need not be found, for the more we search, the more he is lost.

Meditation is not about what you observe externally, for meditation is not a technique for seeking outwardly. The beginners' mind is busy and inevitably fickle; hence they are taught many methods with regard to quiet contemplation. Focus as you sit erect. First it's a flurry of thoughts and after a long while, it eases and lightens. Let the six senses rest and pause their discrimination a bit. As soon as discrimination occurs, arising and ceasing had begun already. The arising and ceasing of thought and their changes manifest from the mind, which require the mind to contemplate them once more. When thoughts do not occur again, then we wear a perfect light on the crown of our head and we beam with a spiritual flame. By then, the mind is unobstructed and can enter the horizontal and the vertical. The cycle of birth and death ends forever. That immortal pill turns gold into liquid. Coarse and fine afflictions cannot seep in or out of the body and mind.

We can talk about confusion and enlightenment but not adversity or favorable states. Consider days of the past in detail while we sit and search that, although the [enlightened] mind has not changed, it is still very messy. But in a matter of a moment, it can turn an ordinary person into a sage. As we go about being busy, we should be extremely careful. Anyone who does not know this, just sit and contemplate.

I wrote this article all in one day, with utter respect.

Three Personal Reflections

One lifetime is about the time it takes a stallion to hop over a tiny fissure.
What leisure do we have to work on miscellaneous things?
To glorify the Shakya lineage, we must make our tradition flourish,
Reflecting upon the standards and goals of our School.

The spiritual path is not yet completed as this time and age is far from the sages.
Do not abandon lessons from good friends and teachers.
Encourage ourselves and be mindful of repaying the Buddhas' grace,
Know for ourselves that we must not rescind our great resolve.

Retributions and conditions are illusory and cannot be forced;
The secular world varies depending on our family wealth and frugality.
In bitterness and joy, in adversity and propitiousness, the Way is in its midst.
In movement and stillness, cold and heat, maintain a sense of shame and reform.

Inscriptions on *Chan*

By *Dhyana* Master Da Yi of E Hu

The various facets of meditation and studying of Buddhism require the individual to select that which is supreme. Do not just try to forget your body and eliminate your thoughts. This sickness is most ingrained and difficult to cure. We must investigate and reach for the source. This is the practice passed on from past to present around the world. Sit erect like Mt. Tai; do not remain in the state of the void.

Just raise the sharp sword that can split hairs. Dissect the primary meaning that has come west. Open your eyes wide and raise your eyebrows, look repeatedly at “who” it is, just as you must look at stolen goods when catching a thief. Fear not that the thieves will bury their treasures deep. The wise will capture them in a matter of a moment while the unwise will never even catch a glimpse of their shadows for years. I sigh deeply over those who often sit in a dull mindstate, like a dead man. Even if you were to sit that way for tens of thousands of years, you will remain the same. If you consider this the

Meditation School, then when the Buddha twirled a flower and [Mahakasyapa] smiled, that must have been a loss of tradition.

Sitting beneath the dark mountains and soaking in stagnant waters, how could you restrict the great earth without bounds? Even if you had eyes of metal and pupils of copper, you can judge for yourself when the goods are in your hand. You have until enlightenment to touch the stolen goods. Give it a holler and roar like a lion cub. Do you not see the reasoning behind the metaphor of polishing a brick down to a mirror? If the cart does not move, beat the ox. Again, do you not see that in front of the rocks is water thousands of feet deep? Clear and calm, it is silent until the fish and dragons come stirring about, making the waves splash and soar fiercely. This is similar to us sitting there quietly without applying any effort. When will we be placed and awoken to the emptiness of the mind? Set your sights high but act immediately. You can certainly resolve the problem of cyclic birth and death in this lifetime. **If you just keep sitting quietly and comfortably like a fool, I know that you do not understand how to cultivate.** Raise your spirits and watch your awareness. It is formless and shadow-free; enlightenment is not difficult then. This is absolutely 100% true in how to use your mind. Bold men must remember this. You must not just listen to the teachings without investigating. The instructions of ancient sages are our compass.

[Once enlightened,] the pavilions are still old and fields fallow, you have not gained anything once won. If you want to know the Unmoving Honored One in meditation, you should know that grass bends when the wind carries.

Now the four seas are clear like a mirror and everything is in my hearing range. I alone know the length and shape of them and they have never moved a hair's width in distance. If you ask me what we achieve in meditation, the answer would be: the sun rises in the east and descends westward by night.

Instructions by *Dhyana* Master Hun Rong of Don Ling, Mt. Lu

Evading the honor and glory above multitudes and enduring six years of hunger and cold, he realized proper enlightenment and saved limitless number of beings without having left his grassy seat. This is the way the yellow-faced old man [Shakyamuni Buddha] left the homelife. Later generations forget their roots, however. They leave the homelife for the sake of their mouths and bodies instead. They do not farm or weave silk. Offerings come conveniently. They do not serve national leaders or their parents. Exempted from drafts they live secure lives. Using the name and dress of monks, they enjoy these conditions by stealing from the world. Unapologetic even at old age, they die as molds in gardens. They are truly sad. Monks, consider living up to the standards of the Buddha; that way, you can avoid the fate of being mold in gardens.

Preface to *Records of a Mirror to Oneself*

By Dharma Master Xing of Blue Valley

Leaving the homelife at the age of nine, I am now over 60. I stroll easily about the large buildings and glance about. I am healthy and wear light and soft clothes. I live a life of leisure. Glimmers of starlight are still in the horizon as it is not yet dawn. Though a delicate meal offering providing the Ten Benefits^{xiii} are already set out. When the sun is bright at mid-moon, an exquisite meal of the Three Virtues^{xiv} is already gathered.

I do not know the hardship of farming and I am not familiar with the hard work of cooking. Who allowed me to feed my six-foot body and maintain my hundred-year life? It is our fundamental teacher Shakyamuni Buddha with his vows. Let me do some calculation based on a 50 year period. The amount of my food and drinks for the mornings and at noon is probably more than 300 tons^{xv}. The cost of medicine and clothes during summers and winters must be more than 20,000 copper coins. Were someone to build me an expensive and fantastic residence with flows of vehicles and servants, furniture and beddings etc., the cost would be limitless. The expenses would also be bottomless for those buildings with tall doors and large yards, green bricks and red pillars, covered carriages and servants, furniture and beddings etc. The monetary loss would also be tantamount were I to use or discard these items inappropriately or to eat during improper times.

All resources provided for me come from others' work. How can I compare the extent of my happiness to the bitterness of those who are anxious about their wealth? Thus, I know the teaching of great kindness is supreme and the power of great compassion is profound. Not to mention how the Taming Hero, with his ten titles cover me like a son while the eightfold gods, dragons and others make offerings to me like a teacher. Though emperors are honored, they dare not expect monks to accord them with court propriety. Hence I know how honored monastics are. As important as parents are, they dare not expect monks to fulfill their duties as children. Hence I know how honored monastics are.

Among people of all walks of life throughout this land, whose home is not my storage room? Who is not my future student? Hence, when I hold my bowl and enter their rooms, sealed meals are suddenly open; when I hold my staff and walk down the street, arrogant attitudes of giving turn into one of respect. The ancients would devote their lives to someone for the benefit of a meal. They willingly died for a kind word. Not to mention how I am covered head to toe with offerings to the Thus Come Ones; from birth to death, I am protected by the Thus Come Ones' shade.

Had I not encountered Buddhism and become a monk, I would have to face frost and dew morning and night, working hard in the field from sunrise to sunset. I would be driven by myriad things and oppressed a thousand times over. Worn out dress might not cover my body; coarse food might not make me full. When would I have the luxury of walking around spacious buildings in the evenings? How would I be able to wield a staff and wander about the yard, chatting leisurely, gossiping gleefully, avoiding hot and cold, picking out sweet and spicy foods, yelling at novice monks and asking them to serve

drinks, letting go of thoughts that are like the bad apples of the barrel, and indulging in emotions like wild monkey?

[For others,] their three obstructions soar above the clouds and they are bounded by the ten entanglements. Their deluded love disturbs their mind and mad foolishness contract afflictions for them. They regret and criticize themselves but only for a moment. They are sad or upset but no longer after some time^{xvi}. Perhaps they pay their respects in the worship hall and sob over how they shamed the Honored One's comportment. Reading the texts, they shed tears of shame before the holy teachings. Perhaps they wear ragged robes and eat the food of dogs. Using ascetic practices to cure themselves, they dispose of their wealth, leave their friends, remain alone and poor. Despite those various means, they cannot reduce their mountain of arrogance and cool their fire of desire; they cannot even give up coarse sounds and sights to avoid the profound punishment of being in a pot of hot water. How sad is that! How sad is that! Therefore they are always wrenching, sobbing, and in misery; but still not earnest. Empty Treasury Bodhisattva and Earth Store Bodhisattva wish to rescue them, but it is impossible to save them.

I repeatedly ask myself while I check, noting that my bodily and facial features are not worse than the average lot. I am clearheaded and on par with some of the notables. What blessings led me to become born in China? What goodness prepared me to become a monk? What offenses made me transgress so many precepts? What quarrels made me so difficult to transform? Therefore, I walk back and forth in the day and in the middle of the night, stand there for long time and sigh, "I do not know the way to resolve my problems and do not know the means to change them."

Having encountered Buddhism since childhood because of my family, I have heard the words of elders. I often read inspirations by famous monks. Someone who thinks things over thrice rely on external reminders^{xvii}. Someone who repeats things nine times for quality's sake will read all the inscriptions and regulatory articles before he writes the instructions. Thus I thoroughly searched the documents of numerous dynasties and read many articles. I extracted sordid examples of the likes of me and visited those lost guests in the wild: those who may disdain the holy words, dismiss accumulated karma, act lazily and shamelessly, and remain obstinate and unchecked. Cases of those who may serve to reprove and encourage are all collected and recorded.

They are condensed into ten subjects and three rolls. Read these sample illustrations day and night, in case it can be of any help. There was a case of someone who became a dragon because he strove to become one. One turned into a serpent instantaneously. Some became cows that sobbed as they climb the hills, rushing about and circling the monastery as they mooed. Some had sticks poke into their bodies and some combusted into flame. Some had spears cut them all over so they bled right away. Some lost their tongues or eyebrows, went mad, become slaves to the owner of vegetables that they stole, had their hooves on fire because they pilfered a bunch of firewood. Some became spirits that possessed trees in the yard and had to slice off their flesh to repay the kindness of donors; some skeleton-like logs became gates to fences.

What they do not see in the past, they now see; what they did not know earlier, they had begun to know. It is too late for regrets even as they cry at the universe, even if they break their heart there is nothing more to be done. Even if their parents had a hundred bodies then, they cannot exchange places; relatives and guests run off without saving them; assets and riches accumulate but are of no help; their staff and attendants are useless. What joys and pleasures did you enjoy in the past? What support is there to expect from family and former friends? Sigh! In the morning they are prosperous and virtuous, singing happily in the hallway. But by evening, they sadly weep in a dark room. I am likely to experience the same. If we only have once in a one-hundred year chance to be a monk and do not grab the chance, will we ever know the end to our shame and regret? How can we not be sad? How can we not be scared?

I assembled all these stories, the introductions and conclusions to them, and kept them by my side. With the encouragement and warnings that examples in this compilation provide, I hope readers will be victorious in eliminating the problems of greed, desire etc. This compilation also includes articles of famous worthy ones, extraordinary feats of philosophers, glories of transformation along the path and comments on current events in the appendix. Hopefully these can be circulated. The ancients said, “Shadows disappear throughout centuries, but the mind remains for millennia.” I truly hope that we will know where our minds are a millennium later.

An Essay on the Difficulties of Being a Monk

Xi Yan’s foremost disciple, Shen Tu was stubborn and decisive by nature. He was well-versed in Buddhist and non-Buddhist studies. He was well-known for his conduct. After his travels he returned to remain in seclusion at his former residence. He does not step into society, but shut the door and sat quietly. He did not befriend anyone other than those who conducted themselves highly and purely. The famous, powerful and other elites built various temples and constantly invited him, but he never responded. At that time there was a young man named Can who wished to be a monk. Can served him by his side. Yan saw that Can would not be good Buddhist material. He wrote *An Essay on the Difficulties of Being a Monk* to send Can away, the essay goes:

Father knows son best; a son knows his father best. I predict that you will not be a good Buddhist monk. Leaving the householder’s life to be a monk is nothing insignificant. It is not about pursuing an easy life, for food or clothing, for petty fame or gain. It is for the sake of birth and death, for living beings. It is to end afflictions, leave the sea of the Triple Realm, and to continue the wisdom life of Buddhas. We are not far removed from the time of sages and yet the Buddhadharma has deteriorated badly. How dare you act recklessly? *The Jeweled Sorghum Sutra* says, ‘*Bhikshus* who do not cultivate the Dharma of *bhikshus* have not a place to spit throughout the great thousand worlds. The *Records of Penetrating Wisdom* says, ‘Monks who do not serve the Buddhas in ten respects will only waste their efforts, even if it is hundreds of years. Is it not rare to be a monk?’

Contemplating in this way, I admit I am already a pretender among monks, and have cheated the Buddhas, not to mention the fact that if I were to let you become a monk too!

Even if you were to become a monk, were you to not know the Three Vehicles and the Twelve Divisions of Teachings, the ways of Lord Zhou and Confucius, then you would not understand cause and effect. You have not penetrated your inherent nature. You do not know about the hardships of farming. You do not think about how donations are difficult to digest. You drink alcohol and eat meat, break the precepts and rules on eating. You conduct business and act like a merchant. You engage in illicit affairs and gambling. You covet courtyards and lodgings, the comings and goings of carts and carriages. You only make offerings and serve yourself. Sad indeed!

You may be six feet in height but you have no wisdom. The Buddha calls your kind deluded monks. You have a three-inch tongue, but you cannot speak the Dharma. You are what the Buddha calls a mute monk. You are like a monk but you are not one; you are like a layman but you are not one. The Buddha calls your kind creepy crawlers, or bald laymen. Therefore *the Shurangama Sutra* says, ‘Why do thieves dress in my clothes engage in substandard sales of the Thus Come Ones? They create various forms of karma and are not boats to save the world. Rather, they are seeds for the hells. Even if they were to emerge when Maitreya becomes born, they will already be trapped in an iron gate, undergoing the pain of hundreds of tortures for a time period much longer than a day or a night.’

Consider those who are monks nowadays. There may be hundreds, thousands, or even tens of thousands in number, but they only wear monastic robes and look like monastics. In all honesty, are there any real monks? As it is said, ‘Vultures squawk royally and phoenixes croon mightily. The average pebbles are no jade. Dense patches of moxa are not the patient grass of the Himalayas.’ A nation is supposed to pray for blessings when they allow people to become monastics. Nowadays, however, some people criticize how the government collects tax from ordinary citizens and waive it for monks. This is their excuse for mistreating disciples of the Buddha.

Just as in the past, the preeminent monks such as Lian of Yu Wang, Gao of Yong An, Jing of Long Jing, and Zhao of Ling Zhi were like the underarm fur of a fox. They were worth much more than thousands of sheep hide. What is there to say? The level of filth that messed about in the sea of Buddhas in the past had never reached the height of today. We may talk about this with wise individuals but not petty individuals.

(Ancient words of the Master: the skin in the underarm of a fox is extremely rare and soft. It is one-in-a-million in kind.)

Final Instructions for the Younger Monks By Dharma Host Cheng, a Preminent Sanghan of Liang

This world is not so solid and my life is about to come to an end. As time peels away, our gum line and hairline become higher. Never lower yourselves for mundane gain; **never give in to win reputation.** Never look down on humane individuals and treat just individuals with condescension. Never be envious of those who are good and jealous of those who are talented. Never oppress the innocent. Never bury virtuous individuals. Never be lax about human affairs. Never be lazy and burn up your cultivation. Never indulge in sleep. Never try to learn about other people's business by force. Never aim high without substance. Never scheme for personal benefits. Never harass the weak out of a place of strength. Never harm others and benefit yourself. **Never slight juniors with rank or seniority.** Never bully the elderly based on youth. Never look down at anything based on talent. **Never be obsequious to others because of certain intent. Never reject others due to personal prejudice. Never try hard to draw near those who are unkind; be kind and never detest those who are bad. Never praise yourself for some capability; never speak ill of others without knowing much.** Never slight the host as a guest; never look down on visitors as a host. **Never fail to observe the rules in taking care of business; never dismiss articles of law because the assembly objects; never blame others when slandered; never search for the faults of others and render them some farfetched interpretation.** Try hard with regard to the Buddhadharma and eliminate often emotions related to sensual states. It is indeed miserable to lose the human form under the sash. It is indeed full of misgivings to experience various strange retributions were one to fall into the *Naraka* Hells^{xviii}.

Since we live a life of leisure and do not do any hard labor, we stroll grounds of gold and sit on high in a floral patterned hall. Our feet do not step on mud and our hands do not snap any water. How can we take for granted the robes we wear and the food we take in? Why did we shave our heads and don our robes? Embodying both toughness and tenderness, progress and forgiveness, we proceed if we may, and stop when we ought to. Do not be greedy for what is before our eyes and reflect several times each hour. When we click with the one, we can digest 10,000 ounces of gold.

I remind you again and again with all my heart: do as I say and we shall meet again in a future life. Do not as I say, who knows where you will end up? Take good care.

You Jie Monk Ning's Record to Encourage the Study of Non-Buddhist Texts

We do not reject any breadth of learning, for things are missing when there are things we do not know. Buddhism goes back a long ways, carrying beings with the Dharma of the Three Vehicles. However, sometimes demons attack Buddhism, so we must defend

against their aggression. The best prevention is no other than knowing all about the enemy. The enemies in India were the Vedas and in China the classical texts. Therefore the monasteries in Sravasti had the Four Vedas Courtyard, which were accorded the highest status by non-Buddhists. Around the world there are also various libraries that contain a host of different texts. The Buddha permitted us to read it only to convert non-Buddhists and not to follow their views. The fact that past preeminent monks of this land were able to stop the proliferation of cults was due to their erudition. For instance, ethnic groups in China communicate in different languages and enjoy different diets; hence the way to understand their goals and connect with them diplomatically is to understand some of their language. For instance too, Dao An subdued Xi Zaochi with humor. Hui Yuan used poems and propriety to entice people like Zong Bing and Lei Cizong^{xix}. Master Fu Li softened Quan Wuer by writing the essay on *Ten Arguments Against Doubt*^{xx}. Jyau Ran befriended Lu Hongjian by writing a poem about him^{xxi}.

The monks did not apply any other method in converting non-Buddhists except to know their canons well. This is especially so since both Confucianism and Taoism contain esoteric teachings. Once a Buddhist monk has become good at Buddhism, why not take another step and expand one's breadth, instead of stagnating and remaining limited in one area.

Mottos of *Dhyana* Master Zhi Dung of Jing Dynasty

Be diligent and ever more diligent. Procrastination cannot take you to the ultimate Way. Why are you where you are for such a long time? You have lost the home of miracles and yet you do not know to return to your Buddha nature. The three realms are vast and you have been trapped there alone for a long time. Afflictions gather externally while the confused mind wanders about internally.

Out of admiration for the Buddha, I shall sacrifice my life to follow the teachings forever and forget about being tired. The life of an individual is as tiny as a drop of dew. My body is not me, so who does the giving? The wise man embodies virtues and knows that with peace comes danger. With a mind that is vast and lofty, he accumulates purity by the meditation pool. Carefully observe the clear prohibitions and speak gracefully about esoteric rules. Pacify your mind on the sagely Way, reinforce your resolve for unconditioned dharmas. Clear the three obstructions, and thaw the six flaws. Empty the five skandhas and the four limbs. Do not take this literally, it is just an analogy: sever, instead of leave the five skandhas. After wonderful enlightenment displays itself, suspend awareness once again. Whether crooked or straight, let it be; let awareness follow things. Do not think and do not discuss it thereafter.

Ninth Articles of Instruction for His Disciples

By Dharma Master Dao An of Da Zhong Xing Monastery at the Capital of Zhou

Let me tell all of you disciples, being a monk for the sake of the path is extremely important and difficult. **Do not look down on yourself or take it easy. It is critical that you**

carry the Way forward by wearing virtue, that you embody humaneness by shouldering justness, and that you continuously uphold the pure precepts until death. It is difficult because you have to part with the world and leave behind the mundane, to sever loving relations forever, and to restrain emotions and change your nature. It is difficult because you have to do what others cannot do and eliminate what others cannot eliminate. It is difficult to bear bitterness, humiliation and give up your life. Someone like this is a person of the path, a guide on the path. His behavior can be imitated and his words can be lessons.

Wearing the robes of a monk, your every move must accord with the Dharma. Neither greedy nor contentious; neither obsequious nor of low-esteem, your education can be high while you aim for wondrous silence. This would be to join the ranks of the venerated Triple Jewel. Coming and going among worthy individuals and holy ones, you cleanse your soul. Therefore, monks may be elites without having to serve the king or taking care of their parents. Consequently, everyone in the world will convert. For monastics whose determination and conduct are clean so they connect with the gods and are replete with a most rare and precious calm and contentment, people will damn their spouses and reduce their intake to offer such monastics clothing and food; they will bend forwards and backwards for them without weariness or resentment.

Since monks indulge and relax, the Dharma is on the decline. Having accessed the wild flows, the Dharma and the Way alternate. Beginners who do not understand the Dharma become attached to the deviant, abandoning that which is proper and forgetting that which is true. They take petty smarts to be wisdom; they are satisfied with some insignificant forms of respect. They are full all day but do not use their mind. It is indeed pathetic to take a step back and examine this. Consider how it has been a number of years since you have been a monk and yet have not comprehended the sutras or determined what the meaning to the texts are. Wasting an entire lifetime without achieving any name, this is the kind of thing that you must think deeply about. The deadline for impermanence is either day or night. The pain of the three destinies is neither more nor less intense.

I offer this explanation because of the profound relationship between teachers and disciples. May this be a lasting exhortation for beings of the same kind.

One

Now that you are a monk, defy birth forever.

Shave your hair and ruin your looks, Dharma robes enhance your conduct.

The day you left you parted ways with your parents; your older and younger siblings sobbed endlessly.

Dissect love and glorify the Way so that your will is lofty.

Follow this aim and develop understanding of the sutras.

How can you be without thought if you purposely preserve form and sound?

Wasting each day, you do not become accomplished with your sutra studies.

Your virtuous conduct is damaged by the day as filth accumulates and brims over.

Your teachers and friends are ashamed while average people look down on you.

These kinds of monk only ruin their own reputation.
I now exhort and encourage you to focus and delve in deep.

Two.

Now that you are a monk, you left the mundane and parted with the governing body.

You should encourage yourself to set goals beyond the clouds.

Do not care about money and sex; do not follow the crowd.

Gold and jade are not to be valued; only the Way is most precious.

Restrain yourself and keep to virtuous conduct. **Taste the sweetness of hardship and enjoy poverty.**

Advance in virtue, which will save yourself and others.

Why do you alter your course of action and lean toward the secular?

You will not warm any seat you sit on as you rush about east and west.

Fast and furious, this play is like a **corvee** led by provincial officials.

You do not understand the sutras and lack virtues in the precepts.

Friends make fun of you and classmates abandon you.

This kind of a monk only wastes time.

Now I hope you will exhort yourself and pity yourself.

Three.

Now that you are a monk, you have parted with family forever. You have no one you are close to or distant from. You are pure and free of desires.

You are not glad when auspicious things occur; you are not sad when inauspicious things occur.

Transcendent and at leisure, you suddenly part ways with the mundane.

Keep to the esoteric and wondrous but follow the rules true and simple. You will then save others on a wide basis in that those people will be aided universally with blessings and prosperity.

How come someone without any thought like you, are still attached and tainted by defilements?

Vainly fight over more or less material goods and a couple of measures.

Contending over gain with worldly people, how are you different than a servant?

Without understanding the sutras and without enough virtuous conducts,

Monks like this will only invite self-ruin and humiliation.

Therefore I now exhort you that it is best that you wash yourself clean.

Four.

Now that you are a monk and a so-called practitioner, you do not pay respects to your parents and do not serve national leaders.

You serve everyone in the world as if they were gods.

Bow down with utmost respect; you do not calculate whether they are rich or poor.

Cultivate purely to benefit yourself and others.

When people reduce their food intake to make offerings, the cut may be as deep as seven pounds of rice.

How can we relax and not repay such grace?

Indulgent and lax, you do not do any work with your body and mind, you just wander around. If you do not hold the precepts but consume donated foods, upon death you will enter Mt. Tai.

You will have flaming iron for food and molten copper to drink.

Such painful ways are listed in the Dharma texts.

Therefore I now exhort you to restrain yourself and it is best that you change yourself.

Five.

Now that you are a monk and someone who supposedly ceases thoughts,
Do not be attached to that which is filthy and miscellaneous, for only the Way is respectable.

Aim to be pure like jade or ice.

You ought to study the sutras and precepts to support yourself spiritually.

Living beings rely on your aid and you may save those dear to you.

How come you, supposedly without any thought, go bobbing along with mundane trends,
Indulging in the four elements and let your five senses run free?

Ethics is growing thin while mundane affairs become more entrenched.

These kinds of monk are as defiled as mundane people.

Therefore I now prescribe constraints for you to develop spiritually.

Six.

Now that you are a monk, you have given up your worldly, physical form.

You must resonate with nirvana and dry up your emotions now.

How can you be restless and not enjoy living in leisure?

You waste time and ruin your development in the sutras and the Way; you exert yourself in secular matters much more.

You do not remain immaculate, instead you enter muddy paths.

This shadow of a life may last for only another moment.

The misery of the hells is difficult to describe in writing.

Therefore I now encourage you that it is best to study those admirable texts.

Seven.

Now that you are a monk, do not be lenient with yourself.

You may appear decrepit but your conduct must be admirable.

Although your clothing is coarse, straighten it whether sitting or rising.

Though you consume meals few and far between, your words are quite eatable.

Bear heat in the summer and bear cold in the winter.

Keep to righteous conduct and do not drink from Stealing Springs.

Do not step toward offerings from questionable sources.

Behave the same during long durations in a private room as you would face to face with the Honored One.

Although your learning may not be large in quantity, it should be on par with superior worthy ones.

This kind of monk behaves enough to repay the two kinds of kin.

All his clan and teachers will be graced.

Therefore I now advise you that it is best that you study steadily.

Eight.

Now that you are a monk, your nature may be drowsy or clear.

Learning is not about quantity but quality.

A superior one meditates. An average one recites sutras.

A below-average one operates a monastery.

How can you go without accomplishing anything all day?

A life without any achievement is a life wasted.

Therefore I now exhort you to examine your sentiments.

Nine.

Now that you are monk, you have gone contrary with the two types of kin forever.

The dharma of the path regulates your nature as secular dress separate from your body.

The day you parted with your loved ones you were sometimes sad and sometimes glad.

From afar you transcend the mundane and leave the sense objects behind.

You ought to cultivate the path of sutras and restrain yourself, walk down the true path.

How come you, supposedly without any thought, become polluted by mundane causes?

Your cultivation of the sutras and the Way is already thin while your conduct is worth not a cent.

Your words are not noble, and you do not cherish any virtue.

Teachers and friends are burdened as your hatred and resentment grow by the day.

These kinds of monk only wreck the Dharma and humiliate themselves.

Think about it and try your best.

An Admonition on Becoming a Monk

By Dharma Master Ci En of the Great Tang Dynasty

Why do we leave the householders' life and join the monastic life? We bow to the King of Emptiness and seek transcendence. The three masters and the seven certifiers determine our initial potential. We shave our heads, dye our robes, and make great vows. Eliminating greed and hatred and dispense of baseness and miserliness. Always cautious during all hours of the day, training and polishing our true nature until it is like space. We will naturally beat back the army of demons. Study vigorously and search for masters who walk their talk and are dependable. Do not let the mind ground be a mess of weeds; a century of time will easily be lost that way. Follow sages of old. Rely on the practice of hearing and contemplating to reach certification. Focus whether walking, standing, sitting or lying down. Things will click when you do not even miss a moment.

The twelve divisions of the Buddhas' true sutras point out the path of Bodhi vertically and horizontally. Without studying them, listening to them, and applying them, when will you become enlightened? Study it soon, as if your head were on fire. Do not wait for next year or the year after. When that one breath does not resume, it is another lifetime. Who can guarantee the solidity of this body? Do not raise silkworms for wardrobe's sake; do not farm for food's sake. The sewing woman and the farming man expend sweat and blood but give up hopes of future realizations on the path. How can you digest the harvest

in peace when we have not accomplished anything on this path? Your parents deserve sympathy, for they swallowed bitterness and spewed sweetness to raise us. When they changed your wet diapers for dry clothing, they expected you to inherit the family lineage and continue the family traditions. Once you departed from your parents and sought to shave your head, they will have no one to rely on by the time they are 80 or 90. If you do not transcend the ordinary and cross the flow of sages; instead you procrastinate along this direction, you would be all wrong. The robe of fields of blessings and the bowl that tames dragons are used all through your life as you seek liberation. If you let minor gains tie up your hearts, how can you possibly reach the other shore of nirvana?

Good man, you must know that it is rare to encounter a time such as this. Since you have left the householders' life and donned the dark sash. You are like the blind turtle that meets a piece of drift wood. A great man must be bold and vigorous. Restraining your body and mind is not easy, but if you can support your practices and vows, surely you will receive a personal prediction at the Dragon Flower Assembly.

Drafted Records on the Reflections Hall
by Upasaka Chao Ran, Zhao Lingjin, of Nan Yue's Fa Lun Monastery,

Among the various sufferings, the suffering of sickness is the worst. Among all blessings, caring for the sick is the highest form. Therefore the ancients consider sickness wise teachers. They also let people know that taking care of the sick is a way to create blessings. Therefore there are buildings in monasteries that are specifically established for the elderly and the sick.

Nowadays in large monasteries where many monks gather, anyone who is sick is assigned to a retreat and do service jobs. Not only is the sick sent to cultivate, reflect, and change duties to get rid of their disease, but also for them to investigate the great matter of life and death when the crowd disperses, leaving nothing but a lone and quiet lamp lit. This arrangement is not without reason. The proctor is ordered to provide the sick with medicine. This is an earlier regulation established by the Buddha.

This is not the case in recent days. There are halls named Lengthening Life, a rather vulgar name, for which there is no basis in Buddhist sutras. The sick do not reflect on their faults and to take it upon themselves to improve; instead, they take exotic prescriptions and medicines, possibly creating some chronic condition. Those with severe illnesses do not do any recitation in the Buddha hall, but stay lazy and relaxed. The purpose for constructing this hall and its name are totally lost. The proctor may have the title but does not fulfill his duties, acting more like a stranger to the sick. The long-term residents are busy with daily affairs and do not comfort the sick; thus the moral to how Upali served the elders and the sick is also lost. Consequently, the sick whine and cry; their pain intensifies by the day. The fault lies with the sick and the caretakers rather than the Thus Come One.

Anyone who inquires after the patient must be old friends or natives of their hometown. Nevertheless, they may neglect some aspects of caring for the sick and they may be

partial with their care because they do not think comprehensively enough. Now that the Fa Lun clinic is brand new, there are probably responsible people managing these duties. There is nothing else to discuss, except what the sick should do. The sick should reflect on their own offenses. Any wise individual knows. This is the right opportunity for monks. When someone experiences a headache or a fever, recognize what is stirring up; when one is calling out with misery and injustice, understand his extreme suffering. Investigate thoroughly, who is experiencing the disease? If there is no one, where does the disease come from? If both the person and the disease do not exist, what is there then? Until one sees this clearly, it is exactly the right time to let him rest.

Inscriptions on Ceasing to Think

by Dharma Master Wang Ming, a *Sramana* of Wei Bing, Zhou Dynasty

There are people with wish-fulfilling jewels in the Dharma Realm. They remain silent for a long time though on their chests are inscriptions. In ancient times, those who gather-in their thoughts are warned: Do not think too much and do not know too much. Ceasing to think is better than knowing a lot and doing a lot. Guarding a singular focus is better than thinking a lot and erring a lot. Too much thought and the focus is scattered; too much information and the mind is chaotic. When the mind is chaotic, afflictions occur; when focus disperses, the path is obstructed. Do not claim, “What is the harm?” when suffering can last a long time. Do not say, “What is there to fear?” when disasters can boil over. Drops of water that go on nonstop can fill up the four seas; dust fibers unswept can create five mountains. Prevent what is at the branches from the roots because what is minor is not insignificant. Shut your seven apertures and shut down your six emotions. **Do not peek at form and do not listen to sounds.** Those who hear are deaf and those who see are blind. Each literary talent and each art piece are tiny flies in the air. Each skill and each capability are lone lamps under the sun.

Outstanding individuals and talented persons are stupid, for they abandon simplicity and drown in beauty. The horse of consciousness gallops easily while the monkey mind is difficult to tame. When the spirit is working hard, the physical will surely incur damage and die. They will be forever lost on deviant paths and caught in the mud on the path of practice. Outstanding individuals and talented persons are drowsy and deluded. They look down on ineptness and envy the talented; their virtues are not supreme. Their reputation is fine, their conduct crude and they will topple soon. What they write only defiles books, which will not be used by others. They are conceited within and resentful without. Whether it is words from their mouths or books they have authored at hand, they want reputation; hence they worry their writing might be considered ugly. The ordinary consider their words fine, whereas sages consider them guilty. Their work can be enjoyed temporarily but sadness endures, for they are afraid of their own shadows and footprints. The more they flee, the more afraid they become. Sitting straight up beneath the shade of a tree, footprints disappear and shadows sink. Similarly, growing weary of birth and concerned about death, the more we think, the more karma we create.

If thoughts end, then we will forever part with birth and death; there will be no birth and death, no signs and no name. The single path is quiet and all things are even. What is

victorious or inferior? What is major and what is minor? What is nobility and what is low-class? What is humiliation and what is glory? By then, the clear sky will be ashamed in comparing its purity to that of our mind; the bright sun will be ashamed in comparing its brightness to that of our mind.

Just as placing Mt. Tai next to the golden city will help to fortify it, I here respectfully provide this article to those worthy and wise individuals. May you go down a proper and harmonious path.

Rules by Monk Dong Shan

A Buddhist monk must adhere to lofty principles. Having stopped exploiting relations, it is best to live a life of simplicity. Severing the love of his parents and forsaking the rites of governing leadership, he shaves his head, dyes his clothes, keeps a towel and holds a bowl. He takes the path leading him away from the mundane and steps onto the ladder of sages. Clean and white like frost, pure as snow, dragons and spirits are respectful while ghosts and phantoms surrender. Focus on repaying the profound kindness of the Buddha so that present parents may benefit. How can we allow ourselves to solicit disciples and follow friends, to practice calligraphy and compose articles? Such minor fame and gain lead us closer and closer to dust. We do not think about precepts and we ruin our comportment. Ease in one lifetime leads to the hardship of myriad eons. Were we to do this, we would be calling ourselves Shakyans in vain.

Writings by Repentance Host Shi of Ci Yun

Say you know when you truly know. For everything that you do each day, it would be best that you stay far away from behaviors that harm goodness, and exercise behaviors that eliminate evil. Do not brag about yourself and do not deceive yourself. Harbor no harm within and avoid advertising oneself without. Wanting others to praise you is to increase your own selfishness. The start of eliminating justness is the foundation for disasters. Thinking too highly of your virtue, others will tease. Exaggerating your virtues will surely invite slander. When retinues gather like trees, stay far away from them. Offerings are like petty profits, you ought to be afraid of them. Let things go and think things over. **What is the appropriate way to punish those who are bad? A stick of fresh incense and several twigs of red lotus.**

Do not stop reciting and do not think other thoughts. Meditate in peace, bow to images, then you will not lose out. Be frugal with fabric, restrict food intake and do not change your determination. As prohibited by the Buddha, do not compose worldly essays. In speaking of others' strengths and weaknesses, accord with the Dharma and be careful. Even if you are talking to guests and companions, do not say too much. You should frequently be alarmed at the rate which time passes and do not sit idly by as time slips away. Plantains are hollow in material and do not last long; returning to lotuses in the Pureland is your true refuge. Diligently practice through the night as if it were day.

An Essay on Vows

May I cultivate with stability, parting ways with various obstructive conditions so that I encounter the proper Dharma without difficulty.

May my country be prosperous and happy.

May I always live in the wilds and enjoy the quietude of being alone.

May I be content with rag robes and the food that I am given.

May I always fear sincere donations and guard against them as if they were mighty enemies.

May I always separate from family as if they were people with whom I greatly resent.

May I always protect the wisdom of *dhyana* as if guarding treasures.

May I always throw out the various evils as if eliminating a bad illness.

Let my Dharma robe and staff avert the armies of demons.

Let my stringed bed and incense be instruments that support the Way.

Let me not be greedy for any more resources than these.

May I not become familiar with the usual habits of those in society. Those who wish to taste fame and fortune are not my kind of people.

Let the illusory echoes of slander and praise go in one ear and out the other.

Let me be patient and compliant so that I may complete my vows on this spiritual journey.

***Dhyana* Master Gui Feng's Mottos**

Rise early so I may work. Say few words so that I will finally enjoy fewer worries. The body is at peace and practices precepts and *samadhi*. Conduct fewer activities and reduce socializing. No need to argue about the faults of others; work on my own faults. Since a century's lifetime is limited, when will worldly matters end? Having shaved my hair and become a member of the Sangha, I should try to live up to the standards of those superior individuals. Why pursue worldly changes? My goals and thoughts are still cursory. The four forms of kindness are as heavy as mountains, and I have not paid back an ounce of it. We live foolishly in large buildings, and what do I anxiously hope for? Birth and death are just a matter of a breath, rising and ceasing like bubbles. Do not dress in monastic robes only to have it become the cause for entering the *Avīci* Hells.

Instructions for the Assembly

By *Dhyana* Master Shun of Bai Yang

Tainted conditions come together easily while the spiritual path is difficult to complete. Without understanding the various conditions before us now, we only see a strong wind of circumstance making forests of merit wither and a fierce fire of the mind burning away seeds of Bodhi. If our mindfulness were the same as emotional states, we would have become Buddhas long ago; if we serve others as if they were us, all things to be done would be completed. Do not see the faults in others and the right things we do, and then we will naturally be respectful toward superiors and respected by inferiors. The

Buddhadharma will then manifest in every moment; afflictions and defilements will be released.

Final Warnings from *Dhyana* Master Shou of Yong Ming, Zhi Jue

There is nothing special about studying Buddhism, just as long as you wash clean the karmic seeds of consciousness accumulated in the sense faculties throughout endless eons. If you can eliminate your thoughts of emotion, sever false conditions, and act like a piece of wood or rock with regard to all states of love and desire in the world, then even though you may not have realized the eyes that understand the Way, you will naturally realize a pure body.

If you meet a real teacher, make sure you draw close with vigor. Even if you investigate meditation and do not penetrate it and your studies are not yet accomplished, at least they have gone through your ears and become seeds for the Way forever. You will never fall into evil destinies and never lose your human form in life after life. As a result, though you are just starting out, you may have a thousand insights upon hearing one thing. You should believe that a good teacher with true spiritual attainments is the greatest thing to being human. Teachers can change beings so they see their Buddha nature.

I heave a great sigh, for who can speak just one word about meditation during this Dharma Ending Age? People only learn superficial things and are devoid of any real understanding. They live in existence every step of the way, but they speak only about emptiness. I do not criticize them today because they are led by their karma. They teach people to deny cause and effect, readily spouting that drinking wine and eating meat do not hinder Bodhi, and stealing and lusting do not prevent *prajna*. They encounter legal trials while alive and are trapped in the *Avīci* Hells upon death. After depleting of their karma in the hells, they then enter the realms of animals and hungry ghosts, never exiting until millions and millions of eons later. Unless they reflect on that thought and turn what is deviant to what is proper, unless they repent and reform, save themselves and practice, they cannot be saved even if all Buddhas were to emerge.

If cutting out someone's heart and liver is like taking out some log or stone for you, then you may eat meat. If drinking alcohol to you is like eating excrement or urine, then you may drink alcohol. If good-looking men and women seem like corpses to you, then you may engage in sexual activity. If you see your own money and others' money like dirt, then you may steal. Even if you reach this level of practice, you still cannot go along with what you think. You must wait to certify to infinite holy bodies, only then can you do favorable and unfavorable secular things. The ancient sages established what they did for no other reason except that monks and nuns during the Dharma Ending Age rarely uphold the prohibitive precepts. Fearing that in the Dharma Ending Age laypeople with good intentions may lose their resolve upon seeing monastics break the precepts; the sages cover for them by drinking wine and eating meat. Thousands of sutras talk about it and millions of shastras explain it: if we do not end lust, we thwart all seeds of purity. If we do not stop drinking, we thwart all seeds of wisdom. If we do not quit stealing, we thwart all seeds of blessing and virtue. If we do not quit eating meat, we thwart all seeds of

compassion. All Buddhas throughout the three periods of time proclaim the same. All those of the Meditation School in the world speak of it with one voice, how can younger students not listen and comply?

We ruin proper causes and practice what demons say instead as a result of karmic seeds from past lives and bad teachers in this life. Goodness is easy to eliminate while bad roots are difficult to extract. Do we not see that ancient sages felt as if they were shot in the heart with a thousand arrows when they saw something demonic? That they felt as if they were stabbed by a thousand awls when they heard something demonic? Leave these things soon. Do not look or listen, but investigate your mind. Be careful for this is not so easy.

Eight Means of Liberation with Transcendent Holiness

To bow to the Buddhas is to respect the virtues of the Buddhas. To be mindful of the Buddhas is to be grateful for the Buddhas' grace. Those who uphold the precepts do the practices of Buddhas. Those who read the sutras understand the principles taught by the Buddhas. Meditators reach the states of Buddhas. Investigators of *dhyana* come together with the minds of Buddhas. Enlightened ones realize the Way of Buddhas. Speakers of the Dharma fulfill the vows of Buddhas. At the level of actual noumenon, not a dust mote is accepted. At the level of phenomenon in Buddhism, not one dharma is abandoned.

These eight things are like the four directions and the four corners, not one can be omitted. Past and future sages all share the same knowing and the simultaneous practice of the Six *Paramitas*. The Sixth Patriarch said, "Those attached to emptiness stagnate in a corner." It is fine that one claims to not establish any word, hence is confused as an individual. However, were one to slander the Buddhist sutras too, one's offenses would be profound." Should we not resist this?

Greatly Wise Vinaya Master Zhao, on a Bhikshu's Proper Name

The Sanskrit word, *bhikshu*, means "beggar." Inwardly we beg for the Dharma to cure our inherent nature; outwardly we beg for alms to provide for our bodies. **Parents are the dearest to laypeople, but we sever our ties with them first.** Hair and beards are most valued according to social norms, but we shave them off completely. We abandon the over-flowing riches of the seven kinds of treasures as if they were grass. We consider the highest level of office passing clouds. Most weary of impermanence, we try to investigate profoundly the basis of our existence. To elevate our goals, we must lower ourselves. We hold a staff that is the likes of a withered stick. We carry a bowl that is no different than a broken container. Wearing ragged clothes means robes that are rubbed down at the elbows. Carrying a pack that works like a pillow^{xxii}, our livelihood is pure and we touch on the Eightfold Noble Path. Being frugal and restrained, we observe the Four Adherences. The four seas and the nine continents all are places to travel. Beneath trees and in cemeteries are resting places. We climb on for a relaxing ride on the Three Vehicles, in the footsteps of all Buddhas.

True Buddhist disciples follow the holy teachings without defiance; real great heroes do not change when encountering worldly conditions. Consequently we are able to beat back demonic armies and brush away webs of dust. We may receive supreme offerings of ten's of thousands of ounces of gold. I suppose we are able to digest them. We are the fields of blessings for the four kinds of beings. I believe this has to be true. Beggars act justly, so it must be for that reason, that monks are named beggars.

An Inscription on Forsaking Affinities

Consider commemorating the past and repaying kindnesses. Forsake Confucianism and become a monk. Scrape away bad habits and wash off secular conditions. Stop the multitude of flows with a wall that stands thousands of feet in height. Writings, pens, and ink can all be burned. No need to be poetic about romantic sceneries. Never turn back to wine, gambling, money and sex. Why bother glancing at fortune and glory? The mad and deceptive during this decline shall be showered with the proper Dharma.

You may wish to change your outer appearance, but have you really stepped onto the path? Although you claim that you have abandoned the secular, you have not eliminated secular habits. All you talk about is transcending the sensual, but your affinities continue. You had just come around to a lecture hall, and you already have plans about being an *acharya*. You have not even entered the monastery and you already hope to be an elder there. You avoid drowning by jumping into a fire, and yet you do not realize how blind and ignorant you are. Even though you walk to proceed, you are actually going in reverse. No generation is short of Confucians with the heart of monks; monastics with the heart of Confucians have also been noted widely around the world.

The *vinaya* prevents vulgarities and violence while *dhyana* ends false conditions. Investigate deeply suffering and emptiness. Always contemplate renouncing this world. Fear bad teachers and corrupt friends as you would wolves. Good teachers and friends are dear to you like your parents. Lower yourself to the ground and shut your mouth like an idiot. Bend the self and the idea of others, stopping personal prejudices and unreasonable mood swings. Sit upright in a quiet room and spend time reading and reciting outside of class. Think about the reception at the land of bliss and focus on the end that is to come. If you can be like this, what worries would you have? True or not, you shall decide.

Mottos

Our four limbs are not diligent and all things are plentiful. While we sit and receive offerings, how do we know their source? They feed this filthy body and rarely breed pure blessings. Though some monks have a sense of shame, I am afraid that we may not be able to bear it still, not to mention those who are in school.

Listening to the teachings excessively and probing others' strengths and weaknesses, we ruin the standards and guidelines. Relying on affinities with others, we avoid the dharmas of the assembly. We look down at those enlightened before us and confuse latter generations. We gauge and calculate for fame and money. We create cohorts and gangs.

Consequently, if we do not develop bad diseases, we will definitely suffer other disasters. We will waste our energy and never achieve anything. Rising or falling is up to us; good and evil involve no door. When blessings wither and calamities arrive, it will be too late to regret. What I say is not false, think about it.

The Epilogue to Regulations

I hope you students will listen to my straightforward words. In justness, we ought to take care of our parents for giving birth to us. In principle we ought to attend to our teachers and elders from whom we received teachings. When we go far away from our hometown, stay in lecture halls. We ought to draw near the humane and select that which is good. Establish our goals and assert ourselves. We engage in discussions without wasting time; we observe the precepts without forgetting even as we walk.

If we were to indulge the lazy horse that is ignorance and let the wild monkey of karmic consciousness do as it pleases, avoiding compliance with good and being shameless about doing evil, we may be criticized or punished, excluded or addressed. Do we not disappoint our generations of ancestors and shame our teachers? We take advantage of those who are pure and do not deserve their donations. Shameless individuals such as these will encounter unpleasantness.

I just gave you a brief instruction on the rules based on the precepts so that everyone will adhere to them, thus ensuring that the Dharma long abides.

End of Advice for Monastics Fascicle Two

Advice for Monastics Fascicle Three

An Inscription on the Sangha Hall at Yong An Chan Monastery in Fu Zhou Authored by Upasaka Wu Jin

Buddhist students of ancient times left all emotions behind and remained in the deep of the mountains and valleys. Caves were their lodgings and grass their attire. They cupped water from the brooks to drink and cooked wild vegetables to eat. They were neighbors to tigers and leopards; they were relatives to monkeys and orangutans. Forced, they became well-known throughout town and their literary talent was exposed. Those who shared the same goals came no matter how far. They packed grains and walked in straw sandals to visit and follow them. Cultivators strongly resisted and refused such admirers from afar. Nevertheless, those who came rushed about like attendants, burning logs, cooking, cleaning, sweeping and planting for the cultivators. They worked extremely hard at everything they did and continued to be focused for years without growing weary, all in the hopes that the teachers will see them. Out of sympathy, the cultivators granted them a few helpful words that led them to transcend birth and death and reached the other shore.

Those teachers had none of what we have today, such as the luxury of buildings and rooms, the comfort of bedding and beds, warm blankets, the cool of straw mats, the light through the windows, the cleanliness of sheets and towels, the abundance of food, the bounty of money, the articles needed and the attainment of what is sought. Sigh, I will not have a chance to meet those people of ancient times! Since Yong An *Chan* Monastery is remodeling its Monastic Hall, I get to say these words here.

In the winter of the sixth year of Yuan You in November, I perambulated the county of Ling Chuan and heard that the host monk at Yong An was sick and old, thus I let Liao Chang, who is a disciple of Cong Yue of Tushita^{xxiii}, to succeed the old host monk there. Liao Chang frequently ascended the seat to speak the Dharma. There was a Mr. Chen who heard it and was extremely joyous. He constantly said to Chang, “Contemplating the exhortations of the Master, of which I have never heard before, I know there will be countless pure followers gathered under you. However, this sangha hall is small and shabby, how could it host so many monks? May I leave the homelife and collect a donation of one-million dollars to construct a building for multitudes by next year?”

This building was completed the following year. It was tall, spacious, and magnificent. It was probably the best among all sangha halls west of the river. Chang sent a messenger to me asking for an inscription, “You forced Chang to stay at this temple in the mountains till now.” Fortunately, I succeeded in building this hall now, so I was able to send a messenger to tell Chang, “You may beat the drums and gather the assembly. Tell them my words as follows:

Bhikshus, since this building is now built, you should use it appropriately for sitting, lying, and walking. Here, if you can sleep with a knife on you and leave all dream-thinking, you are Bai Zhang, and Bai Zhang is just you. Otherwise, drowsiness and sleep are like snakes curled up in your minds. You know nothing in the midst of darkness and enter gloom in bright daylight. If you can sit in the full lotus posture, deeply enter *dhyana samadhi*, then you are Subhuti and Subhuti is just you. Otherwise, your mind is more like a monkey in the cage looking at chestnuts outside. You will become reborn in some non-human realm due to your random thoughts. If you can always recite the sutras and delve into the holy meanings, then you will move from the Gradual Teachings to the Sudden Teachings, then from the Sudden Teachings to the Perfect Teachings. Then the *Tripitaka* is you and you are just the *Tripitaka*. Otherwise, your recitation is just like birds in the spring singing in the day or autumn insects buzzing at night, which occur only because of change in climate and contain no real meaning.

If you can read the words of the ancients in this hall, you will see one thing and realize thousands of insights. Enter society to turn the great Dharma wheel, then all patriarchs are just you, and you are all the patriarchs. Otherwise, you would be like canines chewing dried bones and eagles pecking at rotten mice. With beaks that drum and lips that sound, the fire of hunger heightens further. After all, an analytical mind discriminates between defilement and purity, a listing of them shows the relationship between cause and effect, judgment is a form of emotion, and feelings turn into happiness and misery. These thoughts cause us to float along, bobbing up and down until the end of future. In fact, those who construct this building incurred loss and gain; those who live in this building experience benefit and harm.

All you *bhikshus* should know that if you can slice off Vairochana's flesh mound, sever Guan Yin's arm, gouge out Mañjuśrī's eyes, break Universal Worthy's shank, smash Vimalakirti's seat, and burn Kashyapa's robes, you are worthy enough to accept tiles of gold and walls of platinum, not to mention a mere building. Be warned and encouraged, I do not speak falsely.

For more than a decade Liao Chang constantly consulted with Elder Yue so that he thoroughly understood the great matter regarding the final gate before ultimate enlightenment. The virtuous ones of ancient times call it the *Vajra King Jeweled Sword*.

-- written by the stove while watching the night's snowfall at Nan Kang, Chi Wu on December tenth, the seventh year of Yuan You.

Great Master Chan Yue's Oracle and Mirror for Hermits in the City

The great hermits transcend the world yet live in the mundane, how do they behave? Work hard on goodness upon seeing goodness and do not draw near evil encountered. Act as if we are with special guests even when we dwell in a dark room. Maintain joy as we develop our inherent nature; keep to our poverty in crises. Act stupid though we are not; develop humaneness and acquire humaneness. Let humility and concession be our roots and lone loftiness be our neighbor. It is most noble to be away less; most precious are the words of the taciturn. Study without wasting time and regularly review to know the material anew. Careful not to be affected by glory or humiliation; do not inquire after who is right and who is wrong. Offer ourselves earnest critiques and do not complain about others. Those who offer jade to kings get both of their feet chopped off^{xxiv}; those who write essays encounter distress. Sages of old are this way, so why would we want to promote or publish our opinions? We hear about the world but remain at peace, free and innocent. It is amazing and delectable to be so open and big hearted.

A Summary of the Three Teachings By Monastic Recorder Zan Ning of You Jie^{xxv}

Question: Why are you writing a brief history on monastics? This could start trouble.
Answer: To make Buddhism flourish and the proper Dharma long abide.

Question: The present emperor respects Buddhism, glorifies the esoteric teachings, and applies Confucian scholarship, so Buddhism is already flourishing. How can a *bhikshu* turn the wheel [of Dharma] and claim that he makes Buddhism flourish?

Answer: I wish to help it flourish; however, if Shakyas disciples do not know the Dharma, do not cultivate, do not diligently study various subjects, and do not understand the fundamental beginnings, how can we aid the emperor in making it flourish?

Perhaps one says: What strength do you have in making the Proper Dharma abide for long?

Answer: The Buddha said to know the Dharma and the Mahayana, then protect them, uphold them, and gather them in will sustain the Dharma.

Also one asks: All the masters wrote extensively, what is there for you to do?

Answer: The ancients wrote but there were omissions in their applications. Since they do not know the Three Teachings rotate, starting again after one cycle ends. With one person up above, he is not in danger because one person makes the Three Teachings flourish. The Three Teachings exist to assist that one person. After the three emperors^{xxvi}, Confucius was born, proclaiming and using them appropriately. Regarding Taoism, before the five great Kings^{xxvii}, the way in which a nation was governed coincided with non-governance. In the past, Sima Qian wrote the *Records of History* to ensure Taoism's rank among the nine schools; Ban Gu wrote the *History of Han* to elevate Confucian thought to the highest status among all literary work^{xxviii}.

It has been hundreds and thousands of years since Xia Dynasty, Shang Dynasty, and Zhou Dynasty. If rulers had applied Taoism in governing the nation, it would have been like taking a slow medicine for a fast-spreading disease. Humanism and justness would have diminished, hence propriety and law invented. However, if the problems went beyond propriety and law, Confucians would have had to give up by then.

Buddhist principles have more uses: apply compassion to transform cruelty and evil, apply joy and giving to transform stinginess, apply equality to transform foe and love, and apply patience to transform hatred. Let people know that the soul does not become extinct after death; that people become reborn based on their karma. Reward them with heaven; punish them with hell. Like moulds for clay and dies for metal, dented moulds and wrecked dies will cast an ugly form, and smooth moulds and finished dies will cast a beautiful shape. This is not just talk; anyone can be witness to it.

Therefore, the emperors and officials believe in Buddhism. Just like wind bends grass, people follow their leaders. Buddhism may rely on Taoism and Confucianism; just as wisdom is achieved based on the three types of delusion^{xxix}. In order to unite a nation, we follow all the sagely teachings, so that everyone in that nation will be diligent and

vigilant every day. In grabbing an object, for example, the arm will move the hand, and the hand will control the fingers, which grip or release the object. What is the problem?

If so, the three traditions belong to the same family. The emperor is the head of the household and he should not have any favorites under his supervision. Favoritism will lead to competition and competition will hurt the three teachings. If the emperor has a personal preference regarding the three traditions, there will naturally be no peace. Without peace, the traditions will be hurt. If the emperor does not want to hurt the teachings, the best solution is to avoid preference. If the three traditions can be in harmony, the Dharma will last a long time.

For example, Emperor Qing adopted Li Si's recommendation and burned books and buried Confucians. The *sramanas* were murdered during the latter Wei Dynasty because of Kou Qian Zhi and Cui Hao. Emperor Wu of Zhou Dynasty banned Buddhism and Taoism to show off his intelligence. There were probably no upright individual during that reign. Emperor Wu of Tang Dynasty destroyed Buddha images and temples. Taoist Zhao Guizhen led Liu Xuanjing in slandering Buddhism. How quickly the retributions befell people like Li, Cui and these four emperors!

I suggest that we Buddhists remind and protect one another. Make no mistakes. If we were not tolerated by the emperor, how could we establish the Dharma? Not to mention the fact that the Way flows to retain its essence instead of trying to be foremost in the world. *Sramanas*, why not try and be extra polite and coexist in harmony? We should believe in the words of the Buddha and be respectful and trusting toward everyone. Believe that Laotse is an ancient saint. Believe that Confucius is an ancient teacher. Without these two sages, how could we have propagated Buddhism? Alongside Taoism and Confucianism, let us make our emperor surpass the great emperor Fu Xi and the Yellow Emperor.

People who disagree with this principle are like knavish children who fight without good reason, causing their parents to pay fines or receive punishment by law. Note however, that damages done to the prominence of these three teachings incur only minor losses for a short time. It is just like eclipses of the sun and the moon; they will pass with no permanent damage done to their brightness. Do you not see, Emperor Qin burned the books of hundreds of schools but sages saved those books by hiding them inside walls^{xxx?} Emperor Qin buried Confucian scholars to eliminate them, then Yang, Ma^{xxxi}, and the two Dai's^{xxxii} promoted Confucianism in succession. When was there a time without heir?

Emperor Liang devoted himself to the Way. The rise of the latter Wei Dynasty led to its emperor, Tuo Ba, to slaughter monks. His descendents reestablished Buddhism though. Later, the emperor of Zhou Dynasty destroyed Buddhism and Taoism, and they both recovered shortly afterwards. Emperor Wu of Tang Dynasty banned Buddhism; but immediately thereafter Emperor Xuan revived Buddhism ten times over. How can one stop the flow of a river with his palm? How can one wrestle tigers and rhinos with bare hands?

As monks, it is difficult to exceed the level of Dao An. Dao An was a friend of Xi Zaochi, [a Confucian]. As monks, it is difficult to exceed the level of Hui Yuan. Hui Yuan saw Lu Xiuqing off to Tiger Creek [a noted Taoist spot]. I admire these two preeminent monks who respect Confucianism and Taoism. Some Buddhists may remain skeptical. However, since we respect others, how could other [traditions] look down upon us? Please trust that we may emulate the way Dao An and Hui Yuan dealt with this issue. The *Odes* said, “Like cutting wood with a wooden-handled ax, principles are never far away.” Meng Zi said, “Good geographic conditions are better than good timing; people united are better than good geographic conditions.” These quotations make the same point.

A Transmission of the *Chan* Contemplation

The practice of *Chan* began during the Qin Dynasty. Master Seng Rui wrote the preface to *the Sutra for Attaining Dhyana in Seclusion*^{xxiii}. His article clarified the principles for how to realize one’s mind and access noumenon. However, it is like a recipe for some Chinese medicinal prescription, not all the ingredients are there. People have not heard of the effectiveness of this prescription, so it is merely part of a medical text.

In contrast, the great teaching [Buddhism,] is already widespread. Many outstanding masters explain it in their own way. People who annotate the sutras often exaggerate their words and meaning; people who classify the sutras often show off their analytical skills. It is as if they are shaking a pine tree but trying to hang on to the dust on the tree. They only esteem that aspect of Buddhist teaching that varies according to the individual’s special conditions, resolves arguments, and subdues sharp disagreements; they only notice the aspect of wisdom Buddhist lectures, which is as sharp as the edge of a blade. They totally forget the true Buddhist principles, and do not seek transcendence from the mundane world.

Master Hui Yuan of the south Yangtze River sighed that the *Chan* Dharma had not blossomed, thus sought it diligently and attained it. Master Bodhidharma observed the roots and conditions of living beings in China, and in order to pacify a complicated situation, he proclaimed: no words. That was to eliminate the attachment to text which caused people to stagnate or chase after words only. The method is to point directly to the mind of beings, to let beings suddenly understand the mind’s non-arising. The requisite for this teaching is steep, but the principles are perfect. Thus, it is unavoidable for those practitioners of the gradual dharmas to slander it. The method of *Chan* began with Bodhidharma and was transmitted one to one for six generations. Numerous offshoots came from this lineage and countless number of masters received the transmission. An example is described in the book, *Records of Jeweled Forests at Cao Creek*.

An Inscription for Bao Feng *Chan* Monastery’s Buddha Selecting Hall at Hong Zhou
Authored by Prime Minister Shangying Zhang

Emperor Chong Ning bestowed the name Ci Ying upon Ma Zu's stupa, whose posthumous name is Zu Ying. A monk gets his head shaved each year as an offering. The elder monk who lives in the mountains is Fu Shen. He built the Celestial Text Pavilion behind the patriarch hall, which has multiple stories. The ground level of the building is a hall named Selecting Buddhas. He had his disciple ask me for an inscription to the hall. I rejected him three times and his request became even more firm. I told him, "The ancients call it 'selecting Buddhas', a parallel to the terminology 'passing an imperial examination' that involves special terms and phraseology. Are you sure it is appropriate of you to choose that name for the hall and in addition, for me to write an inscription for it? Since you keep making the request, I will just casually write one."

Since selecting Buddhas really should require no words, so to parallel it to an imperial test of essays and write an inscription for it seems contrary to the idea of selecting Buddhas. The idea of 'selection' is used in national civil examinations and for talent searches; it sharpens the worldly and polishes the dull. It does not apply to selecting Buddhas. If Buddhas could be selected, should the six senses be the criteria, or the six sense objects? Or the six consciousnesses? Were these three sets of six the criteria, all ordinary beings could become Buddhas.

Were the three sets of six eliminated, who would be the practitioners and how would they certify to the infinite amount of Buddhadharma? Were they to attain the Four Noble Truths, the Six *Paramitas*, the Seven Types of Enlightenment, the Eightfold Path, the Nine Stages of *Samadhi*, and the Ten Fearlessnesses, up to the Eighteen Unique Dharmas, the 37 Aids to the Way? If they attain anything, the Dharma exists. Were they to eliminate the Four Noble Truths and the Six *Paramitas* and on up to the 37 Aids to the Way? If they eliminate these, the Dharma does not exist. Eliminated, the Dharma is vague and blurry. If any trace of such remains in the mind, it next enters the chest like dust does all of a sudden. This is described in the treasury of sutras. Perhaps these are called the Two Obstructions, the Four Illnesses^{xxxiv}, the meaning not understood, sophistry, extreme and deviant views and subtle flows.

Seize not upon Buddhahood, eliminate not Buddhahood, but neither eliminating nor seizing is not Buddhahood either. Can the outcome of Buddhahood be selected? Elimination, attainment, existence, non-existence, these thoughts are as miniscule as threads of silk hung in the mind and appear as suddenly as dust entering the mind. In the sutras, these are the two hindrances, four faults, non-ultimate meaning, sophistry, deviant views based on pervasive discrimination, or subtle flows of the eighth consciousness. To attain is not Buddha, to eliminate is not Buddha, to neither attain nor eliminate is not Buddha. How can the fruition of Buddhahood be selected?

One might say, ‘What you just said comes out of the *Abhidharma* School, our patriarchs talk about the *Chan* School.’

All those selections are about those whose minds are empty. Disciples construct the buildings and then ask questions. Masters sit and answer them. Masters might instruct on the esoteric essentials, tell them how to choose the correct Dharma, show them the *Samadhi* of the Dharma Mirror, show them the causes and conditions for the Way eye, direct them to the single path of a superior destiny, show them the final gate to ultimate enlightenment, show them with an instantaneous strike on the head, show them in a plain and honest manner, raise their eyebrows and wink their eyes, raise the whisk to knock on the bed, draw a circle, draw a single line, clap their hands, or dance to match the disciples’ wits in order to let them know that their minds are empty. Once the disciples know that their minds are empty, the fruition of Buddhahood may be selected.

I tell you, the World Honored One raised a flower and Kashyapa smiled. The Proper Dharma Eye Treasury is just so. How come there are so many different ways of pointing to the mind by later patriarchs and masters? I am afraid the teachings of Shakyamuni deteriorated for this reason.

Fu Sheng, whose hometown is He Dong, considers coarse food sweet and can endure hard work. He studied under Zhen Jing of Guan Xi for a long time. He is tough and stands firm. He must be able to propagate his master’s teaching. Shakyamuni Buddha taught his disciples to weaken their bodies to get rid of their attachment to the body and to be alone to eradicate their thoughts. Even ghosts and spirits are unable to peek into the secret practices of precepts and *samadhi*. The wonderful uses of compassion are respected by both visible and invisible beings. Responding only when forced, the marks of self and others will lose their companions that way. Speak only if there is no other choice, that way the six categories of offenses will dissipate [so no offenses are committed].

I have not come into being yet, so how could there be death? Consequently, what is there to fear? Situations are beneficial or hurtful depending on one’s decision. Without having tasted benefits, how can there be harm? What choice is there to make? Someone who can truly be like this need not empty the externals and he is already empty inside; one does not need to empty states, for one’s mind is already empty; one does not need to empty phenomenon, for noumenon is already empty; one does not need to empty marks, for the inherent nature is already empty; one does not need to empty emptiness, for emptiness is already empty. If emptiness, then impartiality. If impartiality, then greatness. If greatness, then perfection. If perfection, then wondrousness. If wondrousness, then Buddhahood.

These are my expectations for you, do not ignore them.

An Inscription on Faith

By Third Patriarch *Dhyana* Master Jian Zhi

There are no difficulties on the Ultimate Way as long as you do not discriminate. Avoid hate and love, and then you will understand everything clearly. A hair's worth of understanding makes a world of difference. If you want great wisdom, do not consider what is favorable or unfavorable. The battle between adversity and satisfaction is the source of illnesses in the mind. Without knowledge of this subtle principle, you are wasting your time in quieting your mind. The true mind is as perfect as empty space, neither insufficient nor excessive.

Since one discriminates, one is not "just as is." Do not chase after conditions; do not dwell in emptiness. With a non-discriminating mind, mindstates will completely disappear. Some people stop any motion and return to stillness, then they reach stillness and they return again to eliminate motion. They stagnate in the two extremes. Given that, how could they know the oneness [of motion and stillness]? Without understanding the one, efforts are wasted for both extremes. Dismiss both existence and non-existence; reach emptiness and discard that emptiness. Many words and thoughts do not click while the end of words and thoughts leads to penetration everywhere. Returning to the roots, one acquires the mission; as one reflects, one loses the goal. Reflect to see that true emptiness is present in everything. This true emptiness is better than the previous "emptiness," which is just to avoid any contact with sense objects. That earlier emptiness will change because it is caused by false views.

As soon as any view about right or wrong occurs, the true mind is already lost. The false mind makes appear numerous thoughts. The dual comes from the one and does not keep to the one either. With not one thought arising, the myriad of dharmas are faultless. Free of fault and Dharma, there is no production and no mind. The senses cease along with objects; objects will disappear along with the senses. Objects exist because of the senses; the senses exist because of objects. If you want to know both, they are just one emptiness. Without seeing that which is refined or crude, how could there be any prejudice? The substance of the great Way is huge, there is no easiness or difficulty.

Those with petty views do not believe what I said; they may seek enlightenment earnestly, but the more eager they are, the later they will reach enlightenment. Attached, picking it up is not correct, for one will definitely enter a stray path that way. Letting things be natural, the substance has no abiding or leaving. Just let the inherent nature be. Accord with the Way and you will be at ease and worry-free. Tied to thoughts and contradict the true, drowsiness debilitates. Do not waste you energy. What need is there to discriminate between close or distant relationships? Wishing to seize the One Vehicle, do not detest the six sense objects; without detesting the six sense objects, you return to Proper Enlightenment. The wise ones do nothing conditioned while fools entangle themselves. The Dharma is no other Dharma, one just falsely loves and attaches to certain

dharmas. Is it not a grave mistake to use the mind to seek [your true mind]? Confusion arises, stillness is lost to chaos; enlightened, there is no good or bad.

All dualities are caused by discrimination. Why bother grabbing onto illusory dreams and hollow flowers? Gain and loss, right and wrong, let it go at once. Even if one is not asleep, all dreams are eliminated naturally. If the mind does not discriminate, the myriad dharmas are just one. The substance of singular Thusness is mysterious, quietly one forgets all conditions. Looking at a myriad of dharmas, they all return to the self nature. Everything disappears; there is no analogy for this. **Stop motion, yet there is no motion; move stillness, yet there is no stillness.** Since there is not two, how can there be one?

Reach the ultimate without any standards and rules in mind. The mind is impartial with regard to everything so that all doing ceases; thus doubts are completely purified, proper faith is adjusted straight away. Nothing remains and nothing is remembered; empty and bright, that is what the true mind is like; it self-illuminates without any effort on the part of the mind.

The true mind is a place that cannot be measured by thinking and difficult to fathom with consciousness. The Dharma Realm of True Thusness contains no self or others. If one wishes to get a quick response, the only method is nonduality. Nonduality is the same and contains all. Wise ones throughout the ten directions all enter this school. The school is not rushed or extended but a thought is equivalent to millions of years. When the mind is not present or absent, all throughout the ten directions are before you. The extremely small is the same as the large as you forget and end states. The extremely large is the same as the small, the edges of which cannot be seen. Existence is nonexistence; nonexistence is existence. If you are not yet this way, no need to guard against it, that is for sure. One is all and all is one. If so, what worry would not end? Faith is nondual and nonduality is faith. Words cease and there is no past, present or future.

The Three Studies of Precepts, *Samadhi* and Wisdom

Reference on Application of the Four Division Vinaya states, “All Buddhadharma are not beyond the Three Studies, for living beings are confused so deluded thinking becomes karma that attracts retribution, causing the cycle of birth and death to continue without end.” To escape the consequence of suffering, one must eliminate the cause of suffering. Therefore we first use precepts to cure such karma and then with *samadhi* and wisdom clarify the delusion. Karma is divided into good and bad, thus the two actions of stopping and doing are listed as precepts. Delusion is just drowsiness and scatteredness, thus the two dharmas of *samadhi* and wisdom are used to counteract it. Illnesses are cured with medicine while cultivators rely on teachings to practice. Karma will then end and delusions will be gone. Emotions will die and our inherent nature manifests. Though the teachings are vast, they are certainly not beyond this.

The Four Reliances of Shakyā's Dharma

(Adhere to “the Four Reliances of Shakyas’ Dharma” and you will see the patriarchs’ minds; the guide to ultimate truth exists only in the sutras of revealed teachings)

Rely on the Dharma and not the people. People exist only because of emotions. The Dharma is the rail and the mode. The proper noumenon of inherent nature being empty (the emptied inherent nature is common to both the great and small vehicles), its substance transcends and it is not false. One should apply this Dharma, which is to rely on the proper Dharma. The ultimate teaching of *the Nirvana Sutra* elucidates this point. (*The Nirvana Sutra* says that those who rely on the Dharma are just the nature of Dharma; those who do not rely on people are Sound Hearers and Those Enlightened to Conditions.) Base our standards on the Buddha’s teachings are to cultivate without any false thoughts. Know the non-existence of Dharma and observe emptiness of the inherent nature; maintain this frame of mind on the path.

Knowing the non-existence of Dharma in part, one understands the principle of complying with emptiness; through observing and renouncing, one understands the practice of discarding existence in part. To settle the mind in that way is called cultivating the true path toward the nature of Dharma. Words are merely to open up the bamboo fishing net to capture meaning. Stopping is the growth of elaboration of meaning. Words are the path leading to principles and transformations. After certification and understanding, thoughts stop. At that time, the Buddhadharma should be discarded because it is no longer necessary, not to mention deviant dharmas. Therefore the sutras contain the analogy of abandoning the raft.

People talk about seeing (Zhuang Zi says that the Tao is preserved when seen.) Is that not a case of using words to express meaning, and ceasing words after meaning is attained? Everyone should know the analogy of the moon and the wonderful pointing. (The above text clarified: meaning is expressed with words; once the meaning is seen, words should be abandoned.) Now we talk about having acquired meaning and meaning is just words. True practitioners often contemplate and often shatter [the contemplation]. To contemplate often is to rely on words; to shatter often is to comply with meaning. Someone might say, “Once the meanings are seen, the words should be abandoned.” (The text earlier refers to how one should still discard meanings in one’s mind; one does not “recite words.”)

On relying upon wisdom but not consciousness. Consciousness refers to this: when seeds in the *alaya* consciousness manifest, knowing is divided according to the sense objects. Encountering form, knowing becomes seeing; encountering sound, knowing becomes hearing. One indulges in this way without waking up. One is then the same as cows and sheep, in that one walks the same path that deviant and ordinary people travel. (The above clarifies how both people and animals rely on the false thoughts of the six consciousnesses; therefore they remain on the turning wheel of rebirth and will fall into evil destinies. The following asks people to accord with the wisdom of the Buddha.)

The great sage reveals the lesson that the objects are just our own mind. The fools below stubbornly attach to the view that sense objects are outside of consciousness. Therefore

transformation and guidance from the great sage bring them to abandon deviant views. Thus, those fools stagnate from the perspective of the mundane because they discard the teachings of sages, are stupidly confused, and repeatedly fall into the three evil realms. Those who are vigorous and sharp know immediately when their thoughts arise. This knowing is inverted and difficult to understand, it is called to accord with consciousness. When one knows the flow of thoughts, one should reflect upon the source of this knowing, it is called according with wisdom. Mounting effort in this manner will gradually enhance one's understanding. Later, seeing the states of sense objects, know that they are not from the outside. Sense objects are not beyond the mind; they are marks of our own minds. How could stupidity or confusion, hatred or love occur otherwise? They think and select endlessly, so their understanding is different from that of cows and sheep.

Accord with the sutras containing comprehensive meaning; do not accord with sutras containing less than comprehensive meaning. These two types of sutras both contain the words of sages. Those who know these sutras before entering the Way will penetrate any blockage and resolve all doubt. It is only because the multitudes' inherent nature and consciousness are different in depth and sharpness that great sages speak differently for different beings. However, according to the ultimate teaching, there is mind only.

Thus the sutras say, "Dharmas in and above the Triple Realm come from the mind alone." I say, "This teaching is to point to the true mind via the world, which is a result of living beings' retribution." Furthermore, the Buddha said that Thusness and the ultimate truth, nirvana and the Dharma Realm, various bodies produced by intent, are only from the mind alone. This teaching is to point to the true mind via the substance of transcending dharmas. Reaching exhaustively for actuality, we will finally arrive at the source. Floating with the flow and responding to conditions, we should accord with the teachings of comprehensive meaning.

Precepts are Only to be Established by Buddhas and No Other

Commentaries on the Nan Shan Vinaya states, "The Buddhas are the Dharma Kings of the Great Thousand World Systems. The *Vinaya* was established by the Buddhas and can only be set down by the Buddhas." Anyone below that status may inherit them and observe them. The conduct and fruition of the Thus Come Ones are most perfect. Buddhas see through all being's karma and nature; while even those at or below the stage of equal enlightenment cannot see through it. Not to mention how anyone of a lowlier sagely position should dare to correct or object to them. Just as orders of reward and punishment must be issued by the king, but if ministers and other subordinates overstep their bounds, citizens would lose their faith, and this country will soon become extinct. The Buddhadharma is the same, if anyone other than the Buddhas were allowed to talk about precepts, then living beings would not observe the precepts; hence the Dharma would not abide for long.

Excerpts from Various Texts in Praise of the Precept Dharma

The *Tradition on the Maintenance of Resources and Guidance of Standards* states:

The precepts are your great master because they can regulate behavior. The precepts are like people's feet because by observing them, people can reach Buddhahood. The precepts are like the great earth that can give birth to beings, let them abide, and embrace them. The precept are the pillars of buildings; they are stages along the Way and they are what the sagely Way depends upon. The precepts are the city of *samadhi* because *samadhi* and wisdom are based upon it. The precepts are like pools and mirrors, garlands, heads and instruments too.

Therefore *the Great Wisdom Shastra* says that the precepts are like giant gems, like life, like a boat and like wings to a bird etc. Search and you shall know.

Furthermore, *vinaya* texts first make clear how to protect the precepts with a total of eight analogies^{xxxv}. Treasure the precepts like they were a young prince, moonlight, a wish-fulfilling pearl or the king's lone son. Treasure the precepts like they were someone's only eye, like food to someone short on resources, like a good country to a king, like good medicine for ailments. Furthermore, in *Precepts' Great Preface*, precepts are said to be like a boundless sea or like a gem that one never grows tired of. In the *Monastic Codes*, precepts are said to be like the lock that bolts down the monkey or the chain that shackles the horse. There are plenty of these similes in the sutras and the *vinaya*, so we will not repeat those quotes here. It is really because the virtues to the precepts are lofty and vast; no object is comparable to them. Among all those analogies listed, each one can only describe one feature of the precepts, and they are not all alike.

The Buddha Propagated the Precepts in Particular While in the World

Furthermore, even though the Buddha lectured on what later became various texts, he paid particular attention to the *vinaya*. We must be more careful with the *vinaya*. The *bhikshu* and *bhikshuni* precepts say, "The World Honored One interacts with deep understanding of the essence of the subjects." In everything, we give primarily with comportment. Indeed, whatever the Buddha does, he focuses primarily on comportment. Furthermore, sutras accord with what others say while the *vinaya* can only be personally proclaimed with the Buddha's golden mouth. Only those with influence and authority dare to follow the precepts, not to mention minor sages, how would they dare comment on the precepts? Furthermore, every sutra spoken by the Buddha has its particular time period and limit, but the *vinaya* is covered from the earliest teachings to the final teachings.

The Commentaries say the Buddha began at Deer Park and ended in Crane Forest, following the senses and establishing precepts according to people's roots. This makes the *vinaya* unique in a million different ways, but three special features forever mark them different than other texts. The words to pervasively propagate them must seem bland.

An Instruction on Brief and Extensive Lists of *Bhikshu* and *Bhikshuni* Precepts

A question is posed in *the Commentaries on the Vinaya*, “The *vinaya* contains 250 precepts for *bhikshus*, which are listed on the precept book. It is said that *bhikshunis* have 500 precepts, is that true?” (The claim of 500 precepts came from *the Great Wisdom Shastra*, which is different from the precept book. Thus I am asking the question for a definite answer.)

Answer: The two specific numbers listed in those two books are rough figures. When we consider them in the Buddhist texts, there is no need to specify a number. If we were to talk about the principle of precepts, there is only one. It is unconditioned. If we were to clarify the marks of precepts in terms of phenomena, the number would be as large as a number equivalent to the quantity of dust motes. The 250 precepts are listed as a shortcut for us to maintain and avoid violating. The *bhikshuni vinaya* contains 348 precepts, which let us know what to prevent. Regarding *the Wisdom Shastra*, it says the *bhikshunis* receive approximately 500 precepts in brief and 80,000 comprehensively. The monks have 250 in brief; though vastly speaking, they are the same as the *Bhikshuni vinaya* and comportment.

The Reason for Teaching Women

The Karma Shastra says:

Their roots matured, some women (the Buddha’s aunt, *Bhikshuni* Mahaprajapati and 500 women wished to leave the homelife under the Buddha, according to the *vinaya*.) were extremely wary of birth and death and sought to leave the homelife under the Buddha. Since women do not have the benefit of propagating the Way and transforming people in a large area, the Buddha rejected their request and did not allow them to leave the homelife. Later, they returned to Sravasti and their hair was shaved and they donned robes. They stood by the sangha house and begged to receive the precepts. At the time, they made three requests and were given the Dharma of Respect, which they must rely on and practice completely. This Dharma then led to the Complete Precepts.

The Records say, “Women are base and weak. People rarely respect and believe them; therefore women are useless in propagating the Dharma and transforming beings; in fact, they will cause the Dharma to be slandered and humiliated so that the period of proper Dharma will be reduced by half.”

Since the Buddha forbid it, the women returned to the city and their appearance changed. Later they stepped over the doorway at Jeta Grove and stayed. Ananda was the representative who requested the Buddha to transmit the teachings to women. If they were able to practice the Eight Respects, they may leave the homelife; hence Prajapati and others heard this and immediately became replete with the Complete Precepts. *The Commentaries to the Precepts* further say, “The reason that women need to have twenty

people for precept teachers is to provide details on women's retribution. In their profound confusion, shallow wisdom and preference for arrogance and laxness, they may only have such supreme resolve fulfilled when there are ten monks and ten nuns with full precepts as their precept teachers."

The Commentaries to the Precepts further say, "The research on the history of Sangha members in China before Song Dynasty show that women received the precepts only from one sex alone (Receiving them from the single assembly of great monks)." Just as all those in the *vinaya* receive the Eight Respects, Prajapati did that because 500 other *Bhikshunis* received the precepts from one assembly. Gunabhadra the sage said, "Receive [the precepts] from one assembly if there are not two assemblies." Only those in the same situation as Prajapati will receive the Dharma that way. How do we know? Regarding this Dharma of Eight Respects, it is only an expedient means; no precepts are received with it. One must still go to the Sangha's karmavajna to receive the precepts. For that reason, a total of eleven *bhikshunis* from Sri Lanka including Devasara and others came to China and studied Chinese. Only then did the *bhikshunis* in China start to receive the precepts from the two assemblies.

Eight Rules of Respect for *Bhikshunis*

"The Chapter on *Bhikshunis*" in *the Commentary on the Vinaya of the Four Categories* says, "*The Wholesome Views Vinaya*^{xxxvi} describes how the Buddha did not allow women to leave the homelife because it will cause the proper Dharma to become extinct 500 years early. Later on, the Buddha spoke the Eight Dharmas of Respect for women and allowed them to leave the homelife. Because they practiced according to the teachings, the lifespan of the proper Dharma was one thousand years of 500 years. Now because we do not practice the Eight Dharmas of Respect accordingly, the proper Dharma ceases to be." *The Records of Assembly Proper* say, "Fourteen years after the Buddha became enlightened, his aunt sought to leave the homelife, the Buddha forbid it. Ananda requested it three times for her. The Buddha asked Ananda to transmit the Eight Respects and have him tell Prajapati, 'If you can practice the Eight Respects, you may leave the home life.' She said, 'I will uphold them respectfully.'"

Regarding the Eight Respects:

1. A one-hundred year old *Bhikshuni* who sees *bhikshus* who have just first received the precepts should get up and bow and asked that they sit down.
2. *Bhikshunis* should not scold *bhikshus*.
3. Do not name the faults of *bhikshus*. *Bhikshus* may speak of the faults of *bhikshunis*.
4. Shikshamanas already studied the precepts, so should follow the assembly of Sangha members in requesting the great precepts.
5. The *bhikshunis* violate the sanghavisasha. They should every half a month engage in *manapya*^{xxxvii} in the two divisions of Sangha Order.
6. *Bhikshunis* should ask *bhikshus* for instructions every half a month.
7. Do not hold summer retreats in places with no *bhikshus*.
8. At the end of the summer, request for critique in the Sangha.

Respect and praise these Eight Dharmas. Do not defy them in this lifetime.

Leave the Householders' Life and Transcend the World

The Karma Shastra says, "Throughout all existence, no one thought to leave defilement. Therefore, the Buddha established the path of monastic life and its joys of quiet leisure. Greed and attachment will finally become golden locks." Just as *the Flower Hands Sutra* says:

There are four dharmas. Those who practice them will become *bhikshus* again in the next life, transformation ally born in lotuses. Their length of life will increase this time around too. The four dharmas are: 1 One enjoys leaving the homelife as well as encouraging others to delight in leaving the homelife. 2. One tirelessly seeks the Dharma as well as encourages others. 3. One practices harmony and patience personally and encourages others to do the same. 4 One studies and practices expediences and makes great vows profoundly.

Furthermore, *the Sutra on the Merit of Leaving the Homelife* says, "If one can let someone else leave the homelife to receive the precepts, the merit is boundless. Just as if one makes offerings to arhats filling up the four continents for hundreds of years is no better than someone who left the homelife to receive the precepts for a day and a night to achieve nirvana." So it is said, "Though the donor is generous in the first case, blessing will end because it is still tied in the Desire Realm." To leave the homelife for the sake of the Dharma is not karma of the Triple Realm; thus the blessing here surpasses the amount of blessings in the first case. The reason that the merit of raising jeweled stupas up into the Tushita Heaven is also inferior to that of leaving the homelife is as follows: even if one enjoys the monastic life for a short time, his achievement in the future is not certain; however, this small accumulation is the basis for supreme loftiness.

The Five Virtues of *Sramaneras*

The Commentaries quote *the Sutra on Fields of Blessings*, which says:

1 Those who resolve to leave the homelife wear the Way because they respect the Way from the deep recesses of their heart. 2. They ruin their fine appearance and enjoy wearing Dharma robes. 3. They abandon the body and life and respectfully comply with the Way. 4. They forever cut off relations with their dear ones because they do not have discriminative feelings toward living beings. 5. The assembly, not just a small one, together devotes to Buddhist practices their entire lives and not just initially. They vow to seek the great vehicle because they want to cross over living beings.

One text says, “Those five virtues are very important to leaving the homelife. Not only should *sramaneras* practice them, all the five assemblies should practice them. Not only practice them when they initially received them, but they should practice them throughout their entire lifetimes.” Furthermore, *the Karma Shastra* says, “Those five virtues ultimately apply to the Five Assemblies, because they can make offerings of objects to teachers among humans and teachers. They are all worthy of receiving offerings and be teachers among humans and gods. Let them recite and uphold those five, do not look lightly upon receiving the precepts, the look of a monastic and monastic robes.”

The Reason for the Three Robes

The Commentaries quote the *Sarvastivada School*^{xxxviii}, saying, “In order to be different from non-Buddhists, *the Shastra of Differentiated Merit* says, ‘The three robes were established for different seasons. Heavy clothing for the winter, lighter clothing for the summer, and medium weight clothing for the spring. It is also for the sake of all insects.’” *The Wisdom Shastra* says, “The holy disciples of the Buddha abide in the Middle Way, so wear the three robes. Non-Buddhists are shamelessly naked. Laypeople tend to be greedier and wear a lot of clothes.” *The Ten Recitations* say, “In order to differ from non-Buddhists, Buddhists cut our robes with a knife so that we know it is the robe of people with shame.”

The Samyuktagama Sutra says, “Cultivate the Four Infinite Qualities of the Mind, shave your beard and hair, and wear the three Dharma robes to leave the homelife. It is named according to such principles, thus it is the robe for compassionate beings.” *The Avatamsaka Sutra* says, “Those who wear the sash can give up and part with the three poisons etc.” *The Four Divisions Vinaya* says, “Those who embrace the fetters should not wear sashes.” *The Sarvastivada* says:

There are five intended reasons for the three robes. 1. One robe cannot prevent cold. Three robes can. 2. With one robe, one cannot have shame. 3. With one robe, it is not appropriate to enter a village. 4. With one robe, there is no goodness created while one is walking on a road. 5. With one robe, one’s deportment is impure. Thus the Buddha ordered to store three robes, and the above meanings are thus replete.

The Samghika says, “The three robes are the insignia of the holy and worthy *sramanas*. The bowl is the instrument of left-home people, not what mundane people can uphold. The three robes and a ceramic bowl are about fewer desires and fewer involvements in worldly matters. So those outside the school are mostly for cold. The three were established. The three were established mostly for cold weather.” *The Four Divisions Vinaya* says, “The Thus Come Ones of the three periods of time wear such robes.” *The Karma Shastra* says, “Just as the *vinaya* says, since *bhikshus* store extras and do not restrain themselves, the Thus Come One asked them to wear one robe in the first third of the night and wear the third robe in the last part of the night. The next morning the Buddha established the dharma of robes as mentioned above.”

The Function of the Sash

A quote from *the Great Compassion Sutra*, “If they have the *sramanas*’ nature and appear to be *sramanas* wearing sash, though they defile the practices of *sramanas*, they will enter nirvana without exception under the Buddhas, from Maitreya Buddha to Rucika Buddha.”^{xxxix} *The Compassion Flower Sutra* says:

The Thus Come Ones made vows in front of Jeweled Treasury Buddha. When realizing Buddhahood, my sash possesses five kinds of merits. First, entering my Dharma, one may violate major precepts, maintain deviant views and others among the fourfold assembly; but with one thought of respect, one will receive certification for the Three Vehicles. Two, if the gods, dragons, humans, ghosts show a little respect toward that monk’s sash, they will attain non-retreat in the Three Vehicles. Three, if ghosts and spirits and other people acquire sashes, even if it is only four inches of a sash, they will be full with and content with food. Four, if living beings collectively act contrarily, the power of the sash will allow them to find their compassion. Five, if in a battle, uphold a little piece of sash and pay respects will allow you to always attain victory. If my sash does not have this kind of power then I must be deceiving all Buddhas.

The Records of Helping Conditions quote *the Sutra of Worthies and Fools*:

The Buddha told Ananda, for infinite *asamkhyeya* eons since ancient times, there was a lion in the mountain forests in Jambudvipa named Firm Vows. Its body was gold and it shone. The hunter shaved his head and wore a sash. With a bow, the hunter shot poisonous arrows at the lion. The lion suddenly realized what was happening and was ready to attack, but when it saw the sash, it thought, ‘This person will soon attain liberation.’ Why? This dyed robe is a sign of the sages throughout the three periods of time. ‘If I were to hurt him, I would be vicious toward saints and sages of the three periods of time.’

The Great Teaching on Forever Severing Silk, Cotton and Leather

The Commentaries also quote *the Angulimalya Sutra*, “If silk, cotton, leather were passed on many times, away from the hands of the person who committed killing, and are offered to those who uphold the precepts. They should not receive those things; this is the Dharma of *bhikshus*. These *bhikshus* who receive them do not break the precepts if they do not feel sad about them.” *The Nirvana Sutra* says, “Leather, shoes, sandals, *kashaya* sash and such clothes should not be stored-- to be proper according to the sutras and *vinaya*. Now there is an assembly of meditators somewhere who all wear fabric made from Chinese mugwort, are they adhering to the teachings?”

The *vinaya* bans monastics from receiving offerings from people who raise silkworms

only. The Great Vehicle Teachings ban the use of any silk, even though the silk might have passed through many hands. Thus we know that the conduct of Sound Hearers is inferior; they just want to be away from wrongdoing. The compassion of Bodhisattvas is deep and profound; they deduce the remote origin of silk etc.; so even though the fabric is not directly offered by those who killed the silkworms, it is still a result of killing. One who stands on a sitting cushion or wears the three robes will all be related to that killing karma. This cannot be bore by Bodhisattvas. How could it be appropriate for *bhikshus*? Please check the sutra texts and maintain some faith. To comprehensively describe the benefits and harm, see the text for attire and comportment. Those who do not receive any offering made from silk accord with both Great Vehicle and Small Vehicle teachings. Those who receive it without feeling sad contradict Great Vehicle teachings but comply with the Small Vehicle teachings. The Small Vehicle emerged out of the Great Vehicle. Those who accept offerings made of silk without feeling sad complies with the *vinaya* in conduct, but they contradict the real intent behind the *vinaya*.

Therefore we should know that in upholding the precepts and practicing kindness, we must accord with holy edicts. Indulging in and using emotions, we completely contradict comportment along the path. Therefore *the Articles on Attire and Comportment* say, “Right now, let us start with the teaching of ‘not feeling sad’, ultimately we should sever anything made of silk forever.’ In our discussion, this is the basis that reveals the profundity and seriousness in not wearing silk. We can quote *the Nirvana Sutra*, which is the final exhortation from the Buddha, and certainly understand that the proper teaching clearly bans the use of silk. Why is there any hesitation or doubt?

Naming current phenomenon to criticize false conduct. I will now give some contemporary examples to criticize the false conduct of wearing silk. *The Records* say:

As *the Biographies of Sanghans* describe it, ‘The two teachers of Dao and Xiu at Nan Yue Heng Mountain do not wear any silk or cotton, they only wear fabric made from Chinese mugwort.’ Therefore the *Vinaya* Master of Nan Shan said, ‘The Buddhadharma has descended in the East for more than 600 years but only those two monks living on the Heng Mountain act compassionate enough for us to imitate.’ Now the meditators and Dharma teachers say, ‘I belong to the Mahayana and am not bound by phenomenon and marks.’ They wear fine fabric to compete in beauty and dress in purple jade to contend for colorfulness.

Those meditators and Dharma teachers indulge in their greed and disobey the holy teachings. Have you not heard that the two masters at Heng Mountain only wear fabric made from Chinese mugwort to defend against wind and frost, Master Tian Tai wore only one robe for more than 40 years, Master Yong Jia did not eat anything farmed and did not wear any clothes spooled from silkworms, and Master Jing Xi wore one large piece of fabric and had only one bed for furniture? It all comes from a profound understanding of the Mahayana; therefore they specifically value ascetic practices. Please consider the virtues of patriarchs and do not be tainted with deviant thoughts. That would

be about being devoted to the teachings and cultivate, making one a true disciple of the Buddha.

Demonstrating That the Robes and Wealth are Inappropriate

The *Commentaries on the Karma Shastra* say, “If out of any mean intention tainted with greed that one sells the Dharma for gain, then in bowing to the Buddhas or reading the sutras will only end the digesting of all karma. All bribes and horded objects are items from a deviant livelihood. In bowing to the Buddhas, reading the sutras, or fasting, etc., all bribes and horded objects gained from those practices are all items from a deviant livelihood. These are restricted because they are contrary to the Buddha’s teachings.” Just as the sutras say, “When *bhikshus* wash their ragged robes by the river, all gods take such water to wash their bodies and do not consider it dirty. With that water, non-Buddhists later want to wash their clean blankets, but all the gods keep them at bay and forbid them to taint the pool. Due to their deviant livelihood, their bodies are impure.”

This essay proves that a pure mind is proper and fundamental. Although searching for purity, the body of wealth accords with the Dharma, fine fabric and rich silk do not fit. Most people in the world use fine silk; the material was derived from hurting lives so they must be restricted and regulated. Now none of the people in the five territories of India or monks in northern or western China wears silk sashes. I personally asked them, and they answered, “This robe is a Brahma robe and we practice the Four Infinite Qualities of the mind.” They already know that it comes from killing and yet they still wear it, this does not accord with the principles. With the Dharma robe, we accord with the Way. Vivacious colors and bright patches stir the mind and spirit. The five colors of blue and yellow etc. are coveted by common men, thus should all be discarded.

The Maintenance of Resources says, “Gods and people in *the Records of Responses* say that the Buddhadharma has come east for 600 or 700 years,” so the *vinaya* masters of the north and south had no such principles at one point. In those 700 years, none of the *vinaya* masters of the north and south shared the following opinion: how can monks use the materials from killing to make robes of compassion? Why do you, Master Nan Shan, raise this point alone?

Nan Shan responded, “Since I read *the Wisdom Shastra* and saw the Buddha wore a *kashaya* made with rough fabric, I kept that question in mind. Why should a different type of fabric be used here?”

After listening to the *vinaya*, I understand that robes and sitting cloth made of silk should be cut or ruined even if they are already made. Thus my respect regarding this matter increases. Nan Shan then said, “I also saw that Indian monks who came from the west all wore cotton or wool. I asked them, and they answered, ‘None of those in the five Indian countries wear silk clothes.’ Consequently, I got the idea to write a book on *Articles of Attire and Comportment* etc. *Tripitaka* Master Yi Jing slandered my points in his book *Records of the Buddhadharma on the Journey Through the South Sea*. He studied the

Small Vehicle teachings and had a lot of attachments. Now I adhere to the ultimate teaching of the Great Vehicle. This is beyond his knowledge.”

A Demonstration of the Dharma on Reverently Protecting the Three Robes and the Alms Bowl

The Commentaries on the Vinaya of the Four Categories say, “*The Ten Recitations* [of the Precepts] go, ‘The three robes are like your own skin and the alms bowl like your eye.’ It furthermore states, “Wherever one travels, one should travel with their robes and bowl, and not be infatuated by the places. One should be just like a bird flying by. If one does not keep the three robes when entering the towns of laypeople, one transgresses.” *The Samghika* also says, “The *bhikshus* must always have their three robes and bowl with them. Violators eliminate such sickness by leaving the boundaries and having the offense named; they should respect the three robes as if they were stupas.” *The Vinaya of the Five Categories of the Mahisasaka Sect* says, “One should protect the three robes cautiously like a thin layer of skin on one’s body. The robes should always accompany us as feathers accompany birds wherever they fly or walk.” The Four Divisions [of *Vinaya*] say, “Know the time to go. If it is not time, one should not go. Wherever one goes, one should always be with the robes and bowl, just as the birds are always with feathers.” All divisions [of *vinaya*] rule that they accompany us. Nowadays we only protect them when we have them by our side while asleep, which is not right.

The Records say, “Nowadays few monks accompany them while asleep, not to mention carrying them all the time. There are many monks who never had a Dharma robe throughout their lifetime. During the Dharma Ending Age, those who accompany them while asleep are already supreme. However, without pure faith within, we slight the Dharma and look down at the robes. Those who truly leave the homelife wish to abide by the holy regulations.” *The Karma Shastra* says, “The reason that robes and bowl always accompany monastics is so that monastics’ minds should be empty and without any attachment to any place. Monastics should stop when there is benefit to beings. If they stay somewhere as long as they wish, it will only increase their bad habits, and cause them to never ponder the Way. This is the reason.”

An Explanation on the Founding of Regulations

The Maintenance of Resources says, “Dropping a corner of the robe on the elbow goes against neatness according to the Numerous Study Section of the *vinaya*.” Nowadays, monks all wear robes with a corner dropped on the elbow. Do they not know that they are transgressing compartment and violating it every step of the way! We now talk about it based on what gods said in *the Records of Responses*, “This precept has been established four times.” Common people often get confused or attached. I will briefly quote it. It says:

The Buddha first converted five people and then converted the Kashyapa brothers. He established the sash. The sitting cloth is underneath the left arm and beneath the sash. The kings and ministers of the west all draped

white blankets on their left shoulders. The Buddhas established that the corner of the robe rests on the arm so that monks appear differently than mundane folks (This the first time the precept was established.)

Later the number of disciples increased gradually. The young *bhikshus* appeared so handsome that when they entered the city for alms, they were favored by women. Because of that, Buddha established the precept that, the corner of the robe should be behind the shoulder. Because the robe flies when the wind blows, the Buddha allows monks to use the *nishanda* to press down the robe. (This is the second time the precept was established.)

Later non-Buddhists asked some *bhikshus* difficult questions. If the sash is so precious and so mighty, how can a piece of fabric that we sit on be placed on top of it? The *bhikshus* could not respond and asked the Buddha. Because of that, the Buddha established the precept to put the corner of the robe back on the left arm and place the *nishanda* under the robe. (This is the third time the precept was established.)

Later *bhikshus* did not dress neatly so non-Buddhists teased that they looked like prostitutes and elephants' trunks.^{x1} Henceforth began the rule of the hook so that the corner of the robe is on the left arm. When underneath the armpit, it cannot hang down as done incorrectly above (It can only be placed on the left shoulder.) If it hangs down on the arm and reaches the elbow, then that is against the Dharma, for each step is an offense. The ancients were incorrect in saying that it is proper to have the robe on the left shoulder as long as its corner is not hanging down.

The Reason for the Alms Bowl

The Commentaries quote *the Samghikas*, "The alms bowl is a container for monastics and inappropriate for laypeople." The *Ten Recitations* say, "The bowl is the insignia for all Buddhas as many as grains of sand in the Ganges and cannot be used incorrectly." *Good Views* says, "The sages of the Three Vehicles all carry clay bowls. They beg to support themselves. The four seas are their home; hence, they are named *bhikshus*."

The Middle Agamas says, "The bowl, also called *patra*, is a container and according to the *vinaya*. It is basically of two types, clay and iron. *The Five Divisions Vinaya* says, "Some use copper-nickel alloy bowls. The Buddha said that this is the Dharma of non-Buddhists. If we store this we commit a transgression. The Buddha personally created the mould for the alms bowl for others to model after." The *Ten Recitations Vinaya* says, "Storing gold, silver, wood, stone and other types of bowls is wrong and creates offenses."

Regarding color. *The Four Divisions* say, “Smoke it into the color of black or red. The *vinaya* text name many ways to smoke the alms bowl; to use undyed clay bowl, white iron bowl, or oil-painted bowl are all against the Dharma.”

Regarding size. *The Four Divisions* say, “Large ones accommodate three pecks;^{xli} small ones one and a half pecks. You can figure out the middle size. This *vinaya* was translated in Yao Qin, where they use the peck of Ji Zhou. It used the peck measure of Ji Zhou. According to the Tang Dynasty peck size, the largest bowl accommodates one peck while the smallest five Chinese liters. It even says, even though the measures of all divisions are not standard, the majority of them use three pecks and one and a half pecks as the maximum and minimum capacity. However, this bowl is an alms bowl which should be established based on the teachings. The *vinaya* says, “Eat according to the measure of our stomach and dress according to our size. We only take enough. Words may be added or diminished, but they must accord with the Proper Teachings.”

The Significance of the Sitting Cloth

The Commentaries quote *the Four Divisions Vinaya*, “The sitting cloth is established for the body, for the robe, and for bedding. The length should be twice the length of the thumb to the middle finger when the Buddha’s hand is fully extended. The width should be one and a half of that finger span. For taller people, add another half of a finger’s length.” The various divisions’ discussion of a finger span is inconsistent though.

Now we rely on *the Five Divisions Vinaya*, “One finger span of the Buddha is two Chinese feet, which is one Chinese feet and 6.7 inches in Tang Dynasty. Regarding the two Chinese feet in *the Five Divisions Vinaya*, it is using the Ji Zhou Chinese foot as the standard. *The Ten Recitations* say, “The new edition says it is two while the older version says it is four. If using new fabric to make sitting cloth, one can use two layers of new cloth to make it; but with used fabric as raw material, one needs four layers.” *The Samghika Shastra* also says the same thing. The *Vinaya* says one should put old clothes on four sides of a new *nishanda* to make the color ugly. Those who make the *nishanda* should follow that. *The Five Divisions Vinaya* says, “One should fold the four corners; otherwise, do not fold it at all.” *The Four Divisions Vinaya* says, “Using less fabric to make a *nishanda* or fold fabric into two layers to make a *nishanda* are both okay.

According to *the Ten Recitations*, “One should not receive any *nishanda* with just a single layer of fabric. Leaving it while asleep is also an offense.” *The Sarvaya Vinaya* says, “If one leaves the *nishanda* while asleep, one need not perform *Naihsargik-prayascittika*^{xlii} to repent, because the Buddha did not establish the precept that way. However, one still should not leave the *nishanda* in sleep.” *The Records* say, “A sitting cloth is for the body because we are afraid to sit on the ground directly and hurt the body. A sitting cloth is for the three robes because they will easily deteriorate without the sitting cloth as a pad. A sitting cloth is for bedding because we are afraid that the body is unclean so that it dirties the beds of Sangha members.”

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Advice for Monastics Fascicle Four

The Lesson Behind the Water Strainer

The Commentaries say, “Though this object is small and light, it has many uses. This illustrates exactly what it means to become a monk and help living beings out of compassion. Nowadays even the loftiest in conduct drink water containing insects, not to mention all those who are corrupt. Hence, to cherish the life of insects, the *vinaya* established two precepts prohibiting drinking and using water containing insects because this occurs often and a majority of monks use such water.” *The Records* say, “The cultivation of kindness is the core for monastics. Kindness bestows happiness and the foremost means is not killing. Creatures may be small, but we should protect their lives just the same.” This is an application of kindness, a condition for monks to help creatures and behave in an outstanding manner. The ultimate Way is achieved this way. Though our peers may be too proud to act on this knowledge, we should not take it lightly.

Quoting the Great Teachings on Performing Purification as a Critique of Abuses

The Upholding of Resources quotes the *Shastra on Supporting the Earth*, “Since Bodhisattvas consider all articles they store impure. Bodhisattvas, with minds of purity, give things away to all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas throughout the ten directions; just as *bhikshus* give their clothing and items to their *acaryas*.” *The Nirvana Sutra* says, “Even though monks may store material items, those items must come from devoted and faithful donors who gave out of purity.”

Nowadays, lecturers only care about gain and fame. They are not ashamed of the Five Deviances; they mostly store the Eight Defilements. Following secular mainstream, how could they be mindful of the words of sages? It has been many years since they stepped off the ordination platform, and yet they have not touched one drop of pure Dharma. How would they know that everything they use on a daily basis is just filth? That stuff collected in their suitcases and bags are indiscretionary assets? They slight the Dharma and entertain deceptive notions; they are just looking for trouble.

Those who study the *vinaya* commit violations in this area on purpose, not to mention adherents of other schools. How would they know that the retribution follows the mind? Why would they believe that outcome develops from seeds? Nowadays we see monks who do not wear their sash. In their next life, they may be wrapped in metal leaves. If they were born in the human realm, they would live in some underprivileged place with grimy clothes; if they were born among animals, they fall and become unclean with malodorous fur or feathers.

Furthermore, both the vehicles of Mahayana and Theravada consider this a pure Dharma. If our faith were deep, why would we be afraid to practice? Therefore *Dhyana Master Jing Xi in the Records of Aiding Conduct* says:

Someone states, ‘Nothing belongs to me. If it were beneficial, then use it. Why? Everything I own, I just do not consider anything I own to be mine. I will use it whenever it is beneficial. So why is it necessary to perform the rite of purity?’

Now I ask you, ‘If your possessions were just like things not in your possession, then why not let everyone in the four seas use them for beneficial purposes? If you agree that your possessions may be used for beneficial purposes, why not give them to the two fields [of compassion and respect] directly? Why do you instead shut your goods deep in the house and lock them in bags and chests? If you truly consider these assets the possessions of *others*, you commit the offense (of stealing) when you use it. If you consider them your belongings, you contradict your claim of purity. So how is it against principle to perform the rite of purity? If you go with your attachments, the next generation will imitate you.’

In short, we know that those who do not perform the rite of purity contradict the Buddha’s intent in a profound manner. They do not belong to either of the two vehicles or the three roots. Is this kind of monastic life not a game and time wasted?

The Eight Types of Wealth are Impure and Increase Greed and Devastate the Path

The Commentaries say:

Eight types of holdings listed in the sutras, *shastras* and *vinaya* are impermissible and obviously mistakes if held in possession. 1. Land, housing, gardens and parks. 2. Vegetation and harvests. 3. Accumulations of grain and fabric. 4. Provisions for sustaining people and servants. 5. Livestock raised or roped. 6. Money and valuables. 7. Blankets and bedding, pots and pans. 8. Beds ornamented with elephant tusks or gold and all other heavy objects of value. The *vinaya* and the sutras declare that monks who store these items are not disciples of the Buddha.

The Five Divisions Vinaya says, “You must not believe in these laws of mine [because you keep these items]. These eight types of holdings increase greed and devastate the path of practice and defile Brahma conduct. They are impure because they are tainted fruits, in that there is something yet to be attained.”

According to the *vinaya*, the ban on storing goods is often lifted for the sake of those monks with petty roots and narrow scope of mind. Furthermore, *the Nirvana Sutra* says, “To protect and support the establishment of the proper Dharma, I allow my disciples to accept and store gold, silver, carriages, vehicles, land, housing, grain, rice and other needs for business during difficult times, when food is scarce and offerings that meet the

needs of Buddhist disciples are rare. Although they are allowed to accept and store them, those items must come from devout and faithful donors who are giving out of purity.” *The Records* explain, “The first part [of this quote] shows Mahayana students have deep roots while the latter part shows Theravadan students have shallow roots and learn slowly.”

The *vinaya* is about phenomena. Transgressions in terms of phenomena are light. Conversely, the sutras are about noumena. Transgressions in terms of noumena are serious. Monks with petty roots and narrow scope of mind cannot bear the strictness of the Mahayana, so this precept is excepted. In contrast, Mahayana practitioners can uphold this, so this is considered a severe restriction.

People allege that the Theravadans have to keep the precepts while the Mahayanans offer some expediences -- how wrong they are!

An Exhortation for Monks to Develop their Broad-Mindedness so Offerings will be Plentiful

The Essay on Sangha Net says, “Sincere monastics are afraid of the tremendous suffering of the four types of resentment. They are weary of impermanence in the Triple Realm. They part with their dearly beloved relatives of the six kinds. They give up their profound attachment to the five desires because the mundane life’s falsehood and illusions really can be discarded. They ought to come back to the true Way. Thus it is best to be open and eliminate any baseness, protect and uphold the Proper Dharma without being stingy physically or financially.” Especially since Sangha members consume offerings that come from laity throughout the ten directions, so it is natural that they should enjoy sharing with other Sangha members.

Unfortunately, people are jealous, narrow-minded, and discriminating. Some monks might close the door to keep out guest monks, is that not stupid? How can this accord with the original intent of ringing the bell for meals? Monastics should especially avoid that kind of behavior because they are supposed to give up their attachments. They with their fragile bodies cannot firmly protect the Proper Dharma; they with their illusive lives are unwilling to share donated food with guest monks who came afar. They contradict the teachings of the Buddha, undermine the blessings of donors, hurt the feelings of those around them, and block the path of monks throughout the ten directions. By misleading later generations of monks in this way, the damage done is long term. Would it not be nice too if they were to correct their deluded behavior and return to the Way? (Being stingy with food and hoarding everything for themselves are part of the karma of hungry ghost. These are extremely deluded behaviors.)

Perhaps some may ask the question: The business of the Sangha is limited while there are countless guests monks from the outside. Given a limited amount of food, it is impossible to offer some to countless number of monks.

Answer: That kind of petty speculation belongs to that of vulgar and narrow-minded individuals; how can that be part of pure and wise persons' store of profound knowledge? Offerings come from four groups of people.^{xliii} The field of blessings for the Triple Jewel is like growth in the universe and functions of mountains and seas, how could there be an end? Therefore the sutras in the Buddhist treasury say, 'The reason that we should focus on our path and our practice according to the Dharma instead of food and clothing is the following: If a tiny piece of white hair from the spot between the Thus Come One's eyebrows were offered to all monastic disciples, it will never become depleted.' With this, we diligently cultivate the practice of precepts and act as sincere Dharma Protectors. We will have our supply from the Way. We may even reference some mundane teachings that say worry about the Way and not about poverty; not to mention the fact that monastics are lofty and supposed to transcend the mundane. Worrying about food instead of worrying about protecting the Dharma is a grave mistake indeed.

A Discussion on Burning the Body and Fingers and How They Differ in the Mahayana and the Theravadan Traditions

The Maintenance of Resources says, "Tripitaka Master Yi Jing's *Records of Letters from the Journey* widely reprimanded people for immolating their bodies and fingers." He believes that such are the conducts of Bodhisattvas and are inappropriate for *bhikshus*. Texts since ancient times warn us not to burn our fingers and body while qualifying that the speaker knows little, so just take this for your consideration. This is because they do not know that people's depths vary, and the teachings of the Buddha can be categorized into two: Teachings to transform and teachings about prohibitions.^{xliv} The *vinaya* clarifies that suicide is an expedient to *Sthulatayayas*;^{xlv} but by violating the precepts and burning one's fingers and body, one reaps good effects. The *Brahma Net Sutra* regulated that if one does not burn one's body, arm or finger, one is not a monastic Bodhisattva and one commits a minor offense. This is so for individuals with petty potential and anxious about their own practice, wishing to end their retribution and transcend during this lifetime. Great Bodhisattvas, on the other hand, focus on benefiting others, vastly helping beings throughout eons as many as dust motes. This is why the Theravadan *vinaya* considers these actions grave offenses while the Mahayana teachings praise the profundity of merit in these actions.

Since the Mahayana and Theravadan teachings are all words of the Buddha, how can they contradict each other? One negates such actions while another praises them? The sutras make it clear that left-home Bodhisattvas may burn body and fingers. Where does it say that *bhikshus* are forbidden to immolate their body etc.? *The Records* list immolating one's body as an ascetic practice, but why should such acts be reserved to inspire laymen alone (these examples in the sutras are meant to inspire common men [in making offerings].)?

Master Jing Xi says it is easy to not burn according to the Theravadan tradition while it is difficult to burn according to the Mahayana tradition.^{xlvi} All sentient creatures are interested in preserving their lives and eager to live. Now I offer an analysis and illustrate the principle with three examples. First, if one is a lay person, he is not limited by all

those rules discussed above. If he has not received any precepts, but he is offering a foot or a finger, then according to this sutra, it is more supreme than offering an entire country or a city. If he received the great precepts directly according to *the Brahma Net Sutra*, to burn a finger or a foot is even better. Two, if one only received the Theravadan precepts and is limited to being a *bhikshu*, not burning fingers etc. accords with the precepts. Burning is an offense according to some specific precepts. Third, if one received the Complete Precepts, then one is a monastic Bodhisattva. Then burning adheres to the precepts while not burning is a violation. If one received the Theravadan precepts first then the Mahayana precepts, or the Mahayana precepts first then the Theravadan precepts, burning one's fingers or body will be judged by the Mahayana precepts, which is not a violation. According to the above analysis, the degree and extent of these acts must be clarified. How can they be considered the same and all be reprimanded as wrong?

That being said, there are bold and violent men who burn their bodies out of arrogance and deception, soliciting offerings and seeking worldly fame. They intentionally do damage to this Dharma practice. They are great thieves within Buddhism. Ruining their own bodies, they are truly traitors of Confucianism. Such burning is an evil cause that will never result in good effect. Nowadays, this kind of burning is very popular among the deaf lay community. With that in mind, should there not be something worthwhile about Master Yi Jing's warning?

The Vinaya Regulates Miscellaneous Studies to Prevent Disturbance to Proper Livelihood

The text to *the Commentaries* quotes *the Five Divisions Vinaya*, "If one wants to learn how to manage monks and host assemblies (as a manager who directs the monks and to organize assemblies for Dharma food etc.), one should not forsake practice over studying. Fortune-telling and inquiries into fortunes and misfortunes are impermissible." *The Four Divisions Vinaya* permits the studying and reciting of texts and the studying of secular shastras to tame heretics. *The Miscellaneous Dharmas* permits new *bhikshus* to learn arithmetic.

The Ten Recitations say, "The prospects are frightening for those interested in composing essays and poems and embellishing passages and sentences; so avoid it. In *the Mother Shastra on the Vinaya*, the Buddha said, "For each line or verse that I teach you, apply it as you should into the future. Do not apply it if you should not. The same goes to what other *bhikshus* of later generations say." *The Records* say, "Calligraphy, arithmetics, fortunetelling, secular texts and poems are all worldly dharmas; therefore improper actions for monastics. Under special circumstances, they may be permissible sometimes."

Now that Shakya disciples have lost their repute and substance, they may write and be considered calligraphy experts. Those who know secular texts call themselves authors. Those who know how to select an auspicious location call themselves geomancists. Those who know the art of prophesy call themselves fortunetellers in three respects^{xlvii}. Do these individuals realize what they are doing is following secular trends, even though

they may have intended to become monks and serve the Buddhas? Do they realize that they are collecting karma for cyclic birth and death, even though they may initially have been weary of the mundane and wished to transcend? Therefore *the Wisdom Shastra* says, “Studying non-Buddhist texts is like using a knife to cut through mud, not only does one accomplish nothing but the knife is ruined in the process. It is also like staring at sunlight until one’s vision deteriorates.”

Preeminent Sangha members of the past often studied different non-Buddhist subjects, became experts in calligraphy, became good at writing, acquired fame in the medical field, or were known for their knowledge of *yin* and *yang*. They only touched non-Buddhist subjects after they studied Buddhism to the ultimate level. Their intentions are to protect and uphold Buddhism and aid the Buddhas in transforming beings. Therefore *the Good Precepts* say, “It is not a violation if one writes essays to dispute peculiar views or if one studies two parts sutras and one part non-Buddhist texts, according to the Four Divisions *Vinaya*.” These are exceptions in recitation. Nowadays, monks may just fish for fame and invite gain, clinging onto the powerful and showing off their capabilities. It is as if their robes have been dipped in the toilet and their minds are tainted with the mundane. Their entire lifetimes are spent in vain. This is sad indeed.

Untrue in Understanding and Practice They Slight the Precepts Instead

The Maintenance of Resources quotes *the Ten Recitations* saying, “The *vinaya* stipulates that *bhikshus* should specialize in the *vinaya* for the first five years of their monastic life. If they successfully uphold and avoid violations in doing the work of *bhikshus*, then they may study the sutras and shastras. Now monks skip stages of learning. Since there is no order to their learning, it is impossible for them to enter the Way. It is not without reason that the Great Sage reprimanded this.” Furthermore, the *vinaya* says, “Seeing that the *bhikshus* were not studying the *vinaya*, the Buddha praised the *vinaya* and praised Upali before all the monks. Later the senior^{xlviii} *bhikshus* learned the *vinaya* from Upali.”

Now that you have just come in contact with the precepts, though you already started to listen to the teachings and to meditate, you do not know a thing about the conduct and comportment of Sangha members. Not to mention slighting the precepts and slandering the *vinaya*, putting down the studying of the *vinaya* as that which belongs to the Small Vehicle. Ignoring the observance of the precepts means being attached to marks. **This is why some monks become confused and lost in secular affairs, imprudent and wild. Indulging in alcohol and meat, they claim that they understand everything; engaging in sex and anger, they say they know the Way.** Without a comprehensive investigation of the holy principles, they misunderstand the true vehicle. If the precepts can be slighted, why did you step onto the platform to receive them? If the *vinaya* can be destroyed, why did you shave your hair and color your robes? By slighting the precepts you are just slighting yourself. Destroying the *vinaya* is just self-destruction. False emotions are easy to learn, but the ultimate Way is difficult to encounter. There is fewer than one-in-a-million chance to stand out in the crowd. Please make an inquiry into the holy instructions, how can you not observe them?

The Intent of Respecting the Triple Jewel

The Comportment of Respect says, “Since we have been soaking in secular affairs for a long time, there is no way for us to understand the true meaning of paying respects to the Triple Jewel.” Things must be based on respect and conducted with comportment. Uncover the Dharma that is first and foremost, grounded in faith. On the phenomenal level, establish respect and rituals to open the door that allows in faith and rely on images of sages to anchor our respect, so that we succeed in transforming living beings. Bring forth ultimate sincerity to the extent we are willing to smash our internal organs onto the ground and wreck our body and skeleton. We know that the Triple Jewel is the most venerable in the universe, so respect it more than our parents. We know that the meaning of the teachings is far-reaching and vast, so the Way transcends the typically confused doctrines (all mundane knowledge, which the ancient Chinese and others classified into seven categories or four divisions).

Furthermore, the shastras of the Small Vehicle say, “Respect originates with shame.” Since my virtues are thin while the Triple Jewel is respectable and lofty, let me practice respect. Nowadays, however, we are shameless, which is profoundly ridiculous.

The Mahayana Shastra says, “Due to faith and wisdom, we pay respect to the Triple Jewel. It is not deviant to have faith; wisdom actually brings forth respect.” A quote from *the Teachings on Sincerity*, “Faith, wisdom, and shame are the roots of respect.” Another quote from a shastra says, “Refuge is a term for turning back or turning around.” Since in the past we have contradicted the proper and followed the deviant, floating along in the four types of births and the six realms, now that the Buddha is in the world speaking the ultimate and venerated Dharma, we should turn our deviant mind around and follow the proper path. Therefore the Dharma of Return contains five different stages. It begins with contradicting the mundane and concludes with the final stage of entering the Way. The five stages are all paths of refuge with the Triple Jewel and help to master our minds.

The master [i.e. the Triple Jewel] of the mind is ultimate; thus its accomplishments will be great. Therefore *the Ekottaragama Sutra* states, “Those who used to be snakes and dragons are still disrespectful in this life. They are often sleepy, deluded, etc., which serves as proof of the point above.” *The Great Compassion Sutra* says, “The Buddha practiced the Bodhisattva path in the past and saw stupas and images of the Triple Jewel’s shariras. Teachers, monks, parents, elders and friends, externalists, all immortals, *sramanas*, Brahmins keep to the side, yielding and remaining humble and respectful. Due to this retribution and since he became a Buddha, all mountains, forests, people and animals keep to the side to pay respects to the Buddha.” Furthermore, social etiquette asks this of people: do not be disrespectful. Be serious, as if thinking. Do not let arrogance develop; do not indulge in sensual desire; do not set an ambition that is easy to fulfill. That is what it means.

The Merit of Seeking to Return to the Triple Jewel

The Comportment of Respect says, “You should know that the newcomers with initial resolves must rely on teachers and good friends. Rely on the Triple Jewel and always draw near them joyously.” *The Great Wisdom Shastra* says, “If Bodhisattvas have not entered the position of Dharmas, then staying far away from the Buddhas will ruin all roots of goodness. They will drown in afflictions and cannot save themselves. How can they save others that way?” Therefore you should not stay far away from all Buddhas. For instance, babies do not part with their mothers; one is not apart from food when traveling; one is not apart from cool breeze in hot weather; one does not wish to part with fire while cold; one does not part with a good boat when crossing a body of water; a sick person does not part ways with a good physician; therefore Bodhisattvas never leave Buddhas. Why? Parents, relatives, friends, kings among people and gods etc. cannot help us cross all those seas of suffering. Only Buddhas, the World Honored Ones, can lead us to transcend suffering. Therefore always be mindful and not be apart from all Buddhas.

Also, like *the Sutra of Good Birth* says, “If someone receives the Three Refuges, he attains boundless rewards that are equivalent to four great jeweled treasuries that the populace of an entire country cannot transport in seven years. Having received the Three Refuges, their blessing surpasses that quantity many times over and is incalculable.” Furthermore, *the Sutra of Measuring Merit* says, “The four continents are full of those with the fruition of the Two Vehicles. Someone may make offerings throughout their entire lives, including erecting stupas and yet that is no better than men and women who say, ‘I, so and so, take refuge with the Buddhas, the Dharma, and the Sangha.’ The merit acquired in taking refuge is inconceivable and the blessing from taking refuge with the Triple Jewel is supreme among all blessings.”

Listing the Terms and Attributes of the Triple Jewel

The Comportment of Refuge and Respect says, “The Triple Jewel is the most venerated among all that is worthy of respect.” So I write this essay to clarify its attributes. *The Practitioner* says, “Take refuge with the eternally dwelling Dharma Body.” The Thus Come Ones have realized the Ten Powers, the Four Fearlessnesses, the Five Eyes, the Six Penetrations, the 18 Unique Dharmas, great kindness and great compassion, the Three Mindfulnesses etc. The Buddha has the wisdom of all modes. He is the unsurpassed one, the one who tames and subdues heroes. His merit and wisdom are subtle, wondrous and pure, as vast as the Dharma Realm, and as ultimate as empty space.

Buddhas comfort the world and universally cover everything, without blockage, without obstruction and without differentiation. They cannot be known with wisdom or be recognized with consciousness, and yet they can manifest the 32 hallmarks and the 80 fine characteristics. They always raise their right hand to peacefully deliver living beings to the shore of perfection, emitting great light to eliminate the darkness of ignorance. They are adorned with hundreds of blessings and their myriad virtues are perfect. They pour down sweet dew rain and turn the wheel of the Proper Dharma, saving and benefiting living beings to transcend the sea of birth and death. Therefore Buddhas are entitled the Venerated Ones among the multitude of sages; they are the Unsurpassed Dharma Kings.

The Twelve Divisions of Sutras are: 1. prose; 2. reiterative verses; 3. bestowal of predictions; 4. causes and conditions; 5. analogies; 6. past events; 7. present lives; 8. broadening passages; 9. previously non-existent Dharma; 10. unrequested Dharma; 11. interpolations; 12. discussions. The Twelve Divisions of Sutras contain goodness that is superior, average and inferior. They are replete with pure flavors and meaning. They reveal Brahma conduct that is the foremost. They cross living beings to the other shore of utmost profound and true marks, impartial great wisdom, pure inherent nature, the ceasing of thoughts, and the end to languages. In this state, the proper Dharma is unobstructed. Never contrary to the truth, it is spoken for living beings. Thus, it is an excellent medication; unsurpassed and transcendental, it quells living beings' afflictions since time immemorial.

Pure monastics of the Three Vehicles enjoy three types of wisdom (hearing, contemplating, and practicing). These modes of wisdom form the path to Bodhi. By wearing the shield of great vows, whipping the stallion of vigilance, carrying the bow of patience and releasing the arrows of wisdom, they kill the thieves of afflictions. With a straightforward and profound mind, they determine a proper destiny that is unsurpassed. These monastics will definitely reach the proper path to Buddhahood. Always mindful of the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha, these monastics receive and practice all spoken lessons provided by every Buddha. They always save all beings with the Six *Paramitas* and use the Four Ways to Appeal to gather-in various sentient beings. Be a Venerated One; be a guide; be someone others depend upon and be a savior, safely placing living beings on the Buddhas' Bodhi path. Therefore monastics are called Dharma friends and wholesome fellows. They always benefit the world with expedience. They are fine fields of blessings for true offerings.

The Abiding of the Triple Jewel is Completely Based on the Precept Dharma

The *Maintenance of Resources* says:

Among the four categories of Triple Jewel,^{xlix} the noumenon of Triple Jewel is just one entity in terms of noumenon; the transformational mark of the Triple Jewel occupies the world only when a Buddha is present; the dwelling of the Triple Jewel covers the three periods of time. Due to the power of the precepts, the abiding Triple Jewel carries forth without becoming extinct. Thus, the precepts are like a boat. How is that so? It is because the two Jewels of the Buddha and the Dharma all rely on monastics to propagate while the existence of the Sangha Jewel cannot be established without the precepts.

Just as *the Standards of the School* says, "When we accord with the precepts, the Triple Jewel abides; oppose the precepts and the Proper Dharma will be overturned and terminated." Just as *the Flower Adornment Sutra* says, "Receiving and upholding the Complete Precepts, their comportment and teachings can sustain the Triple Jewel."

Understanding the Principle that the Merit of the Triple Jewel is Lofty and Returning to It is of Great Benefit

The Comportment of Refuge and Respect says, “Since the Triple Jewel always abides in the world and is not slighted by secular dharmas, it is therefore called a jewel.” Just as gems in the world are respected by the world, this Triple Jewel is returned to and depended upon by all beings among the Three Vehicles and the Seven Assemblies; therefore a proper refuge. Without concentrated faith in Buddhism, one would serve deviant spirits. Even though one has taken refuge with the precepts, one cannot acquire the sacred Dharma. Therefore the sutras say, “One who takes refuge with the Buddha is truly one with pure faith.” One should never mistakenly take refuge with other gods or spirits. Why? The nature and marks of the true Triple Jewel constantly abide and therefore are worthy of being dependent upon by creatures. All those gods other than the Buddha suffer afflictions in the body and the mind; gods have outflows and are conditioned by existence; they are powerless and incapable. They do not even have the time to save themselves, how can gods save others? Only the transcendental jewel has the power to support.

One who has taken refuge is like someone backed by the power of the king and cannot be harmed. Now, with the backing of the proper jewel, boundless awesome blessings arrive so that spiritual dragons averted carnage by golden winged [birds]. The faith-goers transcended the problem of *yakshas*. The five aspects of taking refuge¹ are all about taking refuge with this Jewel, or we could just call it the Triple Jewel with the same marks. Its noumenon is connected to the three periods of time and its meaning reaches the ten directions. The eternally dwelling Triple Jewel is the most supreme. The sutras say, “If people hear the two words, ‘eternally dwelling’, they will never fall into the evil destinies in life after life.” Why? After hearing “eternally dwelling,” one knows that the inherent nature of the Dharma and the Buddha is permanent. With this one moment of hearing and understanding permeating one’s fundamental consciousness, karmic seeds are planted and pure faith will not be lost. Not to mention for those who are willing to make vows while taking refuge and take the Triple Jewel for their teachers and models. Those people certainly will enjoy pure and supreme retribution for eons. It will be impossible for them to fall. Just as it is described in the sutras, someone who receives the Three Refuges becomes liberated from the cycle of birth and death in the initial assembly of Maitreya; someone who takes refuge with the Triple Jewel is the bridge out of the sea of suffering and the ladder to step into the Buddhadharmas.

Abiding in and Upholding the Triple Jewel

The meaning of abiding in and upholding the Triple Jewel is as follows: when people can propagate the Way, compassion flows for thousands of years; the Way relies on people to do the propagation. From here, the three kinds of Dharma begin. It is people who established Buddhism for generations upon generations, proclaiming the Dharma everywhere. If there were no Sangha to do the propagation, the Buddhadharmas would drown and be submerged.

China was a powerful and prosperous country when it first heard the name “Buddha,” but because there was no Sangha to propagate it, the start of Buddhism waned. It was not until later when Emperor Xian Zong started to inquire into the Dharma and sent envoys to India that Yapamātanga and Dharmaratna came to China and started to lecture on Buddhist teachings. The monks transformed laypeople so they sought out Buddhism, brought forth their faith to reflect. Actually, it is the power of the monks’ oral teachings and the added strength of their appearance and deportment that made them the Sangha jewel.

There is no way to awaken to noumenon without texts and words. Therefore words and texts are called teachings. The conditions of speaking and listening create what is called the Dharma jewel. The profundity of principles is known to no one other than the Buddha. Although the Buddha has passed away, images of the Buddha stand. This is the Buddha jewel.

Only because living beings in the present have shallow blessings, they cannot encounter the source of transformation; however, they manage to have a small amount of blessings so that they encounter the Dharma left by the Buddha. This abiding Triple Jewel is conditional in terms of entity and has outflows and defilements; therefore not really worthy of respect. However, the noumenal Triple Jewel depends on the abiding Triple Jewel. If anyone respects this, he will certainly transcend it. Just as a king sends different delegates to different parts of the country to patrol, locals are not concerned about the looks of the delegates other than that they represent the king.

The sutras say, “Though the world considers gold and silver superior gems, if there were no silver, then copper also becomes priceless. Therefore, we should respect the lowest form of Triple Jewel as much as the highest form of Triple Jewel.” If we do not respect the abiding Triple Jewel now, we may not have the means to pay respect to any form of Triple Jewel later. Where shall we focus our mind? Upon what do we rely when we go through birth and death? We should respect it with our bodies and minds, and be mindful of true noumenon. The ultimate meaning of the Buddha’s guidance and transformative teachings is just here.

The sutras say, “By making images as many as stalks of wheat, we will accrue boundless blessings because [images] are containers for the Dharma body.” The shastras say, “Metal, wood, soil and stones are inanimate material used to make Buddha images, people who respect or slander them will accrue offenses or blessings for themselves. They all represent the Dharma body and their merit and uses are boundless. Buddha images can make sentient beings cry and sob with their spiritual comportment and they cannot help but respect them.”

Only because the real form has gone, we see only traces of the legacy. Just as when we are in an imperial temple, we naturally become solemn and serious. This is a sight that makes us feel as if the deceased emperor is still here without any doubt. It is the same with the Buddha. The compassionate Venerable One has passed away for a long time

now and only his images are left to guide us in destroying our arrogance. We should bow and touch his feet. We should show our respect as if facing the living Buddha and listening to his teachings. The reason that some do not hear or see the Buddha is because they do not have faith. How do we know? It is because we can create the three realms with our mind. How could such a small hall remain immobile and devoid of consciousness? *The Great Shastra* says, “All Buddhas constantly release light to speak the Dharma. But because of offenses, living beings cannot see the Buddhas emit light and speak the Dharma right before them.” This is why Buddha images are needed. Other images are made for the same reason. Trees, rocks, mountains and forests were labeled and used for images to guide us along the path of the mind so that we do not transgress sagely regulations.

The Triple Jewel of Transformational Marks

The Triple Jewel of Transformational Marks refers to the following: Shakyamuni the Thus Come One, is the Buddha jewel. The truths of extinction that he spoke of are the Dharma jewel. Those ancient wise men who had already ended suffering are the Sangha jewel. These three are the Triple Jewel of Transformational Marks, or distinctive attributes. Its substance is impermanent, and flows with the four marks. It has been extinct for more than 1,000 years. We now can only commemorate it to increase our respect. Since the three Buddhas in the Worthy Eon are already gone, if Shakyamuni Buddha, the fourth Buddha, were not to appear, upon whom would all beings rely? They would drown for a long time in the seas of suffering and could not find a road to liberation.

Shakyamuni Buddha appeared in the world according to karma. He cultivated for three eons until his myriad conducts were perfect. His flaws were eliminated so that his nature of Dharma became pure. The pieces are replete with goodness and his retribution body and transformation body are subtle and wonderful. Then he was reborn in the Tushita Heaven and then descended upon the royal palace. At the age of 30, he resided under the tree of the Way and became a Buddha. For 49 years he abided in the world to teach and transform, speaking the Dharma 350 times, and proclaiming the 84,000 practices. The kings and ministers protected the four seas and the nine continents externally. The monks who studied under the master delivered the Dharma around the world and in the heavens. The benefit to circulating the Dharma is unimaginably vast. Hence a verse says:

*Place the Buddha on the crown of one's head for eons as numerous as dust motes,
And use one's own body as a bed or a seat in the Trichiliocosm,
But if one does not transmit the Dharma to save living beings,
One is ultimately incapable of repaying the kindness of the Buddha.*

Five Ways to Transmit the Dharma

1. To receive and apply it.
2. To see and read it.
3. To recite and chant it.

4. To explain and speak about it.
5. To copy and write it.

Inner protectors and outer protectors^{li} should circulate the Dharma so that the Jewels of the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha will not end.

Emperor Ren Zong's Praise of the Triple Jewel

Praising the Buddha

*Above and below heaven, the golden immortal the World Honored One
With one mind, ten titles, four wisdoms and three bodies
Save the five skandhas and transcend the six sense objects
Sentient beings return out of respect;
hence he is called One Capable of Being Humane.*

Praising the Dharma

*The myriad dharmas are made from the mind alone but the mind must be still.
From your one mind, the myriad conducts are produced.
Going against enlightenment is false and awakening to the true is holy.
Bowing down to Dharma practices and the Buddha nature is clear and evident.*

Praising the Sangha

*Tireless in using the Six Paramitas and
the Four Kindnesses^{liii} is an extraordinary feat;
Always be eyes for others and bridges that aid Buddhas.
Nourish the body with a single rain while the mind is soaked in myriad scents.
The Tao is everywhere throughout this and other lands.*

Dhyana Master Da Hui's Dedication after Reading the Sutras

Due to my karma and demonic obstructions, my thoughts are not clear. My senses are dull and my thoughts occur spontaneously so that they are [unrestrained], mixed up, inverted or doubled over. This writing is impromptu, so there are many errors in these words. My essay deviates from the use of proper rhyme in voiced and unvoiced sounds. **I am probably too headstrong with my intellectual understanding of Buddhism and deviant views thereof.**

I might not focus on the sutra because of other distractions. I might respond to greetings while reciting so that the recitation becomes choppy and broken. I might become lazy after reciting a long time. I might get angry over some matters. Even though I want to be adorned and clean, I might touch grime and dust. Even though I want to be serious and respectful, I might become condescending and conceited. What I eat and use might not be pure; my attire, hat and manner might not be respectful.

My offering might not accord with the rites. The sutras might be crinkled or crunched up, fallen, defiled or ruined. For all those acts of insincerity and lack of focus, I feel great shame and great fear. I respectfully wish that all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, all sages throughout the Dharma Realm and space, the Dharma Protectors, the good spirits, gods, dragons etc. be compassionate, take pity, repent and wash away my offenses. May the merit of this sutra recitation be perfect, fulfilling the wishes in my dedication. I still worry that translators and editors might make mistakes in their commentaries, which readers might not understand the lessons herein or make mistakes in their pronunciation, that errors still exist after proofreading or blunders occur in copying and publishing. I want to repent on behalf of those masters and other individuals. Relying on the power of the Buddha, may their offenses be removed. May the Dharma wheel always turn and enlighten and help all beings.

The Words of Monk Shu of Lan An

The Buddha warned Rahula in praise:

*All beings throughout the ten directions,
In thought after thought, certify to the fruition of the Well Gone One.
They are men and so am I.
How can I slight myself and retreat?
The six types of ordinary beings and the four sages are but of the same nature.
Since they are this way, aren't I the same?
Cultivate internally and externally so you reach Buddhahood in this life.
Whose fault is it if you spend the day in leisure?
The virtuous ones of ancient times said, 'If this body is not saved in this life,
In which life will you try to save this body?'*

Great Master Zhi Zhe of the Tian Tai School said, “Why not end words and put aside language?” Shatter one minute mote of dust and transcend the sutras of the Great Thousand Worlds. One dust mote is just a false thought of beings. The sutras of the Great Thousand Worlds are just the Buddha nature of beings. The Buddha nature of living beings is covered by false thoughts. If false thoughts were shattered, then the Buddha nature manifests. Master Zhi Zhe proclaimed those words for people attached to language and words. This is what is meant by shaving the marrow with a metal blade. Someday when your spiritual eye is opened, you will know that you benefited from those words of Master Zhi Zhe.

The Shurangama Sutra says, “How can those thieves rely on wearing Buddhist attire to sell off the Thus Come One and create various kinds of karma?” If we do not gather-in the mind with precepts, even if our understanding were at the level of Buddhas and patriarchs, we still could not avoid selling off the Thus Come Ones and create various forms of karma. Not to mention average people. There is good reason that National Master Qing Liang restrained himself with ten vows. Caution is behind the intent of the precepts. Furthermore, a vegetarian diet is about cleansing the mind. Precepts are about preventing wrongdoing.

Four-Line Verses

Four line verses in the sutras. The mark of self, the mark of others, the mark of living beings, and the mark of lifespan. If there are the marks of self, others, living beings and lifespan, then one cannot receive and uphold these four-line verses. If there are not the marks of self, others, living beings and lifespan, then one can receive and uphold these four-line verses. From this ordinary person's view, everyone may receive and uphold them; but one in a million knows them. Why? One does not realize these marks because one's past defilements cover the sutra.

Instructing *Bhikshus* on Reflecting on their Virtuous Conduct as they Accept Offerings

“To reflect on whether one's virtuous conduct is sufficient” means that one may accept offerings of meals if one has sufficient virtuous conduct. One does not deserve offerings otherwise. Nowadays, no matter what age the *bhikshus* are, 30's, 40's, 50's or 60's, they never miss a day's meal offering. Do they have sufficient virtuous conduct? Thus it is said, “A Buddhist student who does not understand the principles will only have to repay faithful donors with their bodies.” For example, mushrooms stop growing after an elder reaches 81. When he gets old, mushrooms in the garden will disappear^{liii}. There is specific text on the teaching, so we must believe. If one reflects for just a moment, one can digest ten thousand ounces of gold daily.

Instructing *Bhikshus* on Being Careful and Not Being Lax

The *Ekottaragama Sutra* says, “The eyes take objects for food; the ears take sounds for food; the nose takes scent for food; the tongue takes taste for food; the body takes tactile sensation as food; the mind takes Dharma for food; and nirvana takes the absence of laxness for food.” For instance, on the 3rd, 13th, 23rd, 8th, 18th and 28th when the bell is struck to gather the assembly for recitation^{liv}, the cantor will say, “You should all cultivate vigilantly as if to save your heads. Be mindful of impermanence and be careful not to be lax.” These words are quite similar to those in the *Ekottaragama Sutra*. Listeners too often consider these words usual; but do not treat them like wind brushing through the woods. Otherwise the intent of the Buddhas and patriarchs just becomes empty form.

Bodhisattvas are Not Weary of Three Things

The *Great Wisdom Shastra* says, “Bodhisattvas are not weary of three things. One, never weary of making offerings to Buddhas; two, never weary of listening to the Dharma; three, never weary of making offerings to the Sangha.” Students nowadays have not yet reached the level of Bodhisattvas so some even slander the law of cause and effect while some never study the subtle words of ancient sages. Little do they know that phenomenon is just noumenon, noumenon is just phenomenon. Phenomenon and noumenon are perfectly one, and the Dharma is just thus. Therefore, Master Yong Ming says, “Do they

wish to be like leeches that think the ocean is too small or bees that want to block the light from the sun?”

Precepts, *Samadhi* and Wisdom

The three studies of precepts, *samadhi* and wisdom are within living beings' inherent nature. They are not acquired through cultivation and certification. Not only do the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas have them, all ordinary people have them too. Our inherent nature is neither good nor evil, neither observing nor violating the precepts, which make up the precepts of the inherent nature. Our inherent nature is neither still nor in motion, neither grasping nor forsaking, which make up the *samadhi* of the inherent nature. Our inherent nature is without knowing and yet there is nothing unknown, which is the wisdom of the inherent nature. The Buddhas and Bodhisattvas know of such and enjoy using them. All ordinary people are ignorant of such and do not enjoy using them. Though it seems like a minor difference between knowing and not knowing, precepts, *samadhi* and wisdom are exactly the same.

Warning on the Four *Dana* Offerings Come from Difficult Conditions

Vinaya Master Dao Xuan of Nan Shan Wrote for the Sake of Disciple Ci Reng

To harm life creates karma of suffering. Suffering consists of emaciation of bones and muscles. The sutras say, “Food comes from plowing, planting, weeding, harvesting, threshing, storing, shipping, grinding, setting up fire, steaming and boiling. Then it is offered and handed to us. In addition, planting vegetables, building walls, irrigating the fields are carried out to make offerings. Were we to calculate the effort in a bowl of food, it is a bowl of sweat. Sweat inside of skin and flesh is just blood. A bowl of effort is just a bowl of the worker's blood. Not to mention how much food we eat in our entire life. From plowing and planting to our mouths, numerous and various insects were killed. Thus the Buddha established the precept of eating one meal a day to sustain life and pass through this lifetime.

Clothes come from raising silkworms, killing cocoons, weaving, dying, washing, and sewing. Coordinating all those conditions involves numerous hard work. Do some calculation for the upper and lower garments: how many silkworms were killed, how much effort, how much pain those silkworm cocoons experienced in hot water. Thus the Buddha established the precept of wearing ragged robes to cover up our bodies and enable us to cultivate the Way.

Houses come from erecting walls and digging the earth, killing insects in the earth; cutting wood, which hurts insects in trees; making bricks and tiles, which kills the insects in water; setting up fire for pottery, which kills insects in grass and firewood. The workers use their strength and donors use their money. Many conditions for food and drinks must be consumed to build just one house. Thus cultivators stay in graveyards, under trees, and on grass mats. Considering that food comes from suffering, eat in a restrained manner. Considering that clothes are from killing, wear ragged robes. Considering houses and beddings are from conditions of suffering, thus happily take on

dhuta practice and move every three months. Considering those four offerings are difficult to digest, there is less desire and more contentment.

One sutra says, “Receive the donors’ food as if eating the flesh of one’s own child during famine; receive donors’ clothes as if wearing hot iron on one’s body; enter a house as if entering an iron boiler; and receive bedding and seats as if they are hot iron beds.” One would rather break this body into numerous dust motes than to receive any offering with one’s body that broke the precepts. The retribution of the three evil paths is all because of greed and love toward clothes, food, and nice houses. If one broke the precepts, one would repay the donor according to causes and conditions. One might become servants who are whipped or ordered around or become an animal with hair and horn, repaying with strength while alive and skin and flesh after death, carrying heavy loads and exhausting, standing up yet falling down again. The pleasure of vainly receiving offerings is nothing, yet the suffering of repaying donors is ten thousand times more. Thus, I teach you to know shame and regret, carefully guard your next lifetime; do not receive offerings without holding the precepts. That is called a pure mind.

A Warning to People in the Dharma Ending Age on the Contemplative Dharma of Gauging Intentions

Ordinary people understand meaning by listening and studying. Since people who know the Dharma still commit the four grave crimes, accumulate eight impure assets, and eat mundane foods. They are without shame and regret, committing those offenses while knowing they are wrong. They are not afraid of retribution in later lives. Thus, I ask you to gauge your intentions. You should first purify your adherence to the precepts, and then you may listen to the sutras. If you can uphold the Five Precepts, you are someone with a pure mind. The ancient virtue ones lectured the *Flower Adornment Sutra* with just one roll of commentary. Later, Dharma Masters composed three rolls of commentary. Nowadays, lecturers write ten rolls of commentary for just the Ten Grounds chapter of the Sutra. They show off their abilities and compete to compose the most colorful poems. There is a large amount of text, but there is nowhere that the mind may rely. Conversely, sutra texts are about meaning, why are all those words needed? Nowadays, fools strive for fame instead of the Dharma.

Actually, we should not be attached to the Dharma, not to mention words. The Dharma is beyond words because speech and language should be cut off. Therefore, the *Great Collection Sutra* says, “There is one sutra text but lecturers offer different explanations. They all cling to their own views, thus causing the proper Dharma to deteriorate and grow in disarray. Gods and spirits get mad while three types of disasters arise. For these reasons, the Buddhadharma became thin, like a liter of milk diluted with 100 liters of water. Even though it maintains the color of milk, it is tasteless.” Those people think, discuss, or speculate about the Buddha with their emotions. How can people conjecture the state of the Buddha’s wisdom? One who contemplates in this way is someone with a pure mind.

A Warning on Observing how *Bhikshus* and *Bhikshunis* who Break the Precepts Do Not Practice Transcendental Dharmas

Bhikshus and *bhikshunis* who break the precepts do the following: accumulate slaves, servants, ox or donkey carts, land, plants, gardens, flowers, fruits, gold, silver, screens, felt blankets, nice pillows, fine beddings, chests, boxes, basins, urns, copper containers, plates, bowls, three fine robes, ivory beds, seats, houses, rooms, kitchens, warehouses, pestles, grind, medicinal alcohol, fish, dishes, and exotic foods. They often befriend ministers, nobility, and important figures. They exploit opportunities with the rich and the elite, frequenting their relatives and old friends, sending them salary, paying visits at funerals, and filing lawsuits at court. They are the head of multitudes and their disciples are many. They chat and argue with each other. They are fond of music. They stay in one temple on a permanent basis and criticize the affairs of the Sangha, punishing each other. They ask about current events such as draught, flood, cornucopia, dearth of resources, robberies, thefts, water, fire, venomous animals etc. They go by liquor stores, markets, butcheries, and hunters' homes. They stay with relatives, friends and maids, play musical instruments, write poems, play Go and chess, read non-Buddhist books, talk and laugh loudly, hate and compete, drink alcohol, eat meat, wear silk cloths in five bright colors, shave their hair and beard very often, and keep their nails as sharp as knife's edge. They hoard the eight types of impure assets and are greedy for them. They amass them and cannot bear to discard them. That is to truly break the precepts.

One sutra says, "Those types of *bhikshus* are called 'bald laymen', 'thieves with sashes', 'bald hunters', 'people in the three evil paths', 'shameless individuals', '*icchantikas*', 'slanderers of the Triple Jewel', 'people who harm the eyes of all *danapati*', 'seeds of life and death', or 'obstructions to the sagely Way.'" If one can be far apart from these ten actions of ill repute, one is someone with a pure mind.

A Warning on Observing the Six Difficulties and Our Fortune in Being Able to Practice Buddhism

First, it is difficult to acquire the human body among all, just as the *Trapsabhallika Sutra* says, "That is more difficult than a blind turtle that surfaces once every 100 years to rear its head through a wooden ring while the log is floating on the ocean." Second, although we acquired human form, it is difficult to be born in a major country instead of the outskirts of a country. A major country is replete with the Proper Dharma according to the Mahayana sutras and the *vinaya*. Three, although the Proper Dharma exists around us, it is difficult to believe in them. May we have faith equal to the degree of our strength, so we dare not doubt or slander the Dharma. Fourth, it is difficult to be a male with no disabilities and normal looking. Five, though we may be able-bodied males, the five desires entangle and taint us so that it is extremely difficult to leave the householders' life. Now we have severed our relationships, left the householders' life to cultivate the Buddhist path. We wear the robes of Buddhas and have received the pure precepts of the Buddhas. Six, though we have received the precepts, it is extremely difficult to adhere to the precepts. You can respect and enjoy the *vinaya*, so be ashamed and be cautious in protecting them. If you do not observe these six items, you will become lax and profound

obstructions will block your sagely path. Having transcended the Six Difficulties, we should always be glad. Since we have acquired what is difficult to acquire, we should be careful not to lose what we have acquired. Thinking in this way is to purify the mind.

Shastra Master Jie Xian's Prayer to Guan Yin

*Listening to the inherent nature and upholding emptiness
is wonderful beyond compare.
Cultivating contemplation, one suddenly enters samadhi.
With the power of kindness for those with whom he has no affinities,
He reaches for multitudes,
just as reflections of the bright moon appear in a thousand waters.*

Bhikshu I, so and so, now bow in respect. Greatly compassionate father Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva, I humbly wish that you will see me and hear me without any obstruction via your power of reading others' minds, and with your spiritual eye. Be sympathetic and bless and aid me.

First, may I, so and so, end the knots of outflow soon and quickly realize nonproduction so that the three karmas are perfect and bright and the six senses pure.

Second, may I, so and so, hear one thing and awaken to thousands of things, attaining great *dharani*, being replete with the Four Types of Eloquence. Any holy teachings that touch the mind and are heard are never forgotten. Merit and wisdom adorn me. The senses and objects pervade the Dharma Realm.

Three, may I, so and so, seek Buddhahood above and save beings below, quickly perfect Brahma conduct, empty the three marks^{lv}, and straightly advance to Buddhahood. Until then, in leaving behind and receiving bodies, always be a man and be a monk around a Buddha, making the resolve for Bodhi, benefiting self and others so that my conduct and vows are boundless.

May I, at the time of death, be free of all obstructions and see the Buddha Amitabha, and become reborn in the land of bliss.

Becoming reborn in that land and having all great vows come true, may I practice the Bodhisattva ways and realize Buddhahood along with all beings.

An Essay on Vows

By *Dhyana* Master Zhen Jue of Yong Jia

I bow down to the perfect and pervasive awareness, the still and impartial, fundamental and true source. The Buddha's fine features are adorned and special; the Buddha is neither existent nor absent. The Buddha's light of wisdom universally shines upon lands as many as dust motes.

I bow to the profound 12 divisions of sutras spoken by lucid, true, and wonderfully Enlightened One. Sutras are not literature, not words, and not oral interpretations. The sutras are of one voice, and yet every kind of being understands it.

I bow down to all the pure worthy individuals and sages. Harmonious Sangha members throughout the ten directions who accord with the true and adhere to prohibitive precepts without breach. They strike their staff and bring their bowls to benefit sentient beings: those born from eggs, wombs, moisture and transformation, those with form and without form, with thought and without thought, neither thought nor the absence of thought and others. They go about the wheel of rebirth among the six realms without pause.

I now bow and take refuge with the Triple Jewel and bring forth my resolve for the Way for living beings universally, for the multitude of beings sinking and drowning in the sea of suffering. By the power of the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha, may living beings be freed from suffering with compassion and expedient means. May I not abandon my vast vow of saving sentient beings. May my transformative powers be wielded with ease so that I deliver beings as many as sands of Ganges River to Proper Enlightenment.

After saying this verse, I further bow and rely upon all Buddhas, the Dharma and the Sangha throughout the ten directions and the three periods of time. By relying on the power of the Triple Jewel, I am determined and make the vow to cultivate unsurpassed Bodhi, agreed upon from this life until I realize Proper Enlightenment. Until then, may I decisively and diligently pursue it without retreat. May I not experience accidents and sicknesses before I attain the Way and not die young. When my life ends, may I not see any evil, be free of any fear, develop no inversion, and be free of any physical pain. May my mind not be scattered but be bright with proper wisdom. May I not experience the mid-skandha body and not enter the hells. May I not become an animal, hungry ghost, or a water, land, air, or earth creature, a celestial demon or heretic, ghost, spirit or some being in the underworld.

May I always acquire an intelligent and upright human body. May I not become born in an evil country, not encounter an evil king, not become born in the border regions, and not experience poverty or suffering. May I not become a servant, a female, a eunuch, or a bisexual. May I never become born with yellow hair or black teeth, be obstinately foolish, dark and dull, ugly and disabled, blind, deaf, mute, or possess any despicable features. May I become born in a great nation, in a family with proper faith. May I always be a male replete with the six senses. May I be fine looking, fresh-smelling and free of any filth, that my will and thoughts are refined, my body at peace and my mind quiet. May I not be greedy, hateful or deluded, forever ending these three poisons. May I not create the multitude of evils and always consider everything good. May I not become a king or a minister, or an envoy who obeys orders. May I not wish for luxury and décor but can go through my life while at peace with poverty. May I be with few desires and be content, with no more additions to my savings. May I have enough food and clothing to sustain the body. May I not steal, not kill, and not eat fish or meat.

May I respect and cherish sentient beings as if they were no different than myself. May my personality be mild and not look for others' faults or praise my own goodness. May I not contend with others but treat enemies and dear ones impartially, without discrimination. May I not develop hatred or love, neither wishing for the goods of others

nor be stingy with my own money. May I not enjoy attacking others but always remain straightforward. May I not be violent but always enjoy being humble. May I say nothing mean with my mouth and do nothing mean with my body. May I not be obsequious but that my three karmas be pure and that I always remain at peace and stay stably somewhere. May I experience none of the obstructions or difficulties, robberies and thefts, and deadbolts. May I never experience any hardship such as trouble with the law, imprisonment, beatings by cangue or cane, being hooked or locked down, knives, spears, arrows, lances, vicious beasts and venomous insects, falling over cliffs, drowning in water, burning by fire, blown by storms, shocks from thunder, lightning, falling trees or avalanches, collapsing buildings, rotting pillars, frightening interrogations and beatings, being chased or surrounded, captured or bounded, accused, slandered, washed away by torrents.

May evil ghosts of accidents, natural disasters and poisonous plagues, deviant demons and strange monsters as many as seas and oceans, tree spirits that live in large and distant mountains, and any spirit that hears my name or see me in form bring forth the resolve for Bodhi so that they guard me rather than attack or trouble me. May I be at peace day and night, free from any shock or fear, that my four elements are healthy and strong and my six senses are pure. May I not be tainted by the six sense objects and not think randomly. May I be free from drowsiness and stagnation, not hold any nihilistic views, not be attached to emptiness or existence and stay far away from various external marks. May I be faithful and devoted to Shakyamuni and not be attached to my own views. May I awaken to understanding and cultivate in life after life. May my wisdom be proper and solid so that I am not pulled away by demons. When my life ends I am calm and happy. May I be without resentment or enemy in the process of giving up my body in one lifetime and take on another incarnation. May I be a good friend to all beings. May I be born in a place where the Buddha is present and that I get to hear the Dharma. May I leave the homelife as a virgin and be in harmony with other Sangha members. May I always wear my sash. May my food container never be anything other than my alms bowl. May my resolve for the path be solid and that I do not become arrogant. May I respect the Triple Jewel and always cultivate Brahma practices. May I draw near teachers who understand and follow good teachers. May I deeply believe in the proper Dharma and diligently practice the Six *Paramitas*. May I read and recite the Mahayana, practice the Way and bow. May I uphold and make offerings to all that are in the mountains, oceans, forests, springs, space and ground. May I make offerings with wonderful flavors, fragrant flowers, sounds of praises and chants, lamps, candles and platforms, the mountains, oceans, forests, and springs. I will uphold and make offerings with everything between heaven and earth, anything bigger than a dust mote.

With such collected merit, let it aid me toward Bodhi, contemplating meaning and enjoying stillness. May I be simple and quiet, enjoy no noise; may I not enjoy group living but prefer being alone, seeking nothing but concentrate on *samadhi* and wisdom. May I be replete with the six penetrations and transform and save living beings. May my wishes be fulfilled, that I am at ease and free of any obstruction so that I may accomplish myriad practices to their exhaustively wonderful degree of refinement. May I be

straightforward and perfect with understanding so that I am determined to realize Buddhahood.

May these roots of goodness reach all realms throughout the ten directions, touching the apex of zenith and the bottom of the wind wheel. May I share all of my merits with living beings, including all sentient beings and all forms in the heavens, human realm, and the six paths. May I do that for eons as many as motes of dust, without exempting one being.

May my roots of goodness completely fill and permeate those suffering in the hells. Homage to the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. (May they all be relieved of their suffering once they recite the names of the Buddhas, the Dharma and the Sangha.) For those suffering in the realm of animals, homage to the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. (May they all be relieved of their suffering once they recite the names of the Buddhas, the Dharma and the Sangha.) For those suffering in the realm of hungry ghosts, homage to the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. (May they all be relieved of their suffering once they recite the names of the Buddhas, the Dharma and the Sangha.) For gods, asuras, and all sentient beings as many as sand grains in the Ganges who are oppressed by the eight types of suffering, homage to the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. (May they all be relieved of their suffering once they recite the names of the Buddhas, the Dharma and the Sangha.) Homage to the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha, may all be free from entanglements due to the good roots of my vows.

Homage to the Buddhas throughout the three periods of time. Homage to all assemblies of sages as many as dust motes. Homage to the sutras. Homage to the Bodhisattvas, the Sound Hearers, and all assemblies of sages as many as dust motes. May you not abandon your fundamental compassion in gathering-in the multitude of beings so that all sentient beings throughout space take refuge with the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha, that they leave suffering and transcend the three evil realms and quickly transcend the Triple Realm. May each bring forth the resolve for Bodhi and practice *prajna* day and night. May they diligently practice in life after life, as if saving their heads on fire always. Were they to reach Bodhi before me, may they vow to save me. May I practice and bow, recite the sutras and be mindful of the Buddha, and cultivate precepts, *samadhi* and wisdom.

Homage to the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha, may all beings realize Buddhahood. May all sentient beings, including myself, steadily seek Bodhi. May all beings bow to the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha so we soon realize Proper Enlightenment.

**A Dedication on Venerating the *Avatamsaka Sutra*
By *Dhyana* Master Sui of Sui Zhou's Da Hong Mountain**

Homage to the Teaching Host Vairochana, the Kindly Venerated One of the Flower Treasury. You proclaim the golden text and the jeweled verses, unfolding scrolls of sutras kept in book sachets. Objects for the senses lap into land after land, perfectly interpenetrating. The One Vehicle of the Perfect Teaching, the *Great Means Expansive Buddhas Flower Adornment Sutra*, contains 10,095,048 characters. If people wish to

know the Buddhas throughout all time, they should contemplate the nature of the Dharma Realm: everything is made from the mind alone.

May I always make offerings to and pay respects to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas throughout the seven places and the nine assemblies.

May I always certify to and proclaim the Five Explanations of cause and effect^{lvi} and the Four Divisions^{lvii} of the *Flower Adornment Sutra*.

May I always make offerings to the multitudes of Bodhisattvas as many as dust motes in 90 lands without pause.

May I always awaken to and proclaim the *Great Means Expansive Buddhas Flower Adornment Sutra*.

May I, furthermore, in life after and life and in any and every place, always see this Sutra with my eyes,

always hear this Sutra with my ears,

always recite this Sutra with my mouth,

always copy out this Sutra with my hands,

and always gain insight into this Sutra.

May I, in life after and life and in any and every place,

always draw near all sages and worthy individuals of the Flower Treasury.

May I always be blessed, thereby gathered-in by all sages and worthy individuals of the Flower Treasury.

May I certifiably experience all states described in this Sutra.

May I be like Sudhana Bodhisattva, Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva, Maitreya Bodhisattva, Samantabhadra Bodhisattva, Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva, and Vairochana Buddha.

With the merit accrued from praising this Sutra and the making of these vows, may all four types of beings in the three existences throughout the Dharma Realm whose kindness I owe, dissolve their limitless karma of enmity that fill the Dharma Realm and space since time immemorial.

May all four types of beings in the three existences throughout the Dharma Realm whose kindness I owe, collect infinite blessings and wisdom that fill the Dharma Realm and space since time immemorial.

May we all travel the adorned sea of the Flower Treasury and together enter Bodhi's great mandala.

Homage to the *Great Means Expansive Buddhas Flower Adornment Sutra*.

An Inscription on Contemplating the Mind By Dharma Master Ying of Tong Jiang

The mind is fundamentally natural. It stands upright and alone, being clear, still, singular and solid. It is the wonder amongst wonders and the mysterious among the mysteries. It neither comes nor goes; it neither changes nor moves. It is neither confused nor awakened; it is neither sagely nor worthy. It cannot be accessed through thought and I will force myself and explain it with words here. All conditions are born because we try to add clarity to our fundamental awakening. The mind is like a mirror containing the myriad things or the ocean accepting hundreds of water streams. Contracted, its spirit is

submerged in the mind; extended, its light fills the great thousand worlds. Its transformations are free and easy while its functions are endless. It is living beings and Buddhas; it is actual and provisional.

Confused, thoughts always escape insidiously without return; enlightened, the mind seal is passed on and on. The mind is your spirit. The mind is your spirit. Do not forget what I tell you, you should listen to what I teach you. You are replete with the myriad dharmas which are fundamentally perfect and realized. The myriad dharmas include you and yet their substance is empty and even. The states are not true states; the names are false names. In the past, you were not awakened and underwent loneliness in vain. Now that you are aware, keep your mind solid and pure. Do not stagnate along the path and wake up when thoughts occur. Untainted by the six sense objects, the three poisons will clear up. Do not stir up thoughts in your mind to cause further turbidity and lose your fundamental clarity. It is best that you clarify it and make it pure so that it returns to the primal essence.

End of Advice for Monastics Fascicle Four

Advice for Monastics Fascicle Five

A Preface on Guests and Hosts by Vinaya Master Dao Xuan of Mt. Zhong Nan

Inconveniencing oneself to benefit others is probably what it means to be a monk. One with the capability to reward good and punish evil may end injustices. Putting others' interests before personal interests concurs with the kindness of Buddhas. If one competes in a way that one dies and another lives, then one contradicts wonderful conducts according to the six aspects of harmony. The temple host must be humane for responses occur and so monks from the ten directions gather. If one receives personal gifts, one will attract a bad reputation from all around and it will spread far and wide. A temple guest must be respectful and maintain propriety and justness; that way, wherever he goes, he may stay peacefully. A rude and unreasonable visitor will trigger resentment wherever he goes.

Now we are fortunate to have been born in a major country where there is Buddhism. The monastic order salvages us from a fire pit thousands of feet deep. We have discarded a bridled net, as if prisoners released from cells or birds out of a cage. We walk on spread-out gold at a place where goodness accumulates. We live among the seven gems and in a land free of problems. Gods and dragons respect us; ghosts and spirits admire us. We do not feed silkworms and yet wear fine clothing; we do not farm and yet eat savory dishes. Why should we cause resentment and covet unreasonable gain? Why should we be eager for money and seek illusory reputation the size of snail antennas? Why should we shut down the open road to the realm of gods and humans? Why should we grasp petty gain the size of tortoise hairs? Why should we dig into the deep pit of hells? Why should we accumulate hatred in this life and face the retribution of being in the hells in future lives? Even if we own buildings full of gold and jade, those possessions tie down us fools. Even if rich fabric brims over boxes, those goods only cause our offsprings to fight and create

heavy karma. Seeking less and being frugal prevent oppression in the mind; being content and eliminating greed spread fragrance on the mind-ground.

Whether living in a pure monastery or attending a large monastic gathering, do not discuss the faults of others but reflect on our own faults. Those with superb capabilities should study the *Tripitaka* intensively. Those with slender capabilities may read about the Five Vehicles and recite them. You must not talk about kindness and goodness but hide knives and spears in your belly, or keep a smile on your face but store swords and pestles in the heart. Not empathetic toward impoverished individuals and not pity elders, you must not forget the infinite grace of your kind parents for having raised you. You must not dismiss the tremendous virtue of teachers and elders for having brought you along. If you use your mind incorrectly as described, you make donors throughout the ten directions lose their faith and become attached to the false and confused over the true. You would attract the teasing and condescension of worthy individuals throughout the four seas.

Thus, this book repeatedly, and in detail and particularly fine points, recommends and encourages. Those who listen will shatter their huge mountain of arrogance; those who read it will stuff up their huge ocean of drowsy confusion. I hope everyone will find this book credible and change the way they think. Make your future lives be better than your present life. Do not let this life be more supreme than future lives. I encourage everyone to quickly awaken to this, so that when death comes, it will not be too late for regrets.

***Dhyana* Master Yan of Dong Shan Sees His Disciple Off on a Journey**

While traveling, you must emphasize your resolve for the Way, do not readily accept presented offerings or pass your days in leisure. You must paste the words “birth and death” on your forehead. Cultivate vigilantly 24 hours a day as if your facial skin is about to be ripped off. Do not stop until you reach enlightenment. If you simply follow the mainstream and chase after crowds so that you spend your days in some uproar, when you suddenly die and Lord Yama comes asking you for food payment, do not say I never told you so. If you were to exert some effort, you would constantly check yourself and always raise your meditation topic. Where am I making progress? Where is effort wasted? When do I not focus on my meditation topic? When do I focus on my meditation topic?

Reflecting in this way and applying effort in this way, you will certainly arrive home.

Some practitioners do not read sutras or bow to the Buddhas. As soon as they get on the meditation cushion, they fall asleep. When they wake up, they think crazy random things. As soon as they get off the meditation cushion, they gossip with others. If this is the way you practice, then even when Maitreya Buddha is born, you will not get a chance to know the means. You must focus to the point that things suddenly burst. Raise that single word of “no.” Investigate it day and night; stare at it all the time. Do not sit and do nothing and do not sit on the meditation cushion as if dead. You must investigate it with dynamism. When random thoughts fly about, you must never come together with them and stare at

them; the more you fight them, the more intense they will be. Some people do not know whether to advance or retreat when they reach this state. They do not know how to resolve or avoid this. They become crazy or insane, ruining the rest of their lives.

It is best to lightly let go of the flurry, turn and get to the floor and walk around a bit, then return to the meditation cushion. Open your eyes and place your palms together. Straighten your back and follow the aforementioned koan. Meditate on it and you will feel cool and refreshed, like pouring a ladle of cold water into a pot of boiling liquid.

If you apply effort in this way, in time you will naturally reach home. Do not become afflicted when you still do not know how to apply effort, for fear that the demon of afflictions may enter your mind. If you feel that your effort is bringing progress, do not become happy, for fear that the demon of happiness will enter your mind. The various sicknesses of meditation cannot be described in toto. If there are long-time practitioners who are accomplished in the community, you must always ask for their advice. Read the words told by patriarchs on how to cultivate as if you and the patriarchs were face-to-face. Now for those rare individuals on this path, be sure that you work hard. I look forward to you quickly shattering the lacquer barrel and return to wipe this old monk's back. The verse goes:

*Seeing wind parting grass when you left home,
Guard your every thought along the way.
Contemporary monasteries have distinct styles,
But you may acquire bargains wherever you arrive.*

Dhyana Master Hong of Boulder House Sees Attendant Qing Off on a Visit to See His Master in His Hometown

Your master at Zhong Shan Monastery is aged and no one takes care of him day and night. If you do not return to sweep and clean, to take care of towels and vases, you would not be observing the propriety of treating a teacher. Your mother is also elderly. She has no one else but you. She has been missing you and has not seen you at all; she leans against the door and sheds tears everyday. What were you after when you parted with your teacher and abandoned your mother and came to this monastery? Though it is difficult to be at peace with poverty and enjoy the path, it is not easy to stay in a hut. To stay in a hut, you must plant bamboo and pine, hoe the mountain and shovel the land. You have to transport water and move logs, water vegetables and irrigate taros. You have to practice and recite sutras, gather-in your mind and eliminate sleepiness. Let veggie stews and millet rice fill this hungry sore; let plain seasonings and thin gruel pass through the intestines. People live busily for their mouths and bodies; we cannot help but also be burdened by this body and become weary over this skeleton of a body. If we do not yet understand our mind-ground, the karma of consciousness is vast and illusory.

We are just temporarily passing by brooks and forests here; this is not a long-term plan for us. Monk Yue Jiang writes in a letter that there is profound significance in encouraging you to go back. After you opened the letter, you left without reading it. You

did not disappoint him by fulfilling your filial duties. So it is said that filiality is the foremost among various conducts, which is no exception for laity and monastics. Attend to your teacher and to serve your mother is to plant in the field of respect; why bother to enter the assembly and meditate? If you sometimes want tranquility and feel that it is noisy at home, you can communicate with me via short letters at your leisure.

A Short Talk During Rains Retreat

The Buddhas and patriarchs are about to falter, which breaks my heart just talking about it. Upholding and supporting them is entirely up to later generations; unexpectedly though, they cheat and quickly head north or rush south. They do not know how to cultivate the proper causes; instead, they conduct other business. Their eyes and face are covered with dust; their karma consciousness is vast and without basis. Even if they were to hitch at some monastery, they wait until it is time for them to return to their beds after the boards are struck. So they may gather at the dorms, bragging and gossiping. They fold up their feet on the meditation cushion and fall asleep. Their clouds of delusion cover the sun, for their sky-like nature is obscured. The stones of fire that grill bring their hearts to a boil. Some cultivators temporarily experience stillness and then stagnate in that lightness of being. They are typically confused and fall for neutral karma. Some of them are constantly in a meditative state of no thought, thus plunging into a state of neutral karma. They do not wish to practice Bai Zhang's pure rules; instead they vigilantly lecture on non-Buddhist texts. They treat the law of cause and effect, which is so evident, casually.

Results from offenses and blessings are so obvious, yet practitioners are completely unafraid of creating offenses. They move into a single room where they are always lax with their body, mouth and mind. The tiles above their heads and bricks beneath their feet, the robes they wear and the food they taste, all come from faithful donors. If they were to digest them before they become accomplished in the Way, how many would feel ashamed if they were to ask their conscience today? By tomorrow, they waste all their free time. Once old age and sickness come searching, Lord Yama rushes the invitation and death arrives. They do not forget the karma committed in the past, hence fall into the three paths and the seven destinies.

Once the sash is lost, it is difficult to restore it; whereas scales and feathers are easy to put on. See how ancient practitioners of the path directly forget the human realm and snub fame and gain. Cooking *huangjing* and braising purple yam, consuming a bowl of rice and a container of water, they prevent their body from wasting away and barely continue their breath. They do not even know that rocks rot and pines wither, for in cleansing their mind, they plan for multiple lives. They are beyond material pursuits; pure and at ease, they only pursue the lofty goal. How could gold in the world be precious to them? After eons pass, the field is blooming with the flowers of Buddhas and a fragrant breeze penetrates their noses; they have attained certification in the Buddha-selection field, thus they freely play in the *Sangharama* of Perfect Enlightenment.

I was giving a short lecture one night to conclude the seasonal retreat, without noticing it, I spoke this verse.

A Formal Talk

It is June and July and there is no rain. Farmers are busy carting water day and night. The skins on their backs are burnt and cracked; the soles of their feet hurt. Their eyes are blurry; they are powerless and on the verge of suffocation. After submitting tax and silk, they have to provide travel expenses for officers too, paid for with wheat of all kinds. The three meals a day are never ample.

In contrast, consider the likes of us monastics. We do not even realize that we take our resources for granted. Our bodies and minds do not tend toward the Way one bit. We loiter about on the east side and romp about on the west side. Three or five of us gather and sit. As soon as they open their mouth it is about others' faults. When they return to their dark room, they commit everything that defies the rules. Not to mention befalling among strange species, they will certainly become farmers in future lives. The hardship they experience in their future lives will be equivalent to what farmers experience today. There is a saying with which ancients exhort their disciples before people and gods, I will quote it here, "If one does not harvest even one basket of merit in his monastic field, one will go through torturous regimes of a hundred kinds in iron fences."

Monk Zhong Feng's Final Warning for Disciples

You do not know anything about the Buddhadharma; you will not become liberated from birth and death anywhere. The retribution body is like a lamp in the wind. Each thought flies by like sparks from banging two rocks together, so cultivate as if saving your head on fire. You might not be able to resolve the issue of life and death, so why be so anxious and generate so much chaos over nothing? In a blink of an eye, we are already 40 or 50. What would you call the Buddhadharma then? You are still beating from outside the door no matter how intelligent you are in explaining and commenting perfectly so that there are no holes in any of the following: the Three Vehicles, the Twelve Divisions of Teachings, 1,700 *Chan* talks, and all 100 philosophical schools. You seem awake when you talk about them, but you continue to be confused when you encounter states.

As you go down this path, you cannot really know anything. The more you want to know, the farther you stray from the path. You see, when I say something, people may articulate some of their insights. Some may even have delved into places where thousands cannot reach. They may have opened up new possibilities, but they are still within the range of this false thought: "I want to know something."

Only those people with great faith truly investigate inwardly and become truly enlightened, carrying on the Buddha's teachings. If they still had a thought about carrying on the teachings of the Buddha, they have not realized the Way. Therefore the teachings of old said, "Even if the whole world were full of people like Shariputra and they were to collectively consider the measure of the wisdom of the Buddha, they cannot possibly

fathom it.” Nowadays, some people pick up some orange peels and think those are fire. They walk around talking loudly and spewing theories they advocate, saying all along, “I know the Buddhadharmā.” They want people to respect them, but where is the bargain in that?

I have been working on this matter for 30 to 40 years now, yet I still do not resonate even with the words, “the Buddhadharmā”; hence I am ashamed day and night. How dare I abuse or take on the role of a teacher. Sweet words and thick stacks of cash which I encounter daily are like venomous arrows shot into the heart. I repeatedly try to evade them without success. This is probably the result of conditions and karma from many lives. It is the basis of illusion, not caused by my power in the Way. I have often seen Buddhist practitioners indulge in their karmic consciousness with a bit of ignorance when they encounter some trivial adversities. They dig holes to trap others and say that they are defending justice. Little do they know that for limitless eons, this kind of justice has tied them to ignorance. There has never been a case of someone becoming enlightened through justice. Not to mention how behind your back, others scorn the justice you espouse today.

You should think nonstop about the great matter of your birth and death, as if the words have been etched on your forehead and burned into your bones. Discard all those thousands of tricks you played throughout endless eons. This type of thinking refuses to quit or pause, however. In vain, you have repeatedly made major vows before thousands of Buddhas and millions of patriarchs in lives past; but it is not until today that you happen to acquire the opportunity to wear the three robes and are considered Buddhists.

Unfortunately, you refuse to stop your mind still. You frequently generate false thoughts, which strengthen and build up the knots of birth and death. You have forgotten your initial goal of leaving the householder’s life. Though you might have millions of lifetimes, amidst heat and chaos, your karma on the wheel of rebirth will only increase in vain. How will all this help you to know the principles? I am just letting you know that living beings have heavy knots and ties; you cannot really do much about them. If you are powerless around people, just put yourself down, go to half of a straw hut, and let your mind stay cold, plain, withered and still. Beg for food and wear worn-out clothing. Try to save yourself only. By doing that, you avoid wasting offerings of food and avoid being a shameless person. Therefore, you know that there is nothing in the Buddhadharmā that you can know; there is nothing in birth and death that you can escape. You cannot know and you cannot escape anything. Just focus on that which you cannot attain, stay there, and do not ask about it for 30 or 20 years. Suddenly, at this place of nothing to be attained, you will experience a breakthrough. By then, you will finally believe that my words are not meant to deceive you.

A Warning on Leisure

There is not one person in the world who does not enjoy leisure and seek it in hordes. I ask people why and they reply:

In the past, for the sake of glory or humiliation, right or wrong, I dealt with things and events all day. My mind and determination became weary and my physical body became fatigued; to such an extent that those things and events settled themselves into my emotions and thoughts, entering my dreams. I quietly reflect on how short my life is and yet I do not have one day of peace. How does it help that I am wealthy and noble? Therefore, I abandoned all those things. I want to sing while I walk, sit and forget mundane affairs, and just watch the blue sky and white clouds. I want to just let myself wander in the phenomenal world. I might avoid the instructions of teachers or be disgusted with worldly busyness, but I treat my livelihood like fire or water, something not to be avoided. I must be far away from mundane things to enjoy leisure.

I say:

Although busyness wears down your body and works your mind, how will it help you realize the noumenal if you just sit in leisure and waste the day? The two situations are both about the false emotions of likes and dislikes. Therefore, the mission of sages is about nonproduction at the same time replete with the two marks of movement and stillness. This is exactly why it is not necessary to loathe busyness and wish for leisure. Let me be straightforward. When people want to learn secular skills, they have to work hard and serve; otherwise they would not accomplish anything, whether it is of high or low status.

Having awakened to the illusory falseness of the world and wishing to study the sages and worthy individuals' transcendental ways, you will not achieve anything if you do not forget food and sleep, no matter how sharp or dull your faculty. Therefore the Bodhisattva who cultivated in the Himalayas sacrificed as many lifetimes as motes of dust and served teachers as many as sand grains in the Ganges River. From accumulated eons until now, he experienced and was tested with various hardships.

Someone who chooses to enter the world should be loyal to the king and be filial to his parents. One should try his best to fulfill his duties, so one has to be busy. If one chooses the path of transcendence, one should draw near teachers and select friends, visit and ask them questions to reach the ultimate Way; consequently one has to be busy. One should not only fulfill his duties, but also his path of practice. That way one will see his real entity and remain unmoving like Mt. Tai; one's mind will be as unconditioned as empty space. How could leisure time match that?

Perhaps there are those who enter the world but cannot fulfill their responsibilities or cannot fully realize the path of practice when transcending the world. They only eagerly pursue the goal of leisure and calm. They do not want to work even for a minute. Thus, sages call these

people shameless individuals. How can anyone with this knowledge be so shameless as to indulge in leisure once again?

I write this to warn people from throwing themselves into leisure.

Dhyana Master Chang of Qian Yan Instructs the Assembly

Meditation is number one. Upholding precepts is number two. Creating blessings is number three. Bowing and reciting is number four. Since becoming a monk, we must do these four things. Do not let your mind run free and do not indulge in your thoughts. Do not be lazy with physical work and do not leave your wisdom in a haze. Contemplate suffering and bliss and be painfully mindful of birth and death. Do not worry about clothes and food; do not be greedy for fame or gain. In all waking hours, remain open and clear in the heart. Accord with the monastic rules in walking and sitting; follow the established rules in movement and stillness. Always draw near wise advisors and stay far away from bad friends. Those who believe me will easily become Buddhas. Those who do not believe what I say only waste your time as monks. You will only be bald laymen gathered among asuras. You will only be sprouts in the hells and members of a horde of animals. Quickly peel off your sash and leave the monastic gates. Go and be laymen. Do not live with us.

Dhyana Master Huai of Tian Yi in His Quarters Asked His Students About the Pureland Practice

If you wish to let go of filth and grasp purity and if you are repulsed by this land and attracted to the Pureland, you are still engaging in seizing and abandoning, which are emotions, false thoughts. If you deny that the Pureland exists, you disagree with the Buddhas. “How does one cultivate the Pureland practice?” The audience was speechless.

He answered his own question, “Production is about being determined to become born; but those who wish to become reborn in the Pureland will definitely become reborn there. His departure is actually not leaving.” Furthermore, he said, “Just as geese fly across the sky, their reflections are casted on cold water; geese themselves are devoid of any intent to leave traces behind while water has no wish to keep reflections.”

Vinaya Master Da Zhi Warns Those Who Willingly Wish for Misery

People who study Buddhism all began with the consideration that the matter of birth and death is great; but when they are affected by fame and gain or flooded with worldly conditions, they dismiss the great matter of birth and death. When others ask them about this, they cannot decide for themselves, so they say something to change the topic. They may say there is no need to ask about this, or that there is no need to know this. Perhaps they say, “When an order arrives, I devoutly do it and do not think about it over and over.” Or they say they will become born anywhere and come and go freely. Or they say they might become born again as a man in a family neither of high nor low status. Or they will be focused and will not follow whatever good or evil signs they see. Or they ask

people to wait until their time arrives. Or they teach others to control the mid-skandhas at the time of death. Or they say, “The carcass may disintegrate hundreds of times, but there is one thing that is always wonderful.” Or they say when the body dissolves and breath ceases, they return to still extinction.

These various subjective guesses and incorrect ideas are not apart from ordinary beings and non-Buddhists’ two views of annihilation and eternalism. When caught at that point while the four elements are dividing and burdened by sickness and suffering, one has no control over one’s consciousness and undoubtedly follows one’s karma on the wheel of rebirth. If one can decide the day and time that one will become liberated while sitting or cremated while standing, that is nothing special because it is just a result of worldly virtues. One who has not read the *Sixteen Contemplations Sutra* does not know the signs to nine grades of birth and does not believe in Amitabha’s power of vows. One insists that one has and willingly heads for utter misery. Are we not sad for them?

***Dhyana* Master Yongming Shou Warns Those Who Have Not Certified to Enlightenment to Never Slight the Pureland**

Question: If seeing one’s inherent nature and realizing enlightenment transcend birth and death, why be mindful of a Buddha and seek rebirth in his land?

Answer: Real cultivators should self-reflect. It is like someone who drinks water and who alone knows the temperature of it. I will now write this essay as a mirror and an oracle for shattering innumerable doubts. All you humane ones should contemplate, “Does my conduct render me to see my inherent nature and realize enlightenment, receiving predictions from the Thus Come Ones and inherit the position of patriarchs like Asvaghosa and Dragon Tree? Have I attained unobstructed eloquence and certified to the Dharma Flower *Samadhi* like Tian Tai’s Zhi Zhe? Have I thoroughly mastered the practices of both the *Chan* and the Teaching school, reaching a level of conduct and understanding like that of National Master Zhong?”

All the Bodhisattvas make it clear with their words and teachings that they encourage rebirth. They are interested in benefiting themselves and others, why would they fault themselves and others? Not to mention the Great Hero who praised rebirth in the Buddhaland and with his golden mouth reminded us about it. I hope you will follow worthy individuals of the past and respectfully adhere to the instructions of the Buddha. That way, you will not go astray.

In addition, the tracks and marks of preeminent individuals of the past and present are recorded in the *Records of Rebirth*. Evidently, many have become reborn in the Pureland. It is best that you diligently read them and reflect so that you know. Are you certain that you are already liberated from the cycle of birth and death, abiding and exiting? Will the heavy obstructions and evil karma since time immemorial for sure not manifest and will your retribution body for sure escape transmigration in this lifetime? Will you be free from suffering and afflictions and come and go freely among the different species of the three evil realms? Will you for sure not stagnate and stay wherever you wished to be among the heavens, the human realm and the worlds throughout the ten directions? How

great if you know the answers clearly and are confident about them. If you have not yet reached that level, do not let your one time arrogance cause you to drown forever throughout eons. You are the one responsible for losing any wholesome benefits, upon whom will you blame? It will be too late to regret and grieve by then.

Repentance Host Shi of Ci Yun's Article on Argument Against Confusions over the Three Robes

Reading over the sutra text, I believe that theory is not entirely correct. "*Kashaya*" can also mean dyed or sitting cloth. According to the translation "dyed," it is a regulation that applies to both monastics and laity in that all should wear muted colors, for fear that one may dye it especially bright, which would be against the prohibitions. Hence it says, they should be taught that everything they wear and dye it a muted color. Perhaps there are customs that prevent this rule from being fully practiced, but monastic Bodhisattvas must dye their robes a muted color. Furthermore, the text says, "*Bhikshus* should dress differently than laypeople." Where does it say that laypeople may also wear a seven-piece sash? Some translate the term to mean sitting cloth. Nan Shan says it is a general term for the three robes. The *Brahma Net Sutra* says, "Wear nine, seven, and five piece sashes." This is the text. Why is not the term "sash" reserved exclusively for monastic robes? The text also says, "*Bhikshus* should dress differently than laypeople." Searching through articles and commentaries by Master Tian Tai and Master Zang, they interpret "sash" to mean a robe dyed a muted color. There is no theory saying that the three robes apply to laypeople too. Although the *Agama Sutra* allows laity to wear the three robes when attending repentances at a monastery, their robes are sewn in single stitches. Laypeople cannot wear robes sewn with looped stitches^{lviii}. The Buddha said that this type of "three robes" are one, called single stitch robes, or two, called lay outfits. Master Jin Xi said, "Ordained monks receive and wear robes with looped stitches; therefore these robes need to be made separately."

It is absolutely forbidden that laypeople, as some have done, borrow monastics' robes. Therefore we know that although these three robes do not refer to monastic robes (refer to *Records of Supporting Practices*). If we believe that the *Brahma Net Sutra* allows laypeople to wear them, why does the *Vaipulya Sutra* require that they be sewn in single stitches? In the *Agama Sutra* too, the Buddha ordered Ananda to bring his *uttarasanga* for Vasiṣṭha to wear.

That was the Buddha's intent for that time being due to a special situation. After the Buddha entered nirvana, we ordinary people should follow the regulations. All the precepts should be settled according to the *Nirvana Sutra*, the Buddha's final teaching. Nothing in that sutra says that laypeople may wear the three robes, some might say. Some claim that given just a small piece, laity can use it to eliminate disasters and prevent calamities. A female performer, for instance, hung it on her temporarily and a hunter pretended to be a monk and wore a robe to shoot an elephant. Some say acquiring four inches of it will make us full while draping one piece of it on us and raksashas will dare not eat us. These examples fully demonstrate the functions of the three robes; however this does not mean that the four types of laypeople are allowed to wear the three robes.

Lax and deviant monastics do not even know the rules for keeping the robes, how would the multitude in the throes of sense objects and complex problems know these rites according to the Dharma?

Nan Shan says, “Used properly, no offense occurs. If the way is received and accepted, it is against the rites, then one lapses into grave offenses. One will have no wardrobe while alive, one will have to face reproach by sages, and one will certainly fall into the evil paths.” These words tell us that even monastics perpetrate grave errors if they do not accord with the rites. How can we present the wrong Dharma to laypeople and drag them down? There are more offensive and deceptive behaviors, which I cannot keep quiet about. I often see monastics and laypeople carry woven cloth bags. This custom started a long time ago and has become more popular recently. Furthermore, the three robes and the five colored robes are regulated in two texts.

Is there any sutra that describes the name and shape of woven bags? Some explain that these bags are made with recycled fabric from the three robes. Ripped robes must be mended for them to be proper robes, that way *bhikshus* do not lose what they receive and uphold. How could they be allowed to wear torn pieces from the three robes? Not to mention the fact that the material is then given another name. How is that different than a *bhikshu* losing his robes to thieves? Some say it is okay to wear the cloth bags temporarily while they work in the inner courtyard. The *antarvasa* is the robe to wear while inside the monastery, why not wear that? As for lay disciples, they should not always wear sash pieces to avert disasters. If they were allowed to wear them all the time, why would they be forbidden to wear the entire robe instead of just a piece of the robe?

Nan Shan quotes the *Samghika*, “Dragons may wear a piece of sash, but it will not be effective if they do not accord with the teachings. If they disregard the teachings then the sash is ineffective, not to mention these contemporary cloth bags that are newly cut and dyed, and made out in the open. In name or actuality, this does not accord with the Dharma.” According to the above analysis, we may conclude that wearing cloth bags will incur offenses rather than blessings.

Now I will briefly articulate the reasons why wearing cloth bags are against the Buddha’s teachings in three respects. Read it, but please forgive me for minor errors. It would be nice if you correct them. First, the term and entity, “cloth bags,” are not recorded anywhere. They were never mentioned in the two types of precepts, the prohibitions and the actions. These cloth bags are short on the five types of merit; they are a form of abuse. The consequence of defying the teachings will not be illusory after death. Second, the Buddha is the only one who created the prohibitive and the active precepts. Bodhisattvas and Sound Hearers may describe them but not create them. You created these cloth bags on your own, are you a Buddha now? You are going along with the non-Buddhists instead of the Buddhists. Nan Shan says, “It is a non-Buddhist practice to sew threads of a different color on robes to create patterns.” This is a violation of one of the *Sthulatayayas*. Other than contradicting the Dharma, the weaving of these cloth bags also very much violate regulations that the Buddha established in the past. If such people are not heretics, what are they? After reading this essay, I hope Mahayana practitioners

throughout the four directions will not follow their own sentiments. Lifting up sesame and forsaking gold is absolutely not the actions of wise individuals. Those who change their faults to become proper are people who understand.

Understanding embodied in the unsurpassed vehicle of the Buddhas is beyond monastics and laity. The rules of transmission and upholding of them are in the *vinaya* and comportment indeed. That is exactly the reason why the *Nirvana Sutra* supports the *vinaya* and talks about permanence. If the precepts and regulations were sullied, what will be the standard for Dharma transmissions? How can we become reborn as humans without protecting our eyes? How can we end the life of those in permanent residence without becoming a *Caala*? During the time when Emperor Zhou Wu eradicated Buddhism, Dharma Master Jin Ai hated himself for not being able to protect the Dharma. What is the use of leaving the householder's life that way? He sat on a piece of rock and slashed his body with a knife, dicing up his flesh and hanging his intestines on a tree. With his heart in the palm of his hand, he passed away. This is the way ancient worthy individuals protected the Dharma. As for us, we cannot possibly imitate his deeds. We should uphold the precepts and regulations. Do not let them be destroyed or damaged, causing ourselves and others to tumble and fall.

End of *Advice for Monastics Fascicle Five*

Advice for Monastics Fascicle Six

An Essay on Oracles and Mirrors By *Dhyana* Master Yi of Ci Jue, Chang Lu

Investigate the Dharma instead of requesting a Dharma talk in the morning. Do not waste any time; hence repay the kindness of the abbot. Behave according to seniority, move and stop peacefully; hence repay the kindness of the leaders. Observe the laws externally and observe the rules internally; hence repay the kindness of the manager. Everyone gathers together and is harmonious in six respects, as if they are mixtures of water and milk; hence repay the kindness of the cantor. Accepting food only to realize the way; hence repay the kindness of the kitchen manager. Safe stays in the monastic housing and cherishing various items; hence repay the kindness of the maintenance man. Violating not a trace of offense with the monastery's belongings; hence repay the kindness of the storeroom supervisor. Never write anything, always cultivate as if saving the head from burning; hence repay the kindness of the secretary. Clear windows and clean desks, the ancients' teachings shine upon the heart; hence repay the kindness of the host of the Canon. Remaining anonymous and not to be sought out unless there is business, do not host anyone or act as companions to guests; hence repay the kindness of the guest prefect. Keep to a regular schedule and always arrive early if requested by the attendant; hence repay the kindness of the attendant. With only a bottle and a bowl as belonging, one is like a mountain in the assembly.

Maintain a peaceful mind when suffering from sickness, not being fickle with soup or medicine; therefore repay the kindness to the medicine host. While taking a bath in turn, walk slowly and quietly without forgetting where the water came from; hence repay the kindness of the bath host and the one in charge of water. When it is one's turn to get warm on the stove or charcoal heater, one silently greets others and offers the opportunity to others; hence repay the kindness of those in charge of charcoal and stove. Reflecting upon one's virtuous conduct to see if one deserves offerings; hence repay the kindness of the coordinator of alms. Consider the amount of work that went into this food; hence repay the kindness to those in charge of gardens, granaries, and buildings. Calculating and making plans to save on the use of water and know to have shame in using water that resulted from others' hard work; hence repay the kindness of the one in charge of cleaning. Be lenient so that others may readily follow; keep things simple so others may easily serve; hence repay the kindness of the pure residents.

Practices in the monasteries are always about improving ourselves. Those with the highest potentials will accomplish the Way in this very lifetime. Those of average potential will work on developing their goodness. Those who have not yet awakened to the origin of the mind will not waste their time either. These three types of monks are truly the jewel of the Sangha and the source of blessings for the world. In the short run, these monks become a bridge when the Dharma is on its decline and ultimately reaches the fruition of the Two Adornments^{lix}. If the monastery is not well managed and the Dharma wheel is not turned, the abbot is not serving the assembly properly. The lead monk is not leading the assembly properly if he is unregulated in his three karmas and unadorned in the four types of comportment. The manager is not protecting the assembly properly if his capacity to tolerate the assembly is not large and his heart to cherish the assembly is not immense. The cantor is not pleasing the assembly properly if he does not comfort the cultivators and does not get rid of the rotten apples of the bunch. The kitchen manager is not serving the assembly properly if the six flavors are unrefined and the three virtues are not supplied. The maintenance man is not providing safe lodging for the assembly properly if lodgings are not repaired and goods are not prepared. The storeroom supervisor does not support the assembly properly if he accumulates monastic property^{lx} and takes away things from the assembly of monks. The secretary does not adorn the assembly properly if paperwork is not written clearly or if there are omissions. The host of the Canon does not treat the assembly properly if desks are not strictly kept, and if noise and frustration do not cease.

The guest prefect does not praise the assembly properly if he despises poor guests and favors affluent guests, valuing laity and slighting monastics. The attendant is not ordering the assembly properly if with a disrespectful attitude, he jumbles the order in terms of seniority. The dorm host does not host the assembly properly if he does not diligently fold bedding and does not guard the dorms with care. The medicine host does not care for the assembly properly if he has little time to serve and provide for the patients and furthermore disturb them and make them angry. The bath host and the one in charge of water is not allowing the assembly to have their baths properly if there is a shortage of hot water and the water temperature is unstable. Those in charge of charcoal and stoves

do not provide for the assembly properly if they do not prepare ahead of time and let the cold stir the thoughts of the assembly.

The alms coordinator does not make offerings to the assembly properly if he is unfair when it comes to money and does not use it to proclaim the Dharma. Those in charge of gardens, granaries, and buildings do not represent the assembly properly if they do not maximize the capability of the land and fully apply their strengths. Those in charge of cleaning do not serve the assembly properly if they are lazy in removing feces and fail to provide enough supplies. Pure residents do not comply with the assembly properly if they refuse to quit when prohibited and refuse to act when ordered.

To slight their teachers and act condescendingly toward the Dharma, following their habits and complying with conditions are wrong ways to repay the abbot. To sit and recline in a clumsy manner, coming and going in an unruly manner are wrong ways to repay the lead monks. To patronize national laws and care nothing about the monastery are wrong ways to repay the manager. To be steadfastly contentious and in discord with those above and below are wrong ways to repay the cantor. To be greedy for savory foods and denigrate poor quality foods are wrong ways to repay the kitchen manager. To be less than considerate toward newcomers in their acceptance and use of things in residence are wrong ways to repay the maintenance man. To be overly zealous for offerings and care not about the property of the monastery are wrong ways to repay the storeroom supervisor. To write readily with pen and inkpad at hand is the wrong way to repay the secretary. To disdain the golden Buddhist texts and search for and read non-Buddhist texts are wrong ways to repay the Canon host. To accompany laypeople and befriend the elite are wrong ways to repay the guest prefect. To forget a request from the attendant and therefore leave the assembly of monks sitting for a long time is the wrong way to repay the attendant. To store goods in such a careless manner that it is essentially an invitation to steal them is the wrong way to repay the dorm host. To harbor much hatred and little joy, resisting the conditions of sickness are wrong ways to repay the medicine host. To cause a racket with buckets and ladle and to use water without restraint are wrong ways to repay the bath host and the one in charge of water. To benefit oneself with warmth from the stove and to prevent others from getting close to it are wrong ways to repay those in charge of charcoal and stoves. To not be mindful of cultivation and to receive offerings readily are wrong ways to repay the coordinator of alms. To simply be full all day while the mind exerts no effort is the wrong way to repay those in charge of gardens, granaries, and buildings. To spit at some wall while the halls are in a mess is the wrong way to repay the head of cleaning. To always act in a stern manner but never teach anything wholesome is the wrong way to repay the pure residents.

Like a storm sweeping over a place and still leave places untouched, there are likely to be omissions here; but let us forgive the shortcomings, go with the strengths and together do the work of monastics. I hope all in the temple Lions' Den are lions and all in the *Chandana* Forest are pure *chandana* so that those born 500 years later may catch another glimpse of the assembly at Vulcher Peak. The flourishing and deterioration of Dharma practices' are up to monastic disciples. Monastics are fields of respect, they should be

respected. If monastics are serious, the Dharma will be treasured; if monastics are frivolous, the Dharma will not be treasured.

If monastics are strict, laity will certainly be prudent. Suppose there are people in charge of rice and soup, but they are only in authority for a period of time. Managers in a monastery are just on duty occasionally. Always respect fellow cultivators instead of being arrogant.

If out of arrogance, one reacts to community business based on personal issues, but how can one remain long as all things are impermanent? One day when you return to the assembly, how will you face them? Cause and effect are not wrong so it will be difficult for you to avoid it. Monks are the Buddha's disciples and offerings should be made to them impartially. They are to be respected by those in the heavens and human realm. Meals twice a day should be refined and abundant according to the principles. The four items should be provided for without lack. The World Honored One's legacy from 2,000 years ago shade and hover over Buddhist disciples of later generations. Even one portion of merit from [the Buddha's] light of his white hair [between his brows] cannot be used up completely. Simply serve the assembly and do not worry about being poor.

Monks should not be classified into "ordinary monks" and "holy monks." They all belong to the sangha of the ten directions. Since they are monks from different places, they have a share in offerings received; how can you be falsely discriminating and slight or detest guest monks? Once they stay beyond three days, make offerings to them and serve them fully according to propriety. If guest monks request meals before the sangha hall, one should make offerings to them impartially. We even care for laypeople, so how can we not serve guest monks? If the mind is limitless, then blessings will naturally be boundless. The sangha should be in harmony. Monks above and below should unite. Each has his own strengths and weaknesses, so we should aid and cover for one another. Do not let outsiders hear about any ugly family business. Though such disclosures seem harmless enough; they do reduce faith in others after all. Just as insects on the bodies of lions eat the flesh of lions; Buddhism cannot be wrecked by heretics and celestial demons. For the traditions to not falter and for the Buddha sun to be bright always, strengthen the shine of patriarchs and aid the holy transformation of imperial dynasties. May this text be a yardstick.

Dhyana Master Ci Shou Admonishes the Assembly on Rules

(This edition of the essay is mostly the same as the edition in the text *Limitless Life*.)

Whether it is attending a congregation in the hall, a reading or recitation of a sutra, or a short Dharma talk, arrive early whenever the assembly gathers. Superior visitors carry the rules with them, how can you be unruly and lazy, causing others to watch over your conduct? You may be forgiven once, but how can you not be embarrassed with three violations? Without thinking about Bai Zhang's true tradition, you already see Tou Zi's path. When a sign of silence is hung, it would be best if you remain quiet. Even when a sign is not hung, you should not speak and laugh. The Buddhas of old gave instructions at the end about keeping your mouth shut. Always remain silent 24 hours a day. Without

being prohibitive in the three karmas, myriad disasters emerge. Understanding a bit of Patriarch Lu's tradition, you hang your mouth on the wall.

Be sure your table is always clean and tidy; only keep an incense box, lessons on meditation and sutra texts. It is most important that you arrange them neatly. Do not place any secular texts here. Medicine, censor and other needs are best kept under the table. Reciting out loud bothers people around you. Leaning backwards and pulling on your head are condescending acts in the assembly. Most of the desk is clear. Occupying the desk with useless stuff or hanging something by the window does not accord with the *vinaya*, how could that be allowed in the monastery? Sit upright and make your thoughts proper so that you silently search for the taste of the truths and holy words. Apply them to the mind ground. Opening a book not in vain is the start of knowing how to read sutras. When sitting in front of a desk during daily life, absolutely avoid chit chatting with practitioners typically next to you. When guests visit, do not be remiss in your manners. When a meal of tea is finished, conclude the conversation and lead the guests out of the room instead of sitting in there for too long. If former fellow cultivators or companions, relatives from afar visit, invite them to a quiet place out in nature so you may talk as you please. As far as conversations about trade or other irrelevant topics, avoid them altogether. Monks do not engage in those.

Returning to the dormitories after a meal, greet your roommates; pay your respects according to seniority. If you do not do that, you are actually slighting others and being arrogant. When a meditation session is cancelled^{lxi} or when opening your room, inform your dorm host. Lift the screen going in and out; drop your hands behind your back. Get on your bed and sit in silent meditation. Do not let your robes hang down low. You should slow your pace when moving and walking. Disturbing others will develop demonic obstacles readily and the mouths of the [gossiping] assembly can melt gold. So what joy is there?

Best to do laundry and sew after a meal. Attending to any business that is not urgent neglects the karma of the Way. Do not soak your clothes in hot water, wash your face on the table, paste paper on the table, make snacks, or wrap and store medicine. Bamboos used for hanging clothes must be checked for cleanliness; before grabbing the iron, check and see if anyone else is using it. Taking it to a particular corner will prevent others from using it. Sages of old mend rips to keep out the cold and quit once sewn. How can you be sewing always, day and night?

Frying snacks and stewing soup are part of major ceremonies in the temple, sit in the meditation posture when everyone has gathered. When cups for drinking tea have been put away, everyone may leave together. Privately hide tealeaf tips will invite spectators' ridicule. What kind of Dharma is it to greet others with one hand? Notify your dorm host if you cannot attend for some reason. Do not avoid short periods of tea. New arrivals in a dorm must be humble. Not knowing the regulations, ask the elder monks. The *vinaya* of one temple is established by the people there. No need to be attached and in a hurry to settle into a room and to clear a table, that way you will naturally be steady in your

inquiry about the rules and the details. Cooking snacks is meant for the assembly, so as long as you are sincere tea should be taken by everyone.

Let newcomers know what the chores are and places where things are kept. When the thermos is empty, add to it immediately. While traveling, protect your precepts and guard your speech. An open mouth is like a bow while words are like arrows. Speaking irresponsibly, criticizing others, talking about food and money, yelling at wind and rain, you will only be hurt by tigers, for your speech is too sharp in the Order where there is no mercy and walls have ears.

If there is a funeral for a monk, attend rain or shine. While each person should be sad, everyone should be compassionate, recite sutras and mantras and shoulder firewood and logs for them lest the monk had wasted his life. So how can you be so wild as to speak and laugh uproariously? Robes and bowl, approximated value of the deceased monk's possessions were meant to shatter stinginess, but people of latter generations do not know better and turn them into greed and love, they secretly measure the lengths of them and peek at old and new items belonging to the deceased monk. They reduce the value of return on the deceased monk's possessions and the funeral costs. They carve up the valuable items to such an extent that they are worse than ordinary merchants. They do not know to reflect and be ashamed; instead, they consider the finds bargains. Those who know better watch from the sidelines and beads of sweat drip down their faces. If you were truly superior individuals in the temple and preeminent guests of the meditation hall, you would create affinities with the dead instead of acting in this way and being laughed at by the living. Gentle and compliant, those above and below can observe this.

Being arrogant, no sage will bless you. The 80,000 fine conducts and the 3,000 forms of comportment can be seen 24 hours a day. Is it not embarrassing to go directly through the hall? I am afraid you may invite very little blessings if you walk directly through the honored hall, dress inappropriately in the hall or visit mountains with grass sandals on. Do not step into the Dharma Hall and go back and forth with the elderly residents. Washing the face early in the morning is originally meant to be a part of the practice. Spitting and dragging a bowl, making noises will only disturb the great assembly. Thoughts occur secretly, but you are too dull to know. As the years go by, you become sallow and emaciated. Use less water for baths and do not touch any chips. Though you do a lot to create blessings, it is better to evade offenses. Spitting in the hallways and rooms and scratching your head on the table, you disobey the sages and do as you please. Check yourself everyday and be cautious every step of the way.

As long as you think less of your body and mind, you will be full. During those ten days when it is your turn to be the dorm host, offer your services to others. Sleep later and get up earlier, be sure your are vigilant and sincere. Be sure to work hard and let others get ahead of you. Make sure you cover and protect the assembly's robes and bowl. One inappropriate matter and everyone's minds are disturbed. In brewing tea, sweeping the floor, changing water and placing incense, do not let the hot water bottle cool so as to prevent meditators from being frustrated. The lead in the dorms must be gentle, before establishing rules, check oneself against the standard. Go to your desk on time and be

brief in your conversations. One inappropriate occurrence and everyone will criticize you. Be timely in leaving for and returning from trips. Kindly guide and encourage bad natured practitioners. If they do not obey, secretly tell the Abbot. Protect the kind and cover for the bad. Establish your credibility among the donors. While shaving your head around the stove, be polite and yield. List all the rules and think ahead about disappointments and feelings of someone wronged. Take care of everyone in daily life, changing them with a slight maneuver; no more goodness is needed than that.

What is the good of getting together if they do not correct themselves after three reminders? Not to mention the dusts of the mind are difficult to sweep away while the water of nature is easy to scour along. Those of average potential and roots can go up or down. When Ke Bing could not win a Dharma battle, he was fined a meal of pasty rice. Wen Yuan was in a competition over meditation, he lost two pieces of burnt toast. Later students should emulate such models in the monasteries. Jiao Shan refused to talk about dualistic *dhyana* but only asked to be fined 16 ounces of oil. A verse goes:

*The turtle was suddenly burned by moxa on the head.
For millennia, this made people laugh continuously.
I suggest future generations set your sights higher
And do not be fined a catty of oil.*

Monk Xiao Wong's Instructions for the Family

So it is during the day, it is so during the night.
It is best to sleep last and rise first.
Tuck away sheets and fold up your blankets, wait for the bell to ring.
Moving, stopping and turning about, lead with the left shoulder.

Do not be wild after the morning gruel.
Lower your head in brushing your teeth and washing. Use less hot water.
If your head itches, wait for a bath.
Clean hand towels will not inconvenience others.

Set up the bowl when the body and mind are still.
First take out the chopsticks and put the spoon back first.
Wait until after the meal to fold up the dining towel.
Greet those left and right of you and do not be short on propriety.

After the gruel, salute and drink tea after the meal.
Do not be noisy when meditation is cancelled or during dinner time.
Accord with the rules when entering and exiting buildings
so capable ones are in the monastery.

Sit by the door as the lead and hit the board loud and clear.
Which meditators dare to enter the hall thereafter?
You have the authority to chase them down and fine them a hundred coins.

It is most difficult when your name is posted way up high.

Entering the room and getting on the seat for recitation,
Follow the rules and observe comportment in full.
People nowadays are shameless,
Wearing a short-sleeved shirt inside the robe.

Be neat in taking off and wearing clothes and shoes.
Best to close the door gently and lower the blinds.
Secretly uphold the mantras and snap your fingers lightly.
Always lift the toilet with your right hand.

In entering the bath, pay attention to your robes; be quiet and respectful.
Move with ease when beating the boards for water.
Do not place your towels on the sink.
And how could you put your feet in the bucket?

Bow and recite sutras to resist sleepiness.
Do not turn this into a craft.
One day when the eyes your mom gave you pop out^{lxii},
You will know that your sickness exacerbates with increasing attachment to medicine.

A bamboo hat and a waist pack make you a traveling monk.
Fear no hardship and diligently search for teachers.
The Dharma practices are about non-attachment so watch yourself and be on guard.
Do not emulate average men who must be firefighters of their minds.

A Short Dharma Talk

By *Dhyana* Master Wu Xing, the Man with a Dead Heart, of Huang Long

A short lecture on home study. What is home study? For instance, a family has three or five sons. What did the oldest do today? What did the youngest do today? Did they come home late? Once they are home by evening, their parents will be the judge as to whether they did right or wrong in each and every one of their actions.

It is the same in a monastery. What happened at the monastery? The abbot decides whether anything is right or wrong. Considering how inferior monasteries are nowadays and how low the caliber of people, I will not comment. Some elders from broken places deliver letters and beg to stay at one temple here and then beg to stay at another temple there. When they get to stay at a temple, they will pick a good day to move in then claim that they are more senior; they act freely and do as they please in the abbot's place. People of this type are dregs in the hells. Nowadays in the temples, rare enough as it is that someone is interested in meditating. I see a team of men who are angry and speak pitifully, claiming, "I know meditation; I know the Way." They enter the abbot's place and speak rashly, departing immediately after uttering a couple of koan-like phrases. This makes no sense. There are also men who have some influence and recognize dull

emptiness and claim that is all. There are also those who see lights and shadows in space. There are also those who incorrectly claim that everything is just the Way; they cannot be salvaged. People of this type can only get by when their physical bodies are at peace and healthy. When they are sick and move to the Lengthening Life Hall, they will be like crabs fallen into hot water, powerless and moving about haplessly. They see spirits and ghosts. They ask some witch here and ask some doctor there. They ask for fortunes and ask what is good or bad.

Do you not see? Our Buddha, the Thus Come One, is the physician king of the Triple Realm and the kind father of the four kinds of beings? He can treat all beings' sicknesses in the mind. Since you do not believe in your own mind and seek for solutions outside, deviant demons and ghosts enter your mind, thus creating many views. Do you want to know your mind? It is like the sun overhead that shines upon the whole world, where is the dark place? By the time you get to this point, there are no signs of fortune or misfortune, good or bad. You can then sit on the head of right and wrong, recline on the head of right and wrong. Even brothels, bars, tiger dens and demon palaces are places where this person may remain in peace. It is only because of dense karmic consciousness for endless eons that your thoughts run up and down, quick and tilted. Unless your faith is at a certain level, you will be turned by emotions and love in the world, bounded left and right. Natives of Jiang Nan protect natives of Jiang Nan; natives of Guang Nan protect natives of Guang Nan; Natives of Huai Nan protect natives of Huai Nan; natives of Xiang Bei protect natives of Xiang Bei; natives of Hunan protect natives of Hunan; natives of Fu Jian protect natives of Fu Jian; monks of Si Chuan protect monks from Si Chuan; monks of Zhe Jiang protect monks from Zhe Jiang. For example, you say, "A fellow villager of mine is a leader at this temple, so I am going to help him." One day when there is some mishap, everything turns into arguments. How miserable. Everywhere you go you complain, "How miserable, how miserable. Why did I come here? It is truly a waste of my skills. It is truly torture." If you are truly a man, cut off every attachment with one slash, how free and easy that is! If you cannot cut your attachments, you will be bounded by love. Those who love form are bounded by form; those who love temples are bounded by temples; those who love fame are bounded by fame; those who love money are bounded by money; and those who love the body are bounded by the body.

Why not step back and think, "What is so good about this stinking skin bag?" Only because of a thought of love at one time that you entered your mother's womb to receive your father's sperm and your mother's eggs, creating a patch of pus in their act together. When your mother eats something warm, you undergo being in a cauldron of hot water in the hells; when your mother eats something cold, you undergo being in the hells of ice. When you roll out of your mother's womb, you experience cold and heat, hunger and fullness, sickness and suffering, grilled and oppressed until today. This is only because you cannot reflect; hence you are associated with much right and wrong, production and extinction. I am born and you die; you die and I am born. Birth and death, death and birth. You accord with karma and undergo retribution without rest.

Recently there were some bastards who were hired to buy precept certificates. They shaved their dastardly heads and donned the Buddhas' sash so that there is no difference

between a bastard and a gentleman, beans and wheat. They enter our Dharma to wreck the Dharma. They always use all they have to rub their backs and press their crotch, beating about left and right. They want to be great men. They do not know how to be great men, but they want to be great men. To be a great man, you must take a step back. Do not criticize what is good and talk about what is bad with your servile lips and tongue in front of others and behind their backs, saying the food here is rich and the lodging there is stable. They cannot digest them. Senior monks like these are not needed in Buddhism. The human body is difficult to come by and the Buddhadharma is difficult to encounter. If we do not save ourselves in this lifetime, in which life will we save ourselves?

If you want to investigate *Chan*, you must let go. Let go of what? Let go of the four elements and the five skandhas, let go of all the karmic consciousnesses throughout limitless eons. Investigate and look exhaustively at the root of your sense faculties to learn the principles. Investigate and suddenly the flowers of the mind will bloom and shine, illumining lands throughout the ten directions. Reaching the mind, one wields freely with one's hands, readily turning the great earth into gold, stirring the Yangtze River into cream. Will you not feel fantastic the rest of your life? The methods of *Chan* and the Way are not in the books. Even if you can read the teachings in the entire Canon, and all the hundreds of philosophies, they are just chatter and are not applicable at the time of death. The ancients became enlightened, and then sought confirmation from a teacher who knows. Eliminate sands and pebbles and leave what is pure and true, then weigh it. Like the owner of some drug store who has everything, when someone wants to buy licorice, give him licorice. Someone comes to buy goldthread, give him goldthread. Do not give someone licorice when he wants to buy goldthread. Also, it is like a piece of gold being smelted in a red-hot stove. Smelt it until it is mature so that it can be pounded into flasks, platters, hairpins and bracelets. How many ounces the flasks weigh and how many ounces the platters weigh are all very clear. Then melt the flasks, platters, hairpins and bracelets into gold. That is called the Dharma practice of one flavor and equality. If not so, it is just vague True Thusness and muddled Buddha nature. Do you still know how? Do you still believe it? Little old me just use four *Chan* phrases^{lxiii} to respond to this monk:

*There is life in death and there is death in life.
Faced with death, fear death; faced with life, fear life.*

Apply and test these four *Chan* phrases against the monks around the world. Also, with what do we test the world's monks? After a long time, he said, "In general his bones and muscles are fine; he is dapper without blush." (A talk recorded in writing.)

**Records of Lun Zang at *Chan* Court Hui Kong of Mt. Bao Chan
Authored by Upasaka Wu Wei, Yang Jie**

There were no living beings in the Dharma Realm originally. Living beings are conditions of false views. The Thus Come Ones originally had no oral teachings; but the oral teachings are for sentient beings. False views are the sickness of living beings. Oral

teachings are the medicine of the Thus Come Ones. Curing sicknesses with medicine then there are no sickness that cannot be cured. Using words to enlighten falseness, then there is no falseness that cannot become enlightenment. The Thus Come One had to speak; wise and worthy individuals had to explain. Therefore Ananda compiled the teachings into sutras and Upali organized them into the *vinaya*. All Bodhisattvas' proclamations became shastras. Although sutras, *vinaya* and shastras are divisions in the *Tripitaka*, they are essentially precepts, *samadhi* and wisdom inherent to the mind. The *Tripitaka* reveals their contents while the mind should not become stuck and stagnate. Therefore the Buddha of the Twin Trees interacted with others depending on their potential, using provisional means to convey the actual teachings. The oral teachings collected became a treasury; wheels carry this jeweled treasury. When the teachings follow the turn of the wheels then they flow without hindrance. With the wheels, teachings manifest; therefore the wheels operate inexhaustively. In this way, those who wear the teachings understand the principles of change and interconnection. Those who see the wheels do not retreat, but leisurely swim in the sea of the inherent nature then later become liberated from the cages of consciousness. At that point, everything is turning the Dharma wheel; all dust motes return to the Flower Treasury. Only those with profound wisdom can reach this state.

Dhyana Master Cong of Ci Zhao of Shi Men, Xiang Zhou, Requests Official Cha to Write "Records of Sangha Halls"

Qian Ming Monastery is a hundred miles away from this town and used to be called Shi Men (Stone Gate) but changed due to the emperor's orders. It is located high up in the mountains and in precipitous valleys where tigers and leopards are in ambush. Those winding roads are tough and nearly completely unpopulated. Unless someone is determined to practice the Way, they cannot reside there. The likes of traveling monks are bridled by fame and gain; though they observe the supremacy of such scenery, they rarely set foot there.

When Dao governed the county, he knew a practitioner by the Dharma name of Shou Rong, who visited the fifth year of Yong Xi. Later he volunteered to rebuild the meditation hall that deteriorated and became dilapidated. He was determined and sought alms in the villages. After many years, he called on many fine workers and gathered excellent material from the market. Five halls and eleven structures were finally completed during the third year of Jing De.

This spring, disciple Hui Guo came to the capital, asking me to write an essay for the hall, which will be engraved on stele. I wrote the following:

Since the Buddhadharma spread widely and Bodhidharma came westward, those with faith sought to certify to their fundamental origin. They live outdoors with the stars shining above their heads; they hide themselves behind grass and trees. Their clothes do not prevent cold and their food does not fill their stomachs. The Proper Dharma becomes shallower gradually while people and the Dharma alternately become slacker.

Therefore *Dhyana* Master Bai Zhang constructed buildings to take care of the elderly and the sick. In recent times, meditation monasteries compete in size and the majestic look of their structures. Young people and newcomers indulge and rest there; but do they not know that those who sought alms tired their bodies and worked hard? Those who donated money hope for blessings and repent of offenses? Those who understand cause and effect are as if lying on a metal bed that they consider their enemy. It has been more than one day and a night that the holy womb has been secretly growing. Next, those who draw near wise teachers and seek liberation will be temporarily sheltered in the monastery and protected by dragons and spirits.

Those whose minds are obscure and entangled by fetters keep their bodies warm. They do not detect any ignorance and do not realize that their lifespan is reducing. They only memorize the words of the teachings and consider that attainment of the ultimate truth. When their lifespans come to an end, they transform and wither, falling into the evil realms. How can a man with a sharp mind not be touched by this?

Lord Rong was born in Feng Xiang, Gao State and left the homelife at Jin Ju *Dhyana* Center at Bai Yun Mountain, Hu County of Yong Zhou.

Written on April 8th, the second year of North Song's third period of reign.

***Dhyana* Master Hua of Ying An Responds to Elder Chuan's Letter on the Inheritance of the Dharma**

Old monk I left the homelife at a young age for the right reasons. Shaving my head and wearing robes are proper causes. Being aware of how I do not yet understand birth and death, I learn that wind is blowing when I see grass moving and I draw near true good teachers. These are proper causes. As for having left the world and led the assembly now for more than 30 years, I did not benefit myself with a trace of hair, did not become a bit lax with the duties of the abbot, did not dare relax but being vigilant throughout the day and night, without ever forgetting about being mindful of the assembly, and did not dare keep anything for myself while protecting and cherishing the monastery's resources. Though my conduct and understanding do not reach the level of the ancients, I practice to the best of my ability so that I do not disappoint anyone and feel ashamed.

I am pained that the Buddha's wisdom life is hanging in danger. It feels worse than cutting off my flesh. Being mindful of repaying the profound kindness of the Buddha, I dare not be too relaxed in sleep and during meals. Being mindful of future monks who do not yet understand the mind ground and are as if hanging upside down, I do not deceive; though I have not lived up to one in a millionth part of the ancients.

Elder, you who attended to me for three or four years, are evidently delighted. During those years, your comportment was awesome and lofty. It is delightful to see that

characteristic in you. In the latter part of the summer last year, I ordered you to be an officer in the monastery, which was when I truly got to know you. I left Zhong Shan and lived at Zhao Ting of Xuan Chen, shortly thereafter, I went to Guang Xiao at Gu Su. Two months later you received an invitation from Feng Shan. On your way there, you took a detour to meet me at Gu Su. Your not forgetting about the meaning of the Way is just like that. I did not hear any news about you after we parted, while I was thinking of you, Venerable Master Huai Jing came and showed me your letter and keepsake.

Only then did I know that whenever you open the hall, you lit incense for me upon entering the monastery. That is when I saw how evident and vast your gratitude was. Since you are now the eyes for humans and gods, your actions and entity are different than in the past. If you can really become a monk at a young age like me, travel and draw near true teachers until you transcend the world and become an abbot. If you can practice those proper causes of the treasury of conducts accordingly, I will not have bestowed [the Dharma] upon you in vain. In that case, why would I worry that the *Chan* lineage will become quiet and deserted? Best wishes. There is nothing else I can send as a token other than a stick of whisk and a set of Dharma robes. Please accept them.

July 7th, Ren Wu year of Shao Xing Reign. A reply letter from old monk Tan Hua, Ying An, at Guang Xiao Monastery of Pingjiang Fu. (A spoken response recorded in writing.)

Dhyana Master Ran of Yi Shan's Essay of Vows

I take refuge with the Taming Master of the ten directions who proclaim pure and subtly wonderful dharmas. May the liberated monk of the Three Vehicles and the Four Fruitions be compassionate and gather me in. I have contradicted the true nature and falsely entered the flow of confusion, floating and sinking along with birth and death, chasing after form and sound and becoming greedy and tainted. The Ten Entanglements^{lxiv} and the Ten Fetters^{lxv} accumulate to become the causes of outflow. The six senses and the six sense objects falsely create boundless offenses, drowning in the bitter sea and sinking deeply into stray paths. Attached to the self, one obstructs others; nominate crooked individuals, one dismisses honest ones. The karmic obstructions from many lives and all faults have been repented of by pouring out my heart. Due to the compassion of the Triple Jewel, may the Capable of Humane One, [Shakyamuni Buddha] save me and good friends by bringing me along out of the deep waterhole of afflictions and reach the other shore of Bodhi.

I hope everyone's foundation of blessing and future will grow in this lifetime; I wish everyone's seeds of wisdom and sprouts of their spirit will together grow beautifully in the next life.

May I be born in a major country and always encounter a wise teacher, leave the homelife with proper faith and enter the path as a young virgin, and that my six senses are sharp and my three karmas are pure.

May I not be tainted by secular conditions and always cultivate Brahma conduct.

May I be attached to upholding the prohibitive precepts so that the karma of sense objects does not invade.

May I strictly guard comportment and never harm an insect.
May I not encounter the eight difficulties and never miss any of the four conditions.
May my *prajna* wisdom appear before me and that I not lose my resolve for Bodhi.
May I practice the Proper Dharma and understand the Mahayana, opening up the doors of the Six *Paramitas* and cross the seas of eons during three *asamkhyeyas*.
May I build Dharma banners everywhere and rip webs of doubt into shreds, taming the multitude of demons and glorify the Triple Jewel.
May I serve all Buddhas throughout the ten directions without weariness, practicing and studying all dharmic practices so that I thoroughly know them, vastly create blessings and wisdom to universally benefit beings as many as grains of sand and acquire the six kinds of spiritual penetrations and perfect the fruition of Buddhahood in one lifetime. Then pervasively enter burdensome sense objects without abandoning the Dharma Realm, like the kindness of Guan Yin and the seas of vows practiced by Universal Worthy.
May I make appear physical forms that proclaim wonderful Dharma depending on the species in this realm and other places. Perhaps I may emit great light or exhibit various spiritual transformations in the hells, in the realms of suffering, and in the places of hungry ghosts. So that those who see me in form, hear my name all bring forth the resolve for Bodhi and forever leave the suffering of transmigration.
May the grounds of heated cauldrons and icy rivers turn into fragrant forests.
May those who drink copper and eat metal become transformationally born in the Pureland.
May those who don fur and wear horn, bearing debt and suffering end all their misery and be touched by benefits and joy.
During plagues and spread of diseases, may I appear as medicinal herbs to cure severe and lingering diseases.
During famine, may I manifest as grains to save impoverished and hungry individuals.
Wherever I can be of benefit, may I start to help and promote such help.

Next, I hope my enemies and dearly beloved from past lives and current retinues who are bobbing up and down among the four types of beings abandon their love and entanglements from myriad eons and realize Buddhahood together with sentient beings. Space may end, but my vows will not end.
May sentient beings and insentient beings together perfect the core of wisdom.

***Dhyana* Master Qian of Mi An, Kai Shan, Responds in Writing to Minister Chen**

Let me say humbly. I am glad to hear that you gave up your leisure time to light incense, sit in silence and make progress on the Way. How delightful it is! Meditation is like taking the national civil examinations. The goal for participating in the examinations is to be placed in a civil post. One cannot acquire an office, fame, riches, status, and glory for an entire lifetime without being placed through the civil exams. The goal of meditation is to awaken to the Way. One cannot acquire blessings, virtues, wisdom that transcend the Triple Realm without awakening to the Way. As I quietly reflect, I consider it easy to awaken to the Way but difficult to be placed through the civil examinations. Why? I may have the scholastic achievement but others are the judge. Is it not difficult to have our perspectives match? Hence it is difficult to be placed through the civil examinations.

While I am the one who investigates *Chan* and I am the one who enters certification, is it not easy to match my emptied views with the mind's emptied views? Therefore enlightenment is easy.

However, very few cultivators among so many become enlightened, why? That is because they have a self. Where there is a self, one cannot reach certification; hence this is the difficulty in that which is easy. Among so many scholars, many are placed through the civil examinations too, why? Their views match. When their views match, they will be selected; hence that is what is easy in that which is difficult. It is easy to have views match but difficult to have no self.

In comparison, it is easy to have no self; it is difficult to be devoid of "no self." In comparison, it is easy to be devoid of "no self"; it is difficult to be devoid of "being devoid of no self." In comparison, it is easy to be devoid of "being devoid of no self"; it is difficult to be devoid of "devoid of being devoid of no self." In comparison, it is easy to be devoid of "being devoid of being devoid of no self," it is difficult to knock down a row of seats. Therefore, Upasaka Pang said, "It is no lie to be able to smelt three mountains' worth of iron and melt copper the size of five mountain ranges."

Having written to this point, may this bring a smile to your face when you gather around the stove to talk about nonproduction.

Lord Wen Sima's Interpretative Verses on *Chan*

In your writing, you consider the Buddha the sage of the west. If you truly believe this as stated in your writing, you will know the mind of the Buddhas. People who talk about *Chan* nowadays like to confuse each other with coded words and compete with one another in magniloquence, thus upsetting practitioners and making them more lost and confused. Consequently, I wrote six verses interpreting *Chan* to elaborate upon your writing. If they are true, we may just practice in China. Why go west? If not, it is beyond my knowledge.

*Anger burns like fire;
Desire is sharp like spears.
Be sad all day long
And live in what is called the Avīci Hells.*

*Yan Hui lived in calm some decrepit street;
Meng Ke developed righteous energy.
Wealth and nobility are like floating clouds.
That is called the Land of Ultimate Bliss.*

*With loyalty and trustworthiness,
One travels barbaric lands with ease.
Doing good brings on all manner of luck,
Which is about creating cause and effect.*

*Words are teachers for countless generations;
Conduct is the Dharma for the world.
They cannot be cloaked for long,
As they are a part of an indestructible body.*

*The humane one's peaceful abode,
The proper path of just individuals
Practiced sincerely and long,
Is called the Treasury of Light.*

*The merits of developing one's moral ethics
Cover all myriad things.
One becomes a worthy individual, a great sage,
Who is called a Buddha, a Bodhisattva.*

Yang Shan's Rice

Written by Secretary of Domestic Affairs, Ruan Zhongda
(Part of the outer collection of Secretary Ruan of Domestic Affairs)

Yang Shan's rice, Yang Shan's rice, each grain is like a pearl that glistens with a brilliance. Consumers should know that it is difficult to come by. I will briefly illustrate this point for everyone.

Eastern marshes and western farmlands early in the spring morning, farmers and housewives are cold and hungry. When the thick of the land wells forth, they get a move on agriculture. The necks of the ox grow sores but they continue to drag the plough. The summer sprouts are blooming but have not yet bore fruit. For four days there was no rain but intense sun. Their backs are dry, their faces crack and beads of sweat drip down their chests. In toiling they only worry that weeds sprout. The grains are ripe in deep autumn like yellow clouds. They harvest during the day and pound it at night with bittersweet hard work. The petty village official rushes and supervises, urging rent for the emperor. One will personally face the consequence of absconding with mortgage tax; one will be whipped for not making payment on government debts; sell your land and house if you have not paid your personal debts.

Have their parents, spouse and children ever been full? Each family saves rice and is embarrassed to offer just gruel. When the old abbot monk begs at each door, this beggar takes whatever small amount^{lxvi} he can get. Their hands and feet become calloused but they dare not be too concerned about their own bodies. They never rest, rain or shine. The door to the Sangha dining hall is still closed early in the morning while staff working in the universal offering kitchen has already risen. They only worry that monastics will eat late. It is the same way everyday. Rice soup is all over the floor as thick as fat while kitchen staff discards husks, keeps the extractives for cooking, and transports firewood. Boiling hot water, setting up fire, and heating the steamers and cauldrons, the kitchen staff carries out their duties and offers their strengths. They are tired indeed.

When the sounds of the long boards end, the wooden fish roars. Sitting upright on the meditation bench, we hold up the bowl to accept the food. If we were to describe the efforts involved in transforming raw food to cooked food in detail, I am afraid you monks will find it difficult to eat the food because it did not come from the culinary world and was not offered by ghosts and spirits. One spoonful, one ladle and even one bowl are all money from faithful donors who pray for blessings. The cantor's mallet clangs like the faint sounds of earrings, together singing sluggishly the names of the Buddhas ten times. When a meal is just a little late, anger arises. Monks completely forget the second precept then. The ancients were busy studying the Way, visiting good teachers and traveling all places. They cooked tree barks, grass and leaves in a pan. They never had this kind of food to quell their hunger. A century's lifespan is like dreams and illusions. If you want to investigate and ask about *Chan*, it is best to do it soon. With the mind-ground not yet clear, even the Buddha cannot digest the rice at Yang Shan.

Assistant Minister Bai's Six Verses of Praise and Preface
(From the Chang Qing Collection)

I, Le Tian, always make vows. May I turn my mundane literary skills of this life into the conditions for praising the Buddha vehicle and turn the Dharma wheel in future lives. I just turned 70. I am old and sick, quite close to a future life. Therefore I composed these six verses and sing them while genuflecting before the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. I hope these become the start of and the budding conditions for that which is fundamental in future lives.

Praising the Buddha

*Worlds throughout the ten directions above and below heaven,
I now know there is no one like the Buddha.
Dignified and towering, he is the teacher for gods and humans.
Therefore I bow at his feet and praise and take refuge.*

*Seeing the millions of billions of Buddhas in the past,
Achieving realization because of the Dharma, all in the sutras.
The great wheel of Dharma is the great treasury of gems.
Therefore I place my palms together and sincerely dedicate merit.*

*Those Enlightened to Conditions, the Sound Hearers and all great sramanas,
Their outflows end and fruitions perfected, they are venerated in the assembly.
With the power of harmony, they pursue the unsurpassed path;
Therefore I respectfully bow to the Sangha jewel.*

*Ordinary beings in the realm of those with fur and beings in the house on fire:
All sentient beings born of womb, eggs, moisture and transformation.
If they plant roots of goodness,
they will ultimately realize the fruition of Buddhahood.*

I do not slight you and you should not slight yourself.

*All offenses created since time immemorial,
Be they minor or major, they are neither great nor small.
For me to seek signs in-between and inside or out,
Makes it impossible. This is about repentance.*

*May my afflictions depart and may I abide in nirvana.
May I step onto the Ten Grounds and may I save the four kinds of beings.
When the Buddhas emerge in the world, may I draw near them,
And let me be the first to request the turning of the Dharma wheel.
May I be present when the Buddhas enter extinction,
And let me be the last to make offerings and receive a prediction for Bodhi.*

Self-Admonitions by Dharma Master Yuan of Tian Tai

The three realms are vast and it is a prison, confining living beings who undergo suffering and sadness. Their original faces have long been buried. Their minds are like wild horses without harnesses, roaming aimlessly. Their desires are like fire burning the forests of merit and virtue while irreversible flows of water surge into the dock of ignorance. Myriad beings are like mosquitoes creating a racket in a container, flying about noisily. They have been to the hall of the heavenly kings and to the pot of King Yama. Circling about, they crash into the womb again. Intercourse stinks while bodies are like collections of foam, temporarily held together by a sack of blood and pus and supported by several pieces of bones. The seven types of emotions scurry about without knowing to return while the six senses compete to be the master. The spring breeze cannot change the waves of the past, which embody greed and hatred like wolves and tigers.

Living beings may have their appearance altered, but they continue to scheme, hence experiencing humiliation and misery. The noble and base, wise and stupid, me and others, correct and wrong, praise and slander are the same nowadays as those in the past. The sun and moon touch the sky; elders and youngsters all become dirt. I sigh over the fact that all of a sudden, it is already too late. Those who follow social trends live in vain.

As I reflect on ancient saints and sages, I cover my face with my sleeves in shame. Now that I have caught the true master of the self, I do not care when the demon of death arrives. Do not use those old tricks; instead, spur yourself on in this lifetime. Do not turn your back to the cave of right and wrong; rather, establish lofty goals far beyond that of fame and wealth. Search for your own faults. Why stoop to compete with conventional people? Let that one bright ray of light of the mind beam directly toward the Western Pureland and let the myriad petty matters wind and unwind. Do not corner yourself into snail antennas trying to steal illusory fame. Focus and seek the eminent position on a golden lotus. Whether it is death, sickness or aging, deal with the afflictions of the moment. Cultivation is only hard on the legs, so sit with your spine straight and do not lie

down. Do not incorrectly identify your standards but guard well the treasure in your garment.

May all foes and beloved ones throughout the Dharma Realm together ride the white ox cart on this straight path.

End of *Advice for Monastics Fascicle Six*

Advice for Monastics Fascicle Seven

A Short Dharma Talk by *Dhyana Master Kai of Fu Rong*

We became monks because we were weary of sense objects and sought to become liberated from birth and death. To be monks is to let go of the mind, cease thinking, and end the exploitation of relations; hence the term, “leaving the householder’s life.” How can we let average offerings bury our entire life? We only need to let go of both ends and put everything down in-between. Treat sound and form like flowers planted on stones; see gain and fame as gum in the eyes. Not to mention the fact that, we have experienced all this since time immemorial. It is not that we do not know the sequence, but we simply turn head to tail. That is all that we do. Why bother be bitter, greedy and infatuated? Until when should we wait to let go, if not now? This is why earlier sages teach people to let go of all idle thoughts now. Being fully present in the now, what is there? If there is nothing in the mind, even the Buddhas are enemies. All secular things will naturally be cool so that things start to resonate.

Do you not see, Yin Shan refused to receive people throughout his entire life; Zhao Zhou refused to offer explanations to people all his life; Bian Dan picked up chestnuts for food; Da Mei wore lotus leaves; the Paper Robe Practitioner wore only paper; senior monk Xuan Tai only dressed in cotton; and Shi Shuang established Withered Wood Hall for practitioners to sit, sleep and let go of thoughts. We only need to let our mind die. Tou Zi had people prepare rice, cook and eat together, so as to save some effort in cooking.

The aforementioned are role models of the past. How can we reach any level of satisfactoriness without strength? Little old me have not accomplished anything in terms of conduct and yet remain shamefully within the gates of the monastery. How can we sit here and waste the monastery’s resources and forget all of a sudden the instructions of early sages? If you, humane ones, investigate this, you will certainly acquire gain. If you do not want to shoulder it, your future lives could be difficult.

Now we shall emulate abbots of ancient times. Everyone discuss and establish some policies. We will not go down the mountain to attend any meal offerings or pursue donors. We will just divide up the monastery’s income for one year into 360 portions, one for each day. We will not increase or decrease expenses based on the number of people; but if the daily budget is enough for rice, we will cook rice. If it is not enough for rice, then we will cook gruel. If it is not enough for gruel, we will make rice soup. New visitors will be greeted with tea and hot water only. There will be no snack. We will set

up a tea house so visitors may get tea. We must reduce extraneous conditions and focus on our practice. After all, there is plenty of work to do and not too few scenic places to visit. Flowers smile and birds chirp; wooden horses whine long and stone ox walk well. The green mountains beyond the sky is lacking in color while the flow of water by my ears is silent. The orangutans' crows on the mount reveal the mid-month moon. In the forest; cranes cry out at the wind in response to pines in clear dawn. The spring wind rises and withered trees hum. Autumn leaves fall and flowers bloom in cold forests. Patterns of moss cover jade steps while people's faces wear mist and clouds in the twilight. Sounds cease and news sink into silence. When everything is really dreary, the mind has nothing to cling onto.

It is inconvenient enough for me to talk about the policies at our monastery before all of you, how can we bother to get on the podium in the hall and rooms, picking up pestles and erecting whisks, scolding and beating left and right? Raising eyebrows and glaring as if we had epilepsy? Not only do we inconvenience senior members, we also disappoint past sages. Do you not see, Bodhidharma came westward and below the Mountain Shao Shi, faced the wall for nine years? The second patriarch stayed in the snow and cut off his arm. He experienced every form of hardship; but Bodhidharma did not say a word and the second patriarch did not ask one question. Do we say what Bodhidharma did was abnormal? Do we consider what the second patriarch did displeased his teacher? Every time we monks talk about the actions of ancient sages, we feel as if we have no ground to stand on. We are ashamed enough as it is that people of latter generations are soft and weak, not to mention that they are surrounded by hundreds of delicacies as offerings. We say we can only bring forth the resolve when we are replete with the four types of items; but I am afraid that it will be too late by the time you act, it may be another incarnation already. Time flies and it will indeed be a pity to waste time. Furthermore, in the long run, you will need many people to rescue you.

Monk I cannot force any teachings on you. Do you all still remember that verse by the ancients?

*The husk-free millet rice of the fields in the mountains;
The wild vegetables and bland condiments,
Eat as you will. If you do not eat,
Then you may travel anywhere you please.*

I only hope that you practitioners will all work hard. Take care.

Dhyana Master Huang Bo's Instructions for the Assembly

Without a breakthrough in your meditative investigation before your last day, you will certainly be caught in chaos. Some heretics sneer when they hear people talk about others applying effort, "You still have this attachment." Let me ask you, "When death arrives all of a sudden, how will you resist the cycle of birth and death?" Just think about it, there is a lesson here. How can one be Maitreya by nature or Shakyamuni spontaneously?

Some loafers and wild ghosts, as soon as they see someone slightly ill, will tell the patient, “Just put it down.” When people are sick, they cannot comprehend the situation and are in a mess. Helpless, they feel as if their flesh is being chopped to pieces by a sharp knife and they have no control. Whenever we are free, we should try to put everything down so that things will be easier for us when we are busy. Do not wait until you are thirsty to dig a well, you will not be able to accomplish any goal of yours at that time. How can you avoid a messy situation like that?

The path ahead is dark while you crash and wander about randomly. How miserable. You typically only pay lip service to *samadhi*, talking about *dhyana* and the Way, then scold the Buddhas and yell at the patriarchs. You cannot use any of that here. You usually only care about deceiving others; how do you know that you are not deceiving yourself today? The *Avīci* Hells will definitely not release their hold on you. However, now that the deteriorating Dharma is about to drown, it depends entirely on powerful fellow cultivators to shoulder the burden as they move forward, extending the wisdom life of the Buddhas so that it does not end. Now we have a few traveling monks who only tour scenic attractions. They do not know how much time they have; as soon as one breath does not return, it is the next life, and who knows what face they will wear then?

I urge you fellow cultivators to acquire some sound understanding while you are still strong and healthy, so that you will not be deceived over this major matter. These gates are extremely easy to go through, but you refuse to do it. You do not have that do-or-die attitude. You only keep saying that it is difficult beyond difficult. I would like you to know, how can trees produce wooden ladles? You must do some work to turn logs into ladles.

If you are a man, read some koans from the past. When a monk asked Zhao Zhou, “Does a dog have the Buddha nature?” Zhao Zhou said, “None.” Investigate the word “none” 24 hours a day; investigate it during the day, at night, while walking, standing, sitting and lying down. While dressing and eating, relieving excrement or urine, contemplate the word “none” in thought after thought and vigorously apply the essentials.

After a long time, everything will become one and the flowers of your mind will suddenly blossom and you will awaken to the knowledge of Buddhas. Then you will not be deceived by the tongues of old monks in the world; instead you will open your mouth wide. Bodhidharma came and rocked the boat in the east while it was a mistake for the World Honored One to pick up a flower. Having reached this [enlightened] state, why bother talking about King Yama? Thousands of sages cannot move you. Skeptics question, “How can it be that special?” Why? Nothing is difficult to a man who is absolutely determined.

Here is a verse:

*Sense objects peel away, this is no ordinary matter.
Work on the tips of a rope with care.
Without going through the bone-chilling cold,*

How can plum blossoms smell so sweet?

An Essay by Elder Xu Xue Encouraging Youngsters at the Monastery to Study Diligently

Unpolished jade cannot become a vessel; people who do not study cannot know the Way. Monks fortunately acquired a body where they part with nets of dust. Living in huge halls and large buildings, be sure that you do not become self-satisfied with the mere ambition of warmth and fullness. Young and healthy, if you do not study diligently, do not investigate the principles and do not correct your breathing, how would you be able to make proclamations before sages? How could you converse with scholars? Without learning about writing, texts, and commentaries, how can you correspond with the officials and elites? How can you respond to monastics? When you have knowledge of the past and the present, you can make clouds and smoke surge from beneath your pen. Only then can you understand the body, the inherent nature and even life. If you are lazy and make the excuse that you do not meet the criteria for receiving the Way, then you are ruining your life. Like monkeys and other beasts that can be taught the arts; parrots and other birds can be taught to sing. People are the most intelligent among all creatures. If we do not study, we are worse than animals and fowl.

Teachers should be strict. If teachers are strict, the Way will be respected. If teachers are too lenient with young students, students will complain later that they did not learn much. It would be better if teachers were *too* strict with young students, so that they will be grateful later for having learned a lot. Children leave parents to become disciples of teachers; however, teachers who are too lenient indulge the students in their laziness. Having missed their time for learning, their proclamations are dull, their utterances are shallow, their writings are awkward, and their handwriting is clumsy. When they realize how incapable they are at everything, they only start to regret it and lay the blame on their teachers.

What does it mean by utmost gratitude? When I first became a monk and followed my master, the instructions were extremely strict and stiff. Only after we completed community work did we dare take care of personal business. We were forbidden to step out without good reason. We had to memorize texts and our writings had to be upright. We had to understand the principles and had to be properly mindful. After polishing in this way day after day, months after months did we restore that which is inherent in us, wondrous clarity. By then, the sea of our nature is clear and lucid; the pearl of our mind is translucent and sparkly. Those who study how to be immortals will set their foot on Peng Lai while those who study Buddhism will reside in the world of bliss. At that time, one will be most grateful for the effect of strict instructions from teachers.

***Dhyana* Master Qing of Yue Ku Instructs Youngsters at the Monastery**

All you youngsters at the monastery listen to my instructions.

Highrisers begin with the foundation down below; greatness begins with the minute. All worthy individuals and sages of the past and present developed similarly. There are rather many examples in Confucianism and even more in the Shakya clan. There are too many to quote, but I will only name two or three. Even the emperors of Yu and Xia dynasties had to be tested many times. Even the two patriarchs Hui Ke and Hui Neng, had to serve diligently. One thought of true cause produces outcome thousands of times grander.

If you wear monastic robes without being a monk, you will not achieve anything. Even if you ruin your outward appearance, you only add to your dark karma. You of young and old, be especially sincere now. Apply yourself truly and do not go with the secular flow; remain on the ground of purity and consider how difficult it is to encounter Buddhism.

Upon seeing the Buddhas and the monks, vigilantly pay your respects and admire them. If you can critique yourself, then you are a man. Passing by donors, greet them first. Do not greet other monastics too late when crossing paths. Do not be lax about lighting a light in the evening and incense in the morning. While eating gruel in the morning and the noon meal, maintain a sense of shame at all times. When it is your turn to serve at the Buddha hall and dorms, best clean diligently and not be lazy in serving others. Be like the elites in your comportment, whether stopping or going. Remain silent and do not interrogate juniors.

Master the Buddhist sutras and become especially knowledgeable about Chinese classics^{lxvii}. Only when you have a rough idea about the past and present will you understand how to behave as a human being. If you act like a mute, what is the use of being a monk? Before the Thus Come One realized Buddhahood, he was capable in both the literary and martial arts. When he first started to teach, Yong Jia was already well-versed in both the *Chan* and Teaching Schools. Zi Yun had said, “Someone who wants to be Yan Hui is a disciple of Yan Hui. Riding a horse that wants to be a stallion is to mount a stallion.” Shakyamuni Buddha did no wrong in teaching a disciple to recite the word “sweep.”

Every one of you must work hard and do not procrastinate thoughtlessly. Be firm and lofty in the goals you set so you do not fall to the level of ordinary beings. The sutras say, “Establish goals like high mountains and plant virtues as deep as the sea.”

With such heartfelt urgings, I hope that you will become this type of human being who repays the utmost kindness of Buddhas and saves beings from endless suffering. Behave in this way everyday so that you are not ashamed. A verse says:

*Carrying a pestle to slash grass, one demonstrates as a fine model.
To inherit and extend [the lineage] requires a bold disciple
Who with one sudden thought, sever the three times.
One receives the singular transmission directly from that hairy old foreigner^{lxviii}.*

Upasaka Shan Gu, Minister Huang’s Text of Vows

In the past the Lion King had the immaculate Dharma for his body. In the empty valley of supreme meaning, he was quick and roared. His bow of thoughts and arrows of sharp understanding, shield of kind sympathy and persistent patience, led him to wreck the army of demon kings. In *samadhi* he was always delighted. He took sweet dew for savory food, the flavor of liberation for drink. Traveling through the three vehicles, he peacefully abided in All Wisdom and turned the unsurpassed Dharma wheel.

Now I praise him for his proper nature and honest words. With my body, mouth and mind I compare and contemplate, repenting earnestly:

Since time past, I had love because of delusion. Drinking wine and eating meat added to my thirst for love. I entered the forest of deviant views and could not become liberated. Now I wish to make some imposing vows before the Buddhas.

From today forward until lives into the future, may I never engage in sexual conduct, may I never take intoxicants, and may I never eat meat. Were I to become lustful, I shall fall into the hells and for limitless eons remain in a pit of fire. I shall suffer on behalf of all beings who are troubled by lust and receive their insufferable retribution. If I were to take intoxicants, I shall fall into the hells, drinking liquid copper for limitless eons. I shall suffer on behalf of all beings who are mixed up over intoxicants and suffer their deserved retribution. If I were to eat meat, I shall fall into the hells, swallowing hot iron pellets for limitless eons.

May I, throughout eons into the future, bear various situations for the sake of my vows and remain pure with my sense faculties. May I be replete with the Ten Patiences. May I require no one to teach me in entering All Modes of Wisdom and yet compliantly accord with the Thus Come Ones and manifest the doing of Buddhist work in boundless realms of beings. I reverently hope that all those who clearly understand and are adorned with the myriad virtues throughout the ten directions will certify me in universe after universe, in dust mote after dust mote. Even if I go through the *galala* and forget my original vows, may they bless me and unveil my clouds of confusion. May I bow to the impartial true emptiness with earnestness that borders on exasperation.

A Short Dharma Talk by Monk Yue of Yun Feng

(Stone engravings at Hu Ying)

The Master gave one of Monk Bai Zhang's instructions to the assembly. "Here you are as a team of juniors. Not only do you not know the sutras, *vinaya* and shastras, but when you enter the assembly to meditate, you do not know how either. What will you do when your last day arrives?"

The Master said:

Obviously you senior members are far removed from the time of the sages. People's minds are shallow. Looking at the monastery now, it is even worse. Three hundred or 500 disciples gather at a place en masse. They consider it prosperous when food is abundant and dorms warm. How many among them diligently work at the Way? Assuming there are ten or five, they go up and down, half green and half ripe, always saying, 'I know how.' Each considers himself holding the gem of the magic python. Who is willing to recognize his faults? Who is willing to be tested by verbal and physical gesticulations for the sake of the future? Indeed, there is not one in 10,000. What misery.

As it is said, 'Each year the monastery's *prajna* withers, the wild grass of ignorance grows by the year.' You juniors only join the assembly to receive offerings, sitting there and greet with your hands. You do not pick one stalk of vegetable and do not move one bundle of wood. Your fingers never touch water and you are not involved with anything. You may be happy temporarily but you may end up letting the three destinies burden you. Do you not see that the teachings say, 'You would rather have iron metal wrap about your body than to accept robes from faithfuls. You would rather drink liquid copper than to accept food from faithfuls.'

Seniors, if you reach enlightenment, even offerings such as the great earth turned into gold or the Yangtze River stirred into cream would be quite common for you to digest. Without realizing the Way, you must don fur and wear horn, drag a plough and haul a rake to begin to repay for just a drop of water or a piece of thread. Do you not know the patriarchs said, 'Enter the path without understanding the principle, then you will have to repay faithful donors in another life.' 'When the elder is 81, the tree grows no mushrooms.' This kind of repayment is true. The time for all you seniors are precious and time does not wait. Do not wait until the day that your eyes are permanently shut to know that you had no merit whatsoever as a monk. When you sink into the pain of a hundred tortures in the iron fence, do not say that I did not tell you so. Take care.

**An Inscription on Thoughts About the Path
By Monk Guan of Yue Lin**

Superior individuals who investigate the esoteric, be sure you do not waste any time. You must use a boat to cross a river; you must have a goal. Though the labels are different, they are neither one nor dual. Unfortunately the amount of the Buddhadharma is not immense, though there really is not one special Dharma among them. Once you access the switch, your natural wisdom manifests without a teacher. A wise teacher has the heart of a doting old woman, teaching people without taboo. The universe appears on the tip of one hair, there is no escape here. Sing the song of De Shan, for those who cultivate the Way should be like that.

When Buddhas and patriarchs emerge, they must remain silent, bite their tongues and swallow every wrong. People who accomplish feats are the same from past to present. Before blurry drowsiness parts, one already signs a contract for land [sealing fate]. Everyone is replete with this but refuses to turn around and look. Everyone must reach one's homeland; do not be attached to fame or position. All Thus Come Ones of the past do not depart but now sigh; all Bodhisattvas of the present receive predictions in turn. The wise ones secretly nod their heads. With empty minds, they reach enlightenment on their own. Fools do not believe and accept this but abandon their homes and escape. How sad. They must wake up immediately and see truly meaningful work. The highest principles of the *Chan* sect contain infinite usages. Whether heading left or right, one always encounters the source of origin; at the same time one does not leave mundane activities either. Men with copper heads and metal foreheads must hit the ground with them. May this merit and virtue reach all beings.

A Short Dharma Talk by *Dhyana* Master Shen of Ci Shou

This mind is pure like space, without a bit of appearance. Any thought raised goes against the Dharma substance. Step back and you accord with it. But you simply refuse to take a step back. Let it go and you will be happy, but you refuse to let it go. This is probably the result of habits created since time immemorial. The ancients first beat back greed, hatred and delusion in studying the spiritual path, then let your mind be cold anywhere you go. Like a fan in December, no one will even take a look at it. Let die fame and fortune and taste blandness. When the mind for the mundane is slight, thoughts about the path is naturally thick.

Mountain monk Bian Zhan boils picked chestnuts for food his entire life. Great Master Yong Jia did not eat hoed vegetables. Preeminent monk Hui Xiu wore the same shoes for 30 years, patched and sewed. He walked barefoot on soft earth because he was afraid of damaging offerings from faithfuls and found it difficult to consume donations. After all, donors sequestered those goods from their wives and children. Once they brought you the offerings, they will ask you to bless them and allow them to repent of offenses.

The offerings you accept and use throughout the day require the work of others. You eat when you are not yet hungry; you dress when you are not yet cold; you bathe when you are not yet dirty; and you sleep when you are not yet tired. Your eye of the Way is not yet clear and your mind's outflow has not yet ended. How can you be worthy of offerings? Therefore the virtuous ones of old said, "To realize the Way, we take the offerings. Before the Way is realized, how can we digest the gifts?" This is why my monastery will not be a place where everyone just eats gruel and rice and pass the day. If we waste the offerings, the gods will be displeased and bad tea and plain food will be difficult to digest too. Nowadays novice *bhikshus* eat and sleep, doing whatever pleases them to pass the day and are still unhappy.

Monastics are like whetting stones. Anyone who wants a sharp knife will come. This stone polishes Smith when he comes and Jones when he comes too. In one polishing after

another, other people's knives become sharper while your stone gradually diminishes. Some even resent others for not coming. What bargain is there in having your whetting stone do the polishing? Eating offered food is like eating poison; accepting offerings is like being shot. A thick stash of cash and sweet words are feared by practitioners.

If you accord with the Way, evidently you may digest even tens of thousands of ounces of gold. This cannot be achieved with talk; you have to truly be at that level. Lofty words are useless and only fool yourself and others.

Nowadays no one talks this way in the monasteries. Do not reckon my talk is nonsense. Remember it and take it down. Ponder it out of respect. Take care.

A Formal Lecture by National Master Wu Ye of Da Da, Fen Zhou

Some monks ask me:

Since the Twelve Divisions of the Teachings came to this land, there have been more than one or two who reached the fruition of the Way. Why did Bodhidharma come eastward to propagate the *Chan* School, which is about the direct pointing-to of the mind and the seeing of one's inherent nature? How could it be that Shakyamuni Buddha omitted some teachings? For instance, the preeminent virtuous ones and Sangha members of earlier generations who studied the nine philosophies and penetrated the *Tripitaka* clearly, Dao Sheng, Seng Zhao, Dao Rong, and Seng Rui all demonstrated their spiritual powers at times, how could they not have known the depth of the Buddhadharma? I am stupid and hope the Master will provide instructions.

The Master said:

All Buddhas never came into the world and gave zero Dharma to anyone. Buddhas offered prescriptions based on the illness, which is why there are Twelve Divisions of Teachings. It is like trading sweet fruits for your bitter gourds, washing away people's karmic roots with the teachings. Nevertheless, all are illusions ultimately. With spiritual penetrations, transformations and thousands of *samadhi* practices, Buddhas can transform and shatter heavenly demons and heretics. By applying the two adornments of blessings and wisdom, Buddhas shatter attachments to existence [with wisdom] and shatter stagnation in emptiness [with blessings]. If you do not know the Way and the intention of Bodhidharma coming east, what is the point of discussing Dao Sheng, Seng Zhao, Dao Rong, and Seng Rui?

Nowadays, individuals as many as sand grains explain *Chan* and the Way; millions and billions talk about the Buddhas and the mind; but they have not cleared one strand of affliction. They cannot avoid transmigration.

Without ending their thoughts, they will completely fall. These types of individuals cannot even recognize their own karmic consequences, not to mention how they falsely talk about benefiting themselves and others. They consider themselves elite and the likes of past virtuous ones. They claim, 'Whatever I see is the work of Buddhas; wherever I go is the Bodhimandala.' But in actuality, their habits are worse than ordinary men who adhere to the Five Precepts and the ten good deeds. Observing their speech, they despise those of the Two Vehicles and Bodhisattvas of the Ten Grounds. These teachings are savory delicacies that are scarce treasures in the world. Consumed by these people, however, the teachings turn into poison.

Nan Shan did not even allow himself to be called a member of the Mahayana. Those who study words debate and argue over the intangibles while considering themselves honest like past virtuous ones. How miserable. Even lofty practitioners in the wild know to avoid offerings; hence they use stones for pillows and wash themselves in the river, abandoning fortune and salary. They may have the ability to bring peace to the world and manage citizens, but they refuse the emperor's offer of governmental posts. Not to mention the fact that the *Chan* School path is quite different. We see that after virtuous practitioners of ancient times reach enlightenment; they live in a stone cave with a grassy roof and cook meals with a pot that has a foot missing for the last 20 or 30 years. They embrace no fame and gain and do not think about money or gems. They forget utterly the world and hide among cliffs and forests. They do not arrive at the command of kings; they do not show up for various ministers' invitations.

Unlike the likes of our kind, who are greedy for fame and love gain, drowning in the paths of the world like salesmen. They have little expectation and forget the great fruition. How can all worthy individuals of the Ten Grounds not penetrate the principles of the Buddhas? How can they be less than erudite men of the common lot? That truly makes no sense. Nevertheless, when they speak the Dharma, which flows forth like clouds and rain, they are still critiqued by the Buddha, saying, 'Seeing the nature is like being separated by a film of gauze.' Since one is still attached to the sagely standards and maintains a view of cause and effect, one does not transcend one's attachment to saints and transcend all marks.

Past worthy individuals and ancient virtuous ones were lofty individuals with plenty of learning, their knowledge reaching the past and present and their clarity cover the web of teachings. They probably interpreted the sutras based on their intellectual knowledge, so they cannot tell the difference between water and milk. They do not know their self nature, and seek the truth by quieting their minds.

Sigh! Those who acquire the human body are as few as the quantity of dirt in our finger nails while those who lose the human body are as numerous as the quantity of dirt on earth. That is truly sad! Assuming several people understand the principles of the Dharma and have a little understanding, they still do not know the means to enlightenment and the entry to noumenon. They may claim that they have acquired the benefit of having transcended the world forever. Patrolling the mountains and side gullies, they slight the elites. This prevents them from ceasing the mind's outflow or understanding the level of the noumenal. They vainly age and die without any accomplishment, wasting time. In addition, intelligence cannot conquer karma and dry wisdom cannot prevent them from the wheel of suffering. Even if they were as talented as Asvaghosa and have reached understanding like that of Dragon Tree, they only prevent themselves from losing the human form in one or two lives. When the senses and thoughts are pure, one understands any situation one encounters. Sheng Gong was this way, but why admire him? He was completely off the path.

As brothers, I tell you the facts and not falsehood. Even having food in our mouths and robes on our bodies is about deceiving worthy individuals and swindling sages. Because when we acquire the ability to read minds and the wisdom eye in the future, we will look back and see that we are really eating pus and blood; until then, we will have to repay these offerings. Anyone who has already acquired spiritual fruitions will naturally attract offerings from faithfuls. Those Bodhisattvas who study *prajna* and refuse offerings should not be arrogant. They should behave as if they were walking on thin ice or scuttling across the blade of a knife.

At the time of death, with one hair's worth of ordinary or sagely emotion remaining, with a trace of thought about sense objects not forgotten, one will become reborn. Depending on their thought, they will be endowed with lighter or heavier five skandhas. They may spend time in the wombs of mules or bellies of horses; they may be cooked repeatedly in a cauldron of liquid in the joyless hells. They instantly lose all their memories, ideas, views, understanding and wisdom from the past. They become ants like before or become flies and mosquitoes once again. Though the causes are good, the effect they experience is bad. So why are you wanting?

Brothers, since greed and desire linger in your nature and the 25 existences chain your feet, you will never be able to accomplish the Way. Bodhidharma contemplated living beings of this land have the root and nature of the Mahayana. He only transmitted the mind-seal to instruct confused sentient beings. Those who acquired the teachings do not choose between ordinary beings and sages, foolishness and wisdom.

Furthermore, quality is better than quantity. A great man should cultivate directly and let it go from now on, ceasing the myriad conditions all of a sudden and crossing over the flow of birth and death. To stand out among the norm and shine singularly with the light of the true mind. Material objects cannot obstruct the true mind as they walk the Triple Realm uprightly. Why possess a six-foot body that shines with a purple golden hue, wear an aura of light and have a tongue vast and long? To see one in terms of form is all about deviant means. If we were meant to have retinues who adorn us, we will acquire them

naturally and without seeking. Mountains, rivers and the great earth cannot prevent us from seeing. We will then be replete with the great *dharani* and enjoy a thousand insights with every encounter. We do not even ask for one meal.

If you people do not act like great men, then Bodhidharma's arrival was not always beneficial or harmful. Benefit refers to how one or half a person among thousands truly becomes a Dharma vessel. Harm was already described earlier. Those who cultivate according to the teachings of the Three Vehicles can acquire the Four Fruitions or the Three Worthy Stages, developing opportunities for further progress. Therefore past virtuous ones said, "If you understand, karmic obstructions are fundamentally empty; if you do not understand, debts from past lives must be repaid." (*Records of the Transmission of the Lamp*).

A Short Dharma Talk by *Dhyana* Master Yun of Fa Chang

You should know that this is extremely difficult. Even great men with huge hearts cannot find the tips of their noses. You, being the ordinary person that you are, do not take this matter lightly and open your big mouth. I, the old man of Fa Chang, do not play to people's emotions and do not love anyone. Those who stroke you or compliment you do not have good intentions. One day when the fire and wind elements in your body disperse, you shut your eyes and die, karmic conditions good and bad, retributions fine and ugly and states of birth and death appear at once. By then you will be like crabs that fall into boiling water, stirring about haplessly. Any tricks, supernatural powers and the Buddhadharma you learned cannot be applied. The consciousness of karma is vast and blurry, without any basis. It will be too late to regret, you will get your retribution according to your conditions. It is uncertain if your human form will no longer be.

Do you not know that the ancients had said, "Those Bodhisattvas who study *prajna* must not deceive themselves. Be prudent. If one trace worth of [karma] remains, you cannot avoid the wheel of rebirth; without forgetting one thread of thought and you will plummet." Do you want to know those who wear fur and horn are about? They are those who typically do what they want. What about those who are in the tongue-pulling hells? They are the people who delude those who are lost. Do you want to know those who are stuck in ice and cauldrons of hot liquid [in the hells] are all about? They are those who abuse the faithfuls' donations. The three paths and the eight difficulties are just your mind's own creation. Only because you have not opened your spiritual eyes that this is the case. How can someone proper receive this kind of news?

What I, Fa Chang, say corresponds with the words of various sages. Not just the three or four of you have this problem. Any Bodhisattva who has not reached the patience of nonproduction has this fault, not to mention the eightfold division of gods, dragons and others. Since you have come here to spend winters and summers, do not take it lightly. I am an old man who works with my hoe in order to offer you some alms. I just described the monastic life for you, so do not be burdened by the ideas of a self and others, hence waste your life. Once the four elements split, it will be too late to apply any effort then. Some men hear people name what they are thinking and become angry, saying, "How can

such things exist in the Buddhadharma? Great enlightenment is not bounded by petty detail, to whom are you pointing?”

Let me address this individual in turn, “To what have you enlightened? Can you be liberated from the conscious thoughts of these skeletons?” Accord with the Five Precepts and the Ten Goodnesses 24 hours a day. At the assembly of Vulcher Peak, have you ever seen a Buddha who misbehaved? Are there any dishonest patriarchs? They are like cow dung and *chandana*, so how can such analogies and the so-called sages be comparable? As it is said, “The supreme taste of cream is treasured by the world but [corrupt] individuals turn it into venom.”

If you want things to click some day, start today. During all hours of the day, face the five desires and the eight winds like a blind man. Do not be moved or controlled by anything, and do not control or move anything either. Always check the door of the six senses, there should not be a trace of fault; only then are you getting a bit closer to the truth. What I, Fa Chang, am telling you tastes like bitter medicine. However, it is only bitter for a while. It will be of great help to you some day. Even after hundreds and thousands of eons, one’s karma will not become extinct; when conditions come together, one will need to undergo one’s own retribution. No one will substitute for you. May each person work hard. Take care. (A talk recorded in writing.)

Monk Gu Jing’s Reply to Viceroy Fen Yang

National Master Zhong of Nan Yang passed up three imperial invitations, which led Emperor Su of Tang Dynasty to value him even more. The emperor also became more respectful toward the Buddhas and patriarchs as a result. However, as I look to Nan Yang and reflect on this ancient master who is drastically more superior than me, beads of sweat drip down due to shame. How come you, [the Viceroy,] sent an invitation asking me to temporarily be in a position of authority at Yu Feng Monastery? How can I let Buddhism become tainted because of me, so that for millions of eons the waters of Yangtze cannot wash away its bad name?

I respectfully take in the lord’s invitation and keep it to look at myself. Release me like a monkey or a bird to enjoy the clouds and the mountains. I have nothing with which to repay you in the future, other than a stick of incense each morning and night.

***Dhyana* Master Ming Jue of Xue Dou’s Final Words Engraved on Stone Walls**

It is no small responsibility to uphold and pass on the lamp of patriarchs and inherit the life of Buddhas. It is best to respect past sages and earnestly maintain comportment. Glance with respect. Look dignified. Punish anger, suffocate desire, regulate energy and nurture the mind. Do not be affected by fame and gain. Do not be bothered by win and losses. Do not follow the up’s and down’s of the world. Do not pursue that which is right or wrong, black or white about people; just keep them in mind. Do not lose control over your feelings so that your joys and anger cannot help but materialize in your physical expressions.

Delight in others' happiness as if it were your own. Worry about others' worries as if they were your own. Be tolerant of the assembly, respect worthy individuals, restrain yourself and restore propriety. Do not lose a long-term friendship over minor disagreements. Do not defy public justness and abandon those to whom you have always been distant. Do not be conceited about your abilities; do not rely on authority. Do not shield your shortcomings and do not conceal others' strengths. Do not forget virtues that you see; do not forget the lowly when you are of high status. Not to mention we are the ones who study the fundamentals and cultivate our inherent nature, how can we get mad at those who do not know? The Way emphasizes the saving of beings without bounds.

When the Way is applied in the world, some may admire its principles and study them. You must be very sincere. Educate earnestly using rules, quote various texts widely and instruct on the wonderful school profoundly. Do not leave for a moment the room of kindness and the robe of patience. In the Jeweled Place of Great Means, [the monastery,] when one wants to do something, one must move and pause according to the regulations, and be careful about things that might induce questions and doubt. You should not humiliate others or deceive gods. Do not pursue or resist the comings and goings of the assembly. Do not get mad or greedy over others' slander or praise. You have nothing to be ashamed of inside and nothing to be pitied outside.

Perhaps when your reputation is glorious and wonderful and rich offerings brimmeth over, fear the cause and effect of the four destinies and be careful in your involvement with the Triple Jewel. You have not yet escaped birth and death and the karma of suffering is difficult to escape. When your resolve has become somewhat firm, earnestly think about how to benefit that which is proper. The body is like a toilet and offerings and fame are like tender thieves. A century [of one lifespan] is not long in the Triple Realm that has no peace. Value every bit of time and seek liberation. The ancient ones of old and all patriarchs are role models for us. Zhang Xi ate only dirt; Dan Xia owned only a coat; Zhao Zhou had dark ash all over his head; and Lang Shi weaved grass into blankets. Also, they cultivated deep *dhyana* for a long time or refused to enter the capital when invited specifically. Restrain yourself, then you rarely lose; be extravagant, then you invite teases. Be humble and there is light; yield and there is no taboo. The time of the Buddha is far away, it is difficult to practice along this path. Watch and see when are there opportunities to advance or stop. Do not humiliate yourself.

Lord Fan of Si Chuan Sees *Dhyana* Master Yuan Wu Off on His Journey

In looking at water, do not look at dirty pools. In dirty bodies of water are lowly fish and turtles. In climbing mountains do not climb meandering ranges. Meandering ranges have little vegetation. In looking at water, look at vast expanses of an ocean. In climbing mountains, step onto Mt. Tai. You will acquire something not so shallow and views quite elevated. The efforts you use will not be in vain. Fortunately in the South is a place for selecting Buddhas, head for it to learn its wondrous mission.

When you become a Dharma vessel, straighten out such dilapidated state of rules so that you will not disappoint the goal of becoming a monk. A man does not calculate for the future. Why scheme for superficial reputation that leads one to one's own destruction? Throughout your entire life, you flow with the conditions most of the time and are awake for a very limited amount of time. Do not let time secretly add years onto you.

Cheng Du is a cosmopolitan city; you stop there only because you are confused by women and wine. Why would you be willing to submerge yourself in filth? Fortunately you the Master have goals like rainbows, but what makes you hesitant and sink in mud? Don't you see the fish that swallows boats do not hide in small streams and giant trees that one cannot wrap one's arms around do not grow on the hills of immortals? With one flap of its wings, the great bird travels 90,000 miles. How can it be likened to the flying seagull by the shore? How can it be likened to harried attempts at steering a fine stallion? Do not imitate wren birds that are infatuated with one branch. Even if you can lecture on thousands of sutras, you still fall for *Chan's* secondary wit. White clouds often besot high platforms. Do not hover over the cage and settle for a while. To comfort living beings expecting rain, clouds casually come out from behind the mountains. Furthermore, do you not see that Mt. Jing has a red jade called Qiong Yao? Before met with a fine craftsman, it remained in the wilds. If it had not left Jing Chu, how could it have won prices several times more than the value of cities?

Instructions on Reading Sutras **By *Dhyana* Master Yong of Bao Ning**

Students must know the way to reading sutras. You ought to purify your three karmas. If the three karmas are complete then hundreds of blessings accumulate. The three karmas are body, mouth and mind. Sit up straight as if facing the Honored One. That is purity in the body karma. Two, utter no miscellaneous words and end all giggles and laughter. The mouth karma is then pure. Third, the mind is not scattered and the myriad conditions are set aside. That is purity in the mind karma. Since the mind is quiet and the outer states are given away, you can then awaken to the source that is true. Investigate the principles of the Dharma exhaustively just as a pearl shines in clear water and the moon is bright when clouds disperse. Sea-like meaning wells forth from the mind while mountain-like wisdom solidifies before your eyes and ears. The conditions for all this to happen do not come easily. If you can really forget both the mind and the Dharma and benefit both the self and others, that is to truly repay the kindness of Buddhas.

A Write-Up on *Vinaya* Master Yuan Zhao (First Illumination) of Da Zhi's Presentation of Robes and Bowl to *Dhyana* Master Ben of Yuan Zhao (Perfect Illumination)

On a certain day, a certain month of a certain year, *Bhikshu* Yuan Zhao (First Illumination) respectfully wrote and offered this to *Dhyana* Master Yuan Zhao (Perfect Illumination) of Jing Ci. Early on, Yuan Zhao (First Illumination) studied the *vinaya* and knew the regulations of the Buddha. *Bhikshus* must have with them these six items: three robes and a bowl, the sitting cloth and a water strainer. These are the six items that those

of above average, average and below average potential must observe in keeping. Therefore those in the Order cannot disobey these. To defy the instructions of superiors is against propriety for teachers and students.

What are the three robes? One, *samghati*, which is the great robe. Wear it when entering the village for offerings or getting on a seat to speak the Dharma. Two, *uttarasanga*, which is the typical robe. Wear it when bowing and reciting along with the assembly and accepting food in the hall. Three, *antarvasa*, the lower robe. Wear it while walking back and forth and working in the monastery. These three types of robes must consist of crude and rough ramie and dyed blue, black or brown. They should be the size of three or five elbows in length and sewed when ripped. This ends greed. The pattern of lines is clear to represent fields of blessings. The looks of them are the same style as that of sages of the Three Vehicles. In terms of name, they are unheard of by the 96 non-Buddhist sects. Describing their merits, they can prevent others from worrying about danger. Dragons wore it to escape the disaster with golden winged birds. Their merits are preserved in various parts of the great Canon and cannot be listed completely while in haste.

The bowl is *patra* in Sanskrit and called an alms bowl here. It accords with the Dharma and consists of two materials: metal and clay. It is in accordance with the Dharma to smoke it green. According to the Dharma, it should be three Chinese pecks to one-and-a-half Chinese pecks in size. It is an insignia of all Buddhas and not a regular container for the temple.

In the past when Thus Come One Kashaya transmitted to our fundamental teacher Shakyamuni a *samghati* sewn with 13 strips of rough fabric, according to the *Great Wisdom Shastra*. He had it from then until he passed away. He forwarded it to Venerable Drink Light and held it at Rooster Foot Mountain to await Maitreya. Some render it as much respect as seeing the Buddha himself. From this, we can tell that the *samghati* is respected by the Buddhas. [Bodhidharma] transmitted it to six generations of patriarchs to show the heritage of the Dharma. Hence the *samghati* is also respected by all patriarchs.

Now there is a monk named Zai Yuan, who had been holding these items for years. He recently died of a sickness. He asked his relatives to offer those robes, bowl and sitting cloth to you. It is truly about relying on your kind protection so he is receives help on journey afterlife. May our venerated *Dhyana* Master advance along the path of cultivation so various creatures rely on you given your virtue. The living and the dead will all gather under you; beings from near and far will all rush to your place like clouds. No other monastery around the world will be as successful. I think that feats are done according to opportunities, and the Way is propagated by people. May you, the wise one, temporarily lower yourself, and submit to the wishes of the lower monks, accept those items, and hold them for the sake of the deceased monk. If you do so, then the strict regulations of the great sage can be maintained, the tradition of all patriarchs will not falter.

I respectfully send a monk carrying these robes and bowl, a total of five items to you, along with a letter expressing my intent. It is up to you to decide if it is okay to accept them. I will not write any more in detail.

(According to the *Sarvāstivāda* School, the three robes are five elbows in length and three elbows in width. Each elbow's span is one Chinese foot and eight Chinese inches. According to the Zhou Dynasty unit, it is nine Chinese feet in length and five Chinese feet and four Chinese inches in width.)

A Preface to the Records of Outstanding Shakyamuni Disciples

In the history of three generations of the Sangha, monks have been selected on the bases of ten categories. The practice of reading and reciting is especially significant in merit and karma. For the emperor's birthday, the imperial dynasty issues commands to certify the authenticity of monastics throughout the country^{lix} to prolong imperial blessings. That is a form of respect for Buddhism and for its proclamations of true principles. This has been so since ancient times and especially glorious now. Currently it is really complicated to become a monk in states and provinces, candidates are selected based on the extent of their knowledge in the sutras.

Once the examination court is established, those who pass the test of having mastered the sutras are posted in public as a reward for the hard work that they put in throughout their entire lives. They will also receive the emperor's order promising leisure the rest of their lives. Wearing the robe of fields outside and carrying the precept jewel inside, they are princes of Dharma and teachers for gods and humans. They do not work on farms or mulberry orchards, but receive donations. Their minds transcend mundane objects while they travel the universe. How could the glory of Shakyamuni's disciples be any more than this?

In recent times, those who leave the secular society do not do it for the right reasons. In fact they try other occupations and do not respect their original vocation. They pretend and consider themselves members of the Dharma's flow. Perhaps they rely on their family or oppress their teachers and elders. Perhaps they place solicitation letters in their sleeves or run after companions from whom they seek benefit. Perhaps they force themselves to smile as they meet people, thus inviting frequent slander and humiliation. They experience many difficulties and hardship. Among hundreds and thousands of people who do so, less than a dozen succeed. How could they believe these are good strategies to glorify themselves and the Dharma practice of peace and happiness?

This is because they betrayed their original resolve in leaving the monastic life, or perhaps they do not have the spirit of a man in their dealings of human affairs. Not to mention how in the wonderful *Sutra of the Lotus Flower*, the ultimate teaching at Vulture Peak, the conditions of the great matter were revealed as the Buddha appeared in the world to demonstrate for all beings what he sees and knows. The teachings are truths from Buddhas who manifest in the world; they provide for living beings infinite pathways to enlightenment. Not everyone in China knows the name of this sutra;

fortunately, we have encountered it. If we do not recite and uphold it, are we not disappointing the Buddha for his kindness?

I sincerely write for those who have forgotten about their original resolve and encourage those who have not yet become monks to practice more vigorously. Hopefully you will change or understand soon. For those of you who are already enlightened, do not quit reviewing. May you finally accomplish the Way and truly digest an offering such as ten ounces of gold. At that point, you will not feel that you are short on virtue when you are respected by the fourfold assembly. The illusory body will die off, but true conduct will not become extinct. There will be signs such as a tongue like a red lotus or bones that cremate into pearls. These are listed in the *Records* in detail. Those who recognize these may learn all about them in the *Records*. Not to mention the fact that the *Prajna Sutra* talks about the blessings accrued from the delight of hearing the *Dharma Flower Sutra* recited just once.

Please accord with the sages' teachings and do not let time pass in vain. In the short run, shave your hair and become a monk. In the long run, hope you will destroy the demons and become a Buddha. If you can truly do so, why would I say anything again? I only worry about those who are monks and yet do not conduct the ten categories of practice to serve the Buddhas, letting their entire lives go by in vain. The ancient sages warned us earnestly, how could we not be touched?

Letter to Cultivator Yun from Assistant Minister Yan

I received your letter of exhortation recently, speaking of *dhyana* and reading the teachings are deeply reassuring. And you instructed me with your theory on the *Chan* and Teaching sects. I am deeply consoled after reading it. You have always given me instructions on the Dharma. I could not reply to every one of your letters due to my many duties. Now you have sent me another letter. If you did not care about me so deeply, why would you warn me with this letter? As foolish as I am, how could I know? However, I humbly doubt what you say in the letter.

It seems that you are attached to one extreme of the Thus Come One's expedient means. You still have the view of a self and others. Considering oneself right and others wrong is a major illness in the Buddhadharma. Without eliminating self and others, presumptuously talking about excellence and inferiority is just facetiousness. Endless contention becomes slander; not even attaining wonderful result, one attracts bad outcome first. One must be very careful with this. If one can cultivate diligently and perfect the practice of any one of the expedient methods of past Buddhas, then one will naturally transcend and become liberated. There is no need to be attached to the self being correct and take others to be false.

Buddhas and Bodhisattvas all praise the cultivation of the Pureland practice. More than one monastic and layperson have headed to rebirth. Not to mention how during the Dharma Ending Age, this practice is considered a shortcut. Even with the Pureland practice, however, one still needs to wash away the sense objects and the faculties,

subdue one's arrogance and believe various other Dharma doors that might not be proper paths depending on one's faith and conditions. How could one presumptuously talk about excellence and inferiority and make one's own judgment about what is superior or inferior?

Bodhidharma came westward and established the practice that is transmitted directly with the mind seal, without relying on any words. The five lineages that came forth are like the five petals of that flower [the Sixth Patriarch] from Cao Xi. People who later became enlightened through this practice were as numerous as the number of wheat, hemp, or bamboo out there. During the Tang Dynasty, national leaders respected *Chan* masters as if they were teachers and elders. Even today, *Chan* is taught so that it does not become extinct. It should not be judged as excellent or inferior. If one must quote the items in the Teaching School and judge its levels of certification, such as which stage or position certain cultivators reached, etc., that is like drawing in space, which only makes one tired. Therefore the sutras say, "This is just like people who count other people's gems but they themselves are penniless." Those who do not cultivate the Dharma but are only erudite are this way too.

I hope that you, master, eliminate your knowledge and view and not discuss those of others. Focus on the Pureland practice. Whenever I talk to you, frequently I hear you criticize the theory of no-words, claiming that this theory is wrong. If so, then Bodhidharma need not have come westward and the Second Patriarch certainly would not have cut off his arm. The fact that words of the *Chan* School are everywhere just shows the arrival of a natural decline [of the Dharma]. What is strange about it? Living beings' knowledge and views are various in the Saha World and they do not transcend with one Dharma. Therefore the Buddha expediently established various practices that reached out to the east and west, north and south, horizontally and vertically, big and small, so that all may cultivate and reach certification.

In the Avatamsaka Assembly, Mañjuśrī had to ask Enlightenment Leader, "The nature of mind is one, how come there are so many different views?" He asked Virtue Leader, "There is only one Dharma that the Thus Come One enlightened to, how come the Buddha talks about infinite dharmas?" He asked Wisdom Leader, "In the Buddhadharma, wisdom is the leader, so why does the Thus Come One praise giving, precepts, patience, kindness and compassion, joy and equanimity too? At the same time, no one transcends by practicing one Dharma alone?"

There are answers in verse for all these questions [in the sutras]. That is something you have been reciting day and night and you must profoundly understand these principles. Since each person has a different sickness, the prescriptions must be different. Now is it right for someone who recovered from some hand or foot disease with a medication, and criticizes another person with a stomach problem for not taking the medication for hands and feet? To only advocate Guan Yin among the 25 practices in the Shurangama Assembly means that we only consider Guan Yin to be fine. How can one just consider Guan Yin superior and other Bodhisattvas inferior? Gods and non-Buddhists are considered those with deviant views in Buddhism, yet the teachers in the Avatamsaka

may be non-Buddhists, kings, or female prostitutes, but they guide living beings. If we only consider “proper” cultivators correct, then Victorious Heat, Maiden Vasumitra, Insatiable King and others, under whom Good Wealth studied, can all be considered wrong.

Thousands of sutras and millions of shastras only aim to eliminate the sickness of living beings. When the illness leaves, get rid of the medicine. Why cure one when one is not sick? Due to the heavy defilements of the mind, one works on creating causes of purity; were both purity and defilement to cease, what is there to cultivate and certify? There is no abiding in the Triple Realm, where do we seek our mind? The four elements are fundamentally empty, upon what does the Buddha abide? The jewel in the lining of our jacket is wrapped by fabric; if the fabric were to deteriorate and disappear, then the pearl will naturally appear.

I am just rambling on about my lowly views as a reply to your letter of exhortation, perhaps there are others who can teach.

One more word: Be grateful.

If there are other matters that you would teach me, please write again. I will feel very fortunate indeed. Careful not to cause schisms, go astray or become sidetracked with intellectual analysis so that sophistry develops. Are you doing okay in your four elements? Has the bitterness that causes you unable to eat receded? I go through the day according to conditions. I only hope that there are no problems.

Take care until we meet again.

Judge Chen Gui Qian’s Letter of Reply to Assistant Minister Zhen Dexiu
(who had visited venerable elders such as Yue Lin and Tie Bian)

You have lowered yourself to ask me about *Chan*. I can tell that your intentions are modest and you wish for goodness. However, as shallow and poorly informed as I am, how can I accept such an inquiry? Yet, how dare I not express my limited views?

With regard to the koan and whether to watch it. From my perspective, fundamentally there is no fixed answer to it. If not-a-thought occurs, then the entire substance is Buddha. Where is there another koan? It is only because of our habits of going against enlightenment and coming together with sense objects for many lifetimes that our each thought rises and falls in every *kshana* just like monkeys picking up chestnuts. Consequently, Buddhas have to apply an expedient method, making us chew one tasteless koan so that consciousness might not arise. It is to switch the sweet fruits [of false thought] with the bitter gourd [of the koan] to wash away your karmic consciousness. The koan has no actual meaning. The koan is like the national armory that has to be used due to requisite circumstances.

Scholars nowadays try to find meaning to the koans; they even try to comment on each one of those koans. They do that as a part of their work. It is truly far away from the real intention of applied koans. Just as Cultivator Leng broke seven sitting pads in 20 years watching the koan, “See that the business of mules have not yet left and yet the business of horses have already come.” He became greatly enlightened when the curtain rolled up. As the saying goes, 84,000 switches can be turned on with one key. What does it have to do with a lot of talk?

Your letter says, “Reciting the Buddha’s words, maintaining the Buddha’s mind, and doing the practices of Buddhas for a long time, one will certainly gain.” Someone who practices in this way will not fail to be a worthy individual at that time. Nevertheless, one will not fail to be a worthy individual in one’s lifetime. The *Chan* lineage considers seeing the scenery of one’s original home the ultimate goal. Although this is something that everyone has, they are covered over by sense objects and false thoughts. If one does not put pains into their practice, they cannot become clear and pure ultimately. The *Perfect Enlightenment Sutra* says, “It is as if refining gold ore. Gold exists originally; it does not come into existence because of the refining process.” Even though the original gold is recovered, it was ultimately revealed through the process of refining.

In your letter, you also say, “If the Way is not in words or languages, why did all the Buddhas and patriarchs leave so many sutras and shastras in the world?” The sutras are the speech of Buddhas while *Chan* is the mind of Buddhas. Fundamentally, they do not contradict each other; however, people chase after words and drown in the net of teachings without realizing that there is a great bright matter of their own. Therefore, Bodhidharma came from the west and established the teaching which contains no words, pointing directly to people’s minds so that they achieve Buddhahood while realizing their inherent nature. It is “another lineage other than the Teachings.” It is not that there is some other principle outside of the teachings, it is about understanding this mind and not be attached to the marks of the teachings. Now if one just recites the words of the Buddhas and does not return to one’s own mind, then it is like someone who counts others’ gems but is himself penniless. It is also like pearls wrapped in rags that drop out when out the door. Even if one tastes a bit of the practice, it is still a fondness for the Dharma.

The truth of one’s own nature is like shreds of gold. Though they are expensive, they will still cause problems if they were dropped in the eyes. One must eradicate everything cleanly, and then there might be a minor response. Though I never read the Buddhist Canon, I am somewhat familiar with the *Avatamsaka*, the *Shurangama*, the *Perfect Enlightenment* and the *Vimalakirti* and others sutras through reciting them. Others, such as the elders’ quotes in the *Transmission of Lamps, Records of Mirrors of Chan* by *Dhyana* Master Shou [Yongming], I have browsed through them all in several decades’ time. I have only stepped in the door. However, I had no time to read sutras or shastras. Although the *Lankavatara* is the heart and tradition of Bodhidharma, its wording is difficult to understand, so I did not study it in depth.

You should know that we should be sincere. We should not try to deceive ourselves like most mundane people and use the material for talk only. We should test it out in daily life. Though we do not commit dark evils and gross mistakes, can we indeed see through and remain unaffected by all those good and bad states, favorable and unfavorable states? Is our awakening the same one during dreams? Am I scared and mixed up? Can I be in control of my illnesses? If mindstates still exist, then one will inevitably be mixed up during sleep and drowsiness. Mixed up in sleep and drowsiness, one cannot be in control during illnesses. Unable to master oneself during illnesses, one will certainly not be at ease on the shore of birth and death. So the saying goes, “Only people who drink the water know the temperature for themselves.”

Minister, if you can pay attention to this path by cultivating purely and reducing desire during the height of your status and fame, then you truly deserve to be called a lotus in the fire. As the ancients said, “This is the work of great heroes and not what generals and ministers can do.” They also say, “You may try to stand at the apex of an immense summit or walk the depth of an ocean; but you should all the more wish to reach the profundity of the distant Ground of No-Doubt. You should try to investigate more and reach higher heights, until you step onto the Ground of No-Doubt.

Your letter also says that you could not find a place to apply your effort. Just that *no-place* to apply effort is exactly the place to gain results of effort. As earlier texts said, “Apply the one eye [of the mind] to see why it is that way, whether in quiet or raucous places.” Practicing this for a long time, you will become skilled at it and will no longer feel the difference between stillness and raucous. If your mind is in chaos and rises and falls without stop, you can bring forth a *Chan* anecdote to deal with false thoughts, then the mind of arising and extinction will naturally cease, and the contemplator and that being contemplated will disappear at the same time. That is to have arrived home. I also study but have not reached that level yet. I just try my best to expose it. I just said it all out as such, no need to show this to others. I am already afraid that Confucians and Buddhists who hold different views on this will fiercely attack it. When Minister you open your mind’s eye someday, you will certainly laugh at it and scold it.

End of *Advice for Monastics* Fascicle Seven

***Advice for Monastics* Fascicle Eight**

***Dhyana* Master Ci Shou Exhorts Youngsters at the Monastery**

*The flurry of mundane truths never end,
It is a bargain to enter monastic life.
Be diligent throughout the day and night,
Avoid restless and wasting of time.*

*Move calmly to offer incense and to bow;
Behold the holy visage in sight and mind.
Repent of offenses from lifetimes with the senses.*

May the water of Dharma cleanse one's heart.

*The monkey mind is easily unleashed, how does one free it?
Horse-like thoughts are difficult to tame, but tame them still.
Without sweeping away emotions even by old age,
One cannot digest the four offerings as monastics.*

*You must study texts but recite the sutras too.
As a monk, clear the ground of the mind.
When the year comes that you get to shave your head and don your robe,
Everything shall be ready when the time is right.*

*Once you leave the homelife as a student,
Serve your master as if serving your parents.
Add incense, change the water, be diligent and cautious.
Dragons and gods certainly witness your actions.*

*Clothing, shoes and socks must be neat.
You cannot go without towels and sheets.
Always be replete with the four bodily compartments.
Never follow fools and mimic insolence.*

*Greet monks whom you meet along halls.
Welcome guests received at the gate.
The attitude of a monk must be humble and yielding.
Never imitate fools who pay no courtesy.*

*Continual consumptions of meat and alcohol as a monk
Waste your time through the Sangharama grounds.
If the mind's field is not pure by old age,
Seeds of Bodhi may not mature.*

*Do not speak of others' strengths and weaknesses,
You only invite trouble by talking that way.
Shut your mouth and bury your tongue deep within,
That is the foremost means to safety and wellbeing.*

*Never emulate fools who chatter on and on about the false.
When will such scandal ever end?
Do not think that no one sees you in the dark,
Only fear you cannot keep things from Minister Ma.*

*Your body is healthy, so do not be greedy for sleep.
Work hard on those duties before your eyes.
Remember Practitioner Lu^{lxx} who in the mill toiled,
Was the one who received the patriarchal robes and bowl?*

*Arrive early for temple work
And never err in all tasks at hand.
Reciting a roll of the Thus Come One's sutra
Is more supreme than chattering on and on.*

*Exert some effort in the kitchen acknowledging that
Dragons and elephants of the five lakes are on the grounds.
Though we work hard until we behold the moon and stars,
We must believe that profound effects result from profound causes.*

*Steal not a cent from the temple for it can hardly be paid.
Since interests compound a thousand-fold each day.
You may end up with the head of a pig and hooves of a mule.
So never quit sweeping the grounds of Buddhas all throughout life.*

*In resident, things large and small must be prized,
Look with your eyes when you use them.
Do not toss them about carelessly as you please,
You must know they do not come by too readily.*

*Be diligent while serving in the dorms.
Do not grow weary over frequent sweepings and boiling of tea.
Be cautious in serving the assembly,
For you are truly a monk in body and mind.*

*When conditions require you to go out,
Take care of that Mt. Wei water buffalo^{lxxi}.
The grass is tall outside so maintain restraint.
Any error may be unretractable.*

*Never engage in fist fights.
A gruff man is no monk.
Wipe away spit spattered your way;
It is no delusion to forgive after all.*

*When the three drummings notify you to enter the bath hall,
Separate your upper garments from the lower ones for laundry.
Impermissible are laughters and shouts.
Avoid crude behavior that spoils comportment.*

*Actions and behavior of a monk must be fitting,
Be careful as if treading on thin ice.
Although you have not yet shaved your hair and beard,
Do as you are taught then you are a monk.*

Encouraging Monks to Take Care of the Ailing (An Engraving at Ling Yan)

A sick monk is homeless in the four seas;
A lone lamp that shines on a broken bed.
Lonely is the heart while one whines in pain,
 Requiring aid with porridge and medicine too,
Yet he can only rely on fellows of the Way.

A patient is easily frustrated.
Healthy ones must be empathetic at all times.
How could we possibly preserve our illusory bodies though?
I, an old monk, write this verse for the monastics:

*Conditions due to moisture and wind may be cured,
But without knowing the sickness of Chan, how could one truly be healed?
If any monk in rags wants to discuss this prescription furthermore,
With my fist, I'll punch him in the mouth all of a sudden!*

Bowing to Guan Yin **By Dhyana Master Da Hui**

Purifying the three karmas, I prostrate myself fully and take refuge with a singleness of heart. Homage to the Kind Father of the Ten Directions, the Greatly Efficacious Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva. I hear that you, the Bodhisattva, entered *samadhi* through hearing, contemplating and cultivating, therefore acquiring boundless merit through the attainment of: the Two Compliances, the Four Inconceivables, the Fourteen Fearlessnesses, the Nineteen Ways of Speaking the Dharma, the fulfillment of the Two Wishes and the Seven Difficulties, and the 32 Response Bodies.

You wield such awesome might and make profound vows. Without rest you save all beings throughout the Nine Realms, the Six Destinies and the Four Kinds of Births in the cycle of birth and death, practicing millions and billions of good deeds and expediences, numerous like the number of sand grains in the Ganges.

I now plea that you help me. While prostrating, I thought how fortunate I am to have encountered the Buddhadharma in this life. Though I became a monk, my mind is not on the Way. I possess delusion and deviant views; my faculties are dull and blocked. Although I studied texts inside and outside of Buddhism, I do not understand the passages and their wonderful principles. Furthermore, I am afraid my blessings are thin and my life will not be long; I waste my life away in the monastic order. I now cleanse my heart and shed tears of blood, sincerely bowing to you. I maintain your holy visage in mind day and night, upholding your sacred name and bow to your saintly image. May the Bodhisattva hear me with your heavenly ear, compassionately save me from suffering, pity me and help me, release great spiritual light to shine upon my body and mind, pour on my crown great showers of sweet dew, rinsing away resentment and difficulties

accumulated in lifetimes, cleaning up offense karma from thousands of lives, eliminating demonic obstacles so that the body and mind are pure.

May I see the Bodhisattva emit great spiritual light while sitting or lying down, day or night. Uncover my wisdom so that I may instantly develop my spiritual powers, be wise and intelligent, naturally remember all texts and understand all principles, acquiring great eloquence and great wisdom, great longevity and great peace, be free of any demonic obstacles in investigating *Chan* and studying the Way, awaken to the patience of nonproduction, practicing the Bodhisattva way in life after life. May I completely repay the four types of kindness and help beings in the three realms. May beings throughout the Dharma Realm together reach the Wisdom of the Perfect Core.

The Dharma of Contemplating the Mind while Reciting a Sutra **By Great Master Zhi Zhe of Tian Tai**

Wishing to eliminate offenses by reciting the sutras, first, wash and rinse oneself and straighten one's comportment. Sit in the full lotus posture on an individual seat. Second, contemplate that the seat that one is sitting on is tall, large and adorned. Then contemplate that the fourfold assembly of gods, dragons, and others of the eightfold pantheon surround one in listening to the Dharma. Next, visualize that one is a Dharma Master transmitting the proper teachings of the Buddha and addressing the fourfold assembly by speaking to what is on their minds. Not only will the audience present hear one, but all throughout the ten directions. This is the contemplation of the false.

Next, contemplate the speaker and the sutra recited. What is a sutra? What are papers and ink? What are the markers to a scroll? Is the one reciting doing it with his mind or his mouth? Is the voice emitted from the gums and palates? Does one's body exist? Who is reciting? Contemplate whether the fourfold assembly truly exists, or does it come into being following one's thoughts? Since the fourfold assembly does not exist, one may deduce that there is no self or the one who recites. This is the contemplation of emptiness.

Although no sutra is being recited, there are rolls of sutras, paper, ink and words. Although no one is reciting, there is a body reciting for the fourfold assembly. Although there is no inside or outside, there is no departure from inside and outside. Although there is no sutra, there is no departure from the rolls of sutras. Although it is not the mind or the mouth, it is not apart from the mind and the mouth. Do so with no errors from beginning to end. This is the contemplation of the inconceivable.

One who understands this and contemplates in this way is engaged in the Three Contemplations. In a thought, one accesses neither what is before nor after and yet the Three Contemplations are intact. Although there is no giver, there is the giving of Dharma. Although there is no receiver, the fourfold assembly is present. Although there is no Dharma seat, one ascends onto a seat to speak.

The absence of one, two, and three is just one, two, and three. This is the *dana paramita* of giving Dharma. Concentrate on upholding this and there will be no obstructions of

various sorts, which is about upholding the precepts. Enduring evil that one is aware of and not being afflicted by fame and money is called patience. The mind does not rest from beginning to end, and there is no shame; that is vigor. To focus on reciting a sutra without any sense that it is one's favorite is *dhyana*. To make distinctions without wrong and understand completely the preface, the text proper, and the circulation sections, each word and phrase is clearly understood, that is *prajna*. These are the perfections of the Six *Paramitas*.

To personally practice this Dharma is about the actual; to teach others is about the provisional. In this way, one will have done everything that one needs to do in this lifetime from birth to old age. The merit realized from the beginningless mind is the seed of direct cause while contemplation with the mind is the awareness-cause. The causes and conditions of sitting on high in the fourfold assembly and teaching are called contributory causes. If the three types of causes^{lxxii} are present and yet one's contemplation is not yet clear, there is still the inherent nature. Practice endlessly so the mind of contemplation resonates [with the inherent nature]. This is called carrying a holy babe. The karma of birth is realized and it is called the cultivation of virtue. The 42 positions in-between are also called the cultivation of the nature. Until the ultimate fruition, the core of wisdom. The three dots to the character "Yi" (伊) are neither vertical nor horizontal. They are also called "the great nirvana," "to the other shore," and "the equal and great wisdom of emptiness in the primary sense of the meaning." All these are proper contemplations of sutra recitations. All Buddhas come forth because of these methods. You may share this with believers but do not say anything without having been asked.

Three, circulation. To regulate oneself and save oneself is not about kindness. Avoid rescuing someone from suffering is not compassion. When one is practicing and proper contemplation manifests, one should further adorn the Dharma Realm. After reciting the sutra and exiting the contemplation, one should dedicate the merit and virtue of this contemplation of the Way as follows:

May those who have already reached Proper Enlightenment save living beings;
may those who have entered sagely positions step onto higher grounds;
may those who have not yet entered sagely positions practice the two dharmas of kindness and compassion so they realize Equal and Proper Enlightenment in a future life.

Contemplations During a Meal

After setting up the seat and sitting down, listen to the cantor who will motion us to move forward or stop. After the bell is rung, put your palms together and make offerings to the single entity of the Triple Jewel, and give and perform the Buddhas' work throughout the ten directions. Next, take the meal while offering it to beings of the six realms, which represent the Six *Paramitas*. Then eat. Food is for maintaining living beings' life. If one eats without contemplating, food feeds the cycle of birth and death. If one contemplates, one could make the distinction between the bounds and the boundlessness of birth and

death. Whether consuming alms or vegetarian food with the pure assembly, one should always contemplate.

The contemplator should fear that food remnants in the body are just delusions and afflictions that nourish one on the cycle of birth and death. Consider all the food currently consumed as *prajna*. Contemplate those food remnants leaving the pores sequentially. After they exit, the path to one's mind is open. Eat the new food now which shines and eliminates all the darkness and achieve *prajna*. Thus the *Vimalakirti-nirdesa Sutra* says, "If one is impartial with food, one reaches impartiality with the Dharma." The evidence is apparent. With this food, one takes in *prajna* food to nourish the Dharma body. Once the Dharma body is established, one gains liberation. Those are the Three Virtues.

One further contemplates that this food is neither new nor old. Since leftover food is old while new food is fresh, this contemplation is the contemplation on the false.

One cannot attain anything by seeking old or new, but it is ultimately about emptiness and stillness. That contemplation is the contemplation of emptiness. Contemplate who is eating the food, "Who acquires the so-called 'new food' to eat?" Since there is no such thing as "new food," how can there be *one* who does the eating? However, one is not apart from old food which nurtures the body and new food which nurtures the body once again. All come from the gathering of causes and conditions; the former and the latter cannot be distinguished. This contemplation is called the contemplation of the Middle.

The contemplation of the Middle is about Falsehood and Emptiness. The contemplation of Emptiness is about the Middle and Falsehood. The contemplation of Falsehood is about Emptiness and the Middle. They are unimaginable, and are called the Middle Way. Again the *Vimalakirti-nirdesa Sutra* says, "Neither afflicted nor not afflicted; neither intending to enter *samadhi* nor not intending to enter *samadhi*. That is called Dharma food."

Vinaya Master Da Zhi's Ode to the Three Robes

I have three robes. The ancient sages regulated that we wear rough hemp and ramie for our bodies. Fur and silk hurt lives and our kindness. They should be the colors blue, black, purple and other mixtures of drab colors. Wearing the five primary colors or five secondary colors will lead to teases in the mundane world. We should carry these robes with us as if they were wings to a bird. Respect and guard them as if they were a thin layer of skin on our body. Believe that the three robes are the insignia of all Buddhas as many as sands of Ganges rivers; they are the rails for holy and worthy *sramanas*. They are the instigators to the 96 types of heretics' initial faith; they are the foundation for the 25 categories of beings to create blessings. Therefore the king of beasts with solid vows tolerated death and praised the robes frequently. The woman Lotus Colors wore the robes in a play and later in life ended greed and delusion completely. Vast vows are most vital while their virtues are difficult to imagine. The dragons [wore a piece of the robe] and avoided the disaster with golden-winged birds. People wearing a piece of the robe can end the danger of enemy attacks.

Nowadays ignoble people are frivolous and shallow while the proper teachings deteriorate and lag. They compete in buying unorthodox robes. They compete and sell faux imperial robes and are ridiculed for such abuses. Their arrogance is tremendous, and they oppress virtuous individuals and the elderly. Such habits become trends due to stupidity; which is why they do not know that which is wrong. You should respectfully observe these rules and regulations; at the same time admire the grace and kindness of those who established them. Feel fortunate at all times and never be apart from them in every step. Submerge your spirit in the country of bliss, you will naturally dress in celestial wardrobe, descend into this Saha world, and you always bear the robes of retribution.

The rock of eons may disintegrate, but I believe these words will not disappear. Space may have its bounds, but this resolution will not change.

An Ode to the Metal Bowl

I have a metal bowl, cut and made according to the measure of half of a Chinese peck. It is neither big nor small, smoked by burning bamboo. It is shiny and clean, somewhat like a bright pearl. It is like the bright moon close to full moon days. I enter the assembly early in the morning and the multitude of volunteers pour forth grains like golden sand while rice pile up high like snow. It is no different than the transformational meal in the world of Fragrant Accumulation^{lxxiii}, and hardly different than the foods from heavens.

We are on the same boat and should rectify ourselves. We do not farm or toil; we do not sow or harvest, what do we rely upon to maintain our lives? We are insatiable in our wish for food and the source of our greed never dries up. When proper mindfulness weakens, the *raksha* seizes. For savory foods enjoyed for a short time we suffer thirst and hunger for millions of eons. Enlightened ones may receive offerings of ten thousand ounces of gold; however, I am certain that you have not reached ultimate enlightenment yet. We may accept millions of ounces of gold but they do not guarantee us anything thoroughly; in fact, we can hardly consume one cup of water, as the holy teachings clearly state. It is best that we do not defy the Five Contemplations and restrict ourselves as we start with the first three spoonfuls. Careful to not waste faithfuls' donations just so that this filthy body may be fed. We must use these resources and conditions for liberation soon.

An Ode to the Sitting Cloth

I have a sitting cloth that is cut and measured according to standards. Its color and form are like most sashes. This object is just two layers of coarse cloth, four Chinese feet in length and three Chinese feet in width. It is meant to undermine the use of new beds. Those who are large may increase the size of it. I am petite so I use the size listed in the original rules. Some people prefer larger ones and dislike small ones, so they lay the blame on others. They disobey the rules and make exceptions for themselves. Don't they know they are actually harming themselves? I once heard that the body of a *bhikshu* is like a stupa for the Five Divisions of the Dharma Body^{lxxiv} while the *nisdana* is a

foundation for the four directions. It is a resource for the path. How could it be a protection to benefit the body? We open it during meditation and lecture so that we do not error in deportment. We hold it as we go into town for alms so that it is not one step away from us. Otherwise, it is against the *vinaya* rules and for this life, we are without a proper sitting place according to the Dharma.

An Ode to the Water Strainer

I have a well-made strainer with fine filtering cloth at the bottom. Molden metal frames it. Look carefully when using it to filter water. When releasing living beings caught in the filter, be sure they are not harmed. You should know that our kind Buddha does not abandon even the tiniest creatures. A strainer allows us to drink water while preventing any retribution of harming insects in the water. Therefore, transformed by the Buddha, creatures large and small in our world are all regulated.

The filter should be carried if traveling within half a *yojana*. Most people neglect it or hoard it. Who will be the judge? How do we consider what is right or wrong? Some know about it but do not make it and sneer at it for being a practice of the Theravadans, or make the filter but does not use it, hanging it in the room instead. This is because they have no inner empathy and are lax and wild outwards. They block the path for those who do not yet know and ruin the rules in our tradition. You should be sincere and maintain its use. Attempt to restore and expand its use too. Consequently, not only will the four types of beings have a basis of reliance, but the Triple Jewel will be dignified too.

An Ode to the Staff

I have a staff which is made according to the rules. It consists of three parts from top to bottom, and it stands six Chinese feet tall. Its 12 rings are round and without any deficiency to show that the 12 causes and conditions are birth and death. The two anchor rings represent neither separation nor adherence to emptiness and existence. It is not to support the body; instead, it is for alms. Holding it, it is silent. Shaking it, it rings. Wishing to let all beings who enter the door cease suffering in the three destinies, always carry it and hang it on the wall. Dirt accumulates easily on it, so one should wipe it often. It is not considered difficult to throw it up into the air; it does not consume any more energy than what it takes to separate two fighting tigers. Fortunate indeed! Commoners and fools! We are in the footsteps of saints. Because we are rude externally and harbor thorns internally, we do not fully accord with that which is proper, so how could we not be worried, even by evening?

***Dhyana* Master Ze's Warnings on Rinsing Flour**

Just as flour is not natural, wheat does not well forth from the earth. They are the result of living beings' blood and sweat, the wealth of donors. They are meant to heal our emaciated bodies so that the Way may be realized. I am afraid that it is difficult for us to digest our usual offering, not to mention the washing away of their essentials so that they are only left with gluten sediments. That gluten is then used to create the five flavors by

adding color and scent to the dishes; the gluten is cleverly transformed into thousands of different dishes such as mock fish and meat. Starch, like goose feather or white snow, flow away from the hall in water. Two-thirds of the food that could be eaten is wasted. To waste food in this way is indeed shameless. We ignore the hardship of agriculture and reduce the protection of dragons and spirits. Even if we had the blessings of Wheel Kings, they will disintegrate and melt. Though we did not rob anyone of life or hurt anyone, we still invite consequences to our causes.

The greatly enlightened World Honored One ate one hemp seed and one wheat; lofty individuals since ancient times made themselves full on fruits and vegetables. Without eliminating indulgences, how can we expect liberation? We only hope that we acquire the marrow of meditation, why wash flour in the hopes of getting gluten? Even if we can digest thousands upon thousands of ounces of gold, it is best that we eat a simple and crude meal. If we can avoid frequent seekings that block our spiritual path, the direction toward which we head will naturally be lofty. Though our tradition uses limited materials, there is another sense of delight associated with it.

Think hard about the kind instructions given by Yuan Tong, which are worthy of our changing our bones and washing our intestines (*Dhyana* Master Yuan Tong of Fa Yun often warns his students not to wash flour). Thinking deeply about Elder Shun's rules, which are clear cut and absolute (Monk Shun of Yun Ju laid down a rule forbidding residents and various villagers to wash flour). Everyone brings forth their resolve for the Way together. Do not despise the small number of offerings. My head may be chopped off, but I am determined not to wash the temple's flour.

The third year of Yuan Fu, November 1, by Abbot Zong Ze.

*We are still halfway along the path of cleansing the mind,
How has washing flour ever revived ancient traditions?
The monastery at present thinks about Elder Shun
And remembers great masters of the past, such as Master Yuan Tong.*

*Planting wheat is hard work and grinding wheat is difficult.
Do not turn washed flour into a meal on a plate.
Ask me what it feels like to waste food in this way,
I will tell you my flesh is being consumed.*

*Even if the year's harvest has been abundant,
doing so still hurts your blessings.
If there has been an unproductive one,
doing so will hurt your finances too.
Work diligently to repay all meditators.
Tighten the knot of a rope without release.*

*Treasure any extras.
Do not go overboard or be shameless.*

*Otherwise explanations to the old Yama King will be hard,
And harvest dragons and spirits will be unhappy too.*

*Do not claim such an act causes little harm.
Everything has to do with rinsing flour.
Just as hundreds of officials recommended Emperor Shun
To not make painted containers in olden days.*

*Flour contains both gluten and starch.
Without gluten, the starch is difficult to process.
You do not want to eat the starch,
But passing it to others only makes them upset.*

*The gluten is cooked in spice and tastes like real meat.
It stacks up like fake fish, fat and fresh.
If you reach fruitions by drawing Buddhas,
Will replicating creatures allow you to certify to [the nirvana] without
remainder?*

*Gluten requires three washing in freezing winter, as chill pierces the bones;
You have to steam the flour during September summers while you perspire,
Wasting water, oil and heat,
You wear out people, animals and spirits too.*

*Practitioners enjoy eating simple meals
So purification requires no effort.
Besides time spent on the usual rounds of alms and offerings,
I much rather meditate and recite sutras during free time.*

*Do not study the dhyana of the five flavors in different places;
Inherent news is within.
Make soup and wish that you net what you want;
Look often at your hook and believe in affinities.*

*After working in the day, return to the meditation hall.
Be without a mind in each thought so you pass Tiger Creek.^{lxxv}
The bowl contains rough millet husks
And the soup in the bucket is plain and minced condiments.*

*Do not be moved by high-ranking officials who enjoy fine foods.
Why is it rude to offer them communal meals in everyone's dining hall?
All in Buddhism are equal, neither of high or low status.
All sages come through this same path.*

*When faithful donors provide offerings,
Do not become upset over a simple meal.*

*In general, refined and crude foods all make us full;
But they are completely different in their merits and faults.*

*Emulating past cultivators will bring profound benefits.
Xin Luo does not try to flout the monastery's norms,
But we offer a plain meal to notable figures,
Which still illustrates how Chan cultivators are hospitable.*

*Duties owed the emperor and our parents are heavy yet we gave them up lightly;
We stay far away from cooking water and land creatures.
Apparently not all such sentiments have ceased though.
Lower your head and recall your leaving the homelife.*

*Polishing a plate and wiping the altar, you pretend and socialize with officials.
Indeed you should be ashamed for being a Chan monk.
As your resolve for the transcendental gradually wane,
You increasingly conform to people and the mundane.*

*The monastery becomes withered and bland like a forest of logs;
Profound is the intent of the ancients to keep our daily provisions bare.
Do not wash flour donated by all throughout the ten directions;
Instead meditate on the mind of the six generations of patriarchs.*

*Do not think people today are similar to people of the past,
Ultimately there are some closer to us and some more distant.
In building a granary, we carve up our skin and marrow
While children of later generations wash their flour and gluten.*

*Fewer meals are easier to prepare and bring long-term peace;
Savory foods are difficult to digest and harm the conditions for the path.
We often see guests by the river and under trees
Who do little their entire lives and yet live a long life.*

*Learning to wear ragged robes and be a beggar,
How could you brag that your delicacies are like those enjoyed by royalty?
If someone mocks you for your meals, let them laugh;
Raise the white flag and surrender.*

*Being a monk is not about worrying about poverty or miserliness.
Stop frequent meals and absorbing nutrients from the Way; unite with the
inherent.
Rely on superior ones who have already penetrated their minds;
Verbose meditators should not casually spread things about.*

*Dairy, scallions and meats harm the fragrance of precepts;
Flour gluten is wasteful and adds cost to the monastery.*

*Now if you let go of everything,
You will suddenly appreciate the faint taste of monasticism.*

*Washed flour is ultimately difficult to digest.
Imprudence creates many problems and prevents light ease.
How much blessings and virtue can ordinary people eat?
Even if it is as deep as the sea, it will dry up indeed.*

*Our original face is most evident,
But we pursue waves and are born too gaunt.
We should be laughed at by lofty individuals in the monastery,
For we have lost our inherent truth and acquired only a superficial name.*

*Monastic leaders and preeminent monks think like no others,
Their nostrils flare up and the air about them soars.
They even despise the precious taste of dhyana,
So why would they chew flour gluten?*

*At first I had no experience with hardship,
So I led the monastery like most others;
Thus 15,000 pounds of flour in the temple
Were washed away with water and into the world.*

*Definitive conclusion can hardly be drawn
Since there is no evidence available for judging its merits and faults,
Simply cherish blessings for the sake of the great assembly.
I am the one who should have been ashamed that other day.*

*Wasting goods belonging to monastics causes immeasurable offense,
Seeing and speaking of the hells make the days long.
Instead of fearing such a possibility so it obstructs our practice,
Today we might as well eat some ordinary food.*

*As managers of the temple, do not be fools.
Poor results from causes will be difficult to stand.
Furthermore, I ask the leaders of various lands:
For whom do you work so bitterly and act so sweet?*

*For monastics, one meal is enough to support the body.
Cherish blessings and do away with gluten.
Those who chew madly at butcher houses are too shameful to name.
And who buys alcohol with ten thousand coins?*

*Three emperors with the character Wu (武) in their names destroyed Buddhism,
So Shakyas disciples went home to empty stupas and temples.
Buddhism used to be respected and believed,*

Spendthrift monks who defy traditions cause such destruction.

*I specifically changed the temple rules
So our lineage lasts.
If monastics could keep a simple fare,
Future emperors shall not err and tear Buddhism down.*

*The latter part of Tang Dynasty was quite a mess;
Millions of homes were left in ruins due to war.
Had they considered frugality during peacetime,
Would China have been invaded by bandits as such?*

*The banquet trend is an increasingly lavish one.
Sprouts of disasters should be trimmed during peacetime.
Wishing for the world to cease all its extravagance,
Buddhism became ever and even simpler.*

*One can tame gods and dragons, influence ghosts and spirits
Only with lofty conduct that transcends the common.
Though no one enjoys bland food since times of old,
We apply such purity as a practice to transform.*

*You cannot enjoy the same abundance in monastic life as in homelife;
It is best to enjoy dhyana bliss when resources are slim.
Only when you know the taste of no-taste in eating
Will you then see the emptiness of no emptiness.*

*Many people accept blessings but few cherish blessings;
Getting a bargain is losing a bargain.
The pie of Yun Men and the rice of Jing Niu
Make our minds full so we forget hunger of a hundred kinds.*

*The sash has a hundred patches and the bowl has five,
Why would you bother comparing how refined or crude are the two meals?
The sramaneras should ultimately live lightly and ascetically.
Soft and warm cultivation makes the practice lax.*

*In peacetime, people tend to be lazy,
They enjoy frequent luxuriousness and trouble brews.
Before shame is born, deluded blessings already end.
Disasters, famine, flood, and drought strike suddenly.*

*As the number of teeth during peacetime gradually grows,
People enjoy savory foods, bright clothes and luxury items.
Land and the financing of them become limited.
Now is the best time for economy and not decadence.*

Engravings on Being a Master of the Mind **By Dharma Master Jing, Ban Cai**

Why are we born in this body? We feed it with food, cover it with clothes, shelter it with lodging, and cure it when it is diseased. We nourish it with numerous things, and never mistreat it for a moment. It does not know to be grateful though; instead it becomes resentful and contrary. The four elements bother each other and the five organs deceive one another. This body is impermanent and will abandon you in one breath. This body is impure and the nine apertures constantly drip. Thousands of sores are covered by this thin layer of skin. This body is detestable and there is nothing to be greedy over or cherish. We shall make this body cultivate according to the Dharma, such as applying the Three Types of Purities and the Sixteen Forms of Contemplation. Never retreat along this path, at least not until we retire in peace to the Western Pureland. We are Masters of the Mind when we realize unsurpassed wisdom.

Important Words to Live By **By Great Master Chan Yue of Tang Dynasty**

The *Preface* reads:

I often read Bai Taibao's mottos, which are a sequel to Cui Ziyu's mottos. His words are classic and elegant while his intent is most earnest and sincere. These mottos are worthy of being exhortations. For the sake of my future, it would be remiss of me to not learn them. They can warn and spur on those who are not yet enlightened. These are words that can be passed on to future generations. We see Yao Zong, Bian Lan, Zhang Shuo, and Lee Yi all have particularly profound and amazing writings. These words of encouragement and grace can serve as testimony and nutrients for thousands of years.

I will tell you a secret, I personally love this essay. I only hate the fact that people in the world cannot practice them and catch only ten or twenty percent of them. I happened to have a calligraphy brush in my pocket one day, so I wrote a preface to Mr. Bai's preface. I named it the *Preface to Mr. Yao Liang's Mottos*. Even though my writing cannot possibly match those outstanding authors [aforementioned], in both literary skill and principle, it can nevertheless be inscribed on the wall.

Goodness is done for your body and behavior is done for your life. Disasters and blessings can be altered; do not say that they are destined. Consider others' attainments our own, and then all good things can be achieved. See others' faults as our own, which makes the situation auspicious. Scoundrels who act contrarily will be executed by gods and ghosts. Do not be leaders or pioneers who wreak havoc in society. The tendency to kill will reduce your lifespan. Stop that. Remain humble with few desires. We must do that which is good and detest that which is bad. Do not get excited at the sight of nobility

and walk lamely out of obsequiousness. Do not be condescending toward the base. Rely on one another as superiors or subordinates.

Ancient sages wrote busily and diligently. Acts of loyalty, filiality and trustworthiness were more important to them than food and clothes. Everything in the universe is but false when we are in danger and our life events run before us like a galloping horse. Why not spur ourselves on? Why would we want to speak and act falsely, which lead to a fall as we are about to step into the jade hall? Fear and forbid beauty, for it will end your life; fear alcohol for it will corrugate your intestines. You must carry out your resolve to the end. Stuffed piggy banks will certainly break.

Commit anonymous acts of goodness so your offspring will certainly be awarded by kings. Do not rely on literature, that career path is fraught with misfortune. Problems come from being impatient and harm comes from chasing after discontentment. It is tit for tat. Officials in harmony go a long way together. Draw close to kind people and question your underlings humbly. Establish high moral principles and restrain yourself with them. Do not hide under the shade of evil woods; do not drink water from stolen springs^{lxxvi}.

Considering how little accountability there is in the world, how much production can we expect? One must be like ice or jade, plant peaches and plums. You ought to hate to see others in trouble and repay kindness and justness. Ignore one's losses and make others' dreams come true. Do not shoulder hollow repute and do not go against ultimate principles. Be at peace from beginning to end. This is just about perfecting lofty virtues of gods.

Please listen to my advice. (A Compilations by Chan Yue)

On the Filth of Snakes by Monk Mou, You Yun, of Mt. Neng Ji, Ji Zhou

The most venomous things in the world are snakes; the dirtiest has to be excrement. The venom of snakes can kill. The filth of excrement can dirty someone's body or clothes. To protect our lives, we must stay away from the harm of venom. To keep our bodies and clothes clean, we must clear away filth.

People are happy to have dreams about snakes, thinking that they are omens of future wealth. Those who have dreams about excrement are glad, thinking that it is a sign of upcoming fortune. Why the difference in loving and hating the same things between sleep and waking states? We should know that we shun and fear certain things while awake, so why are we happy to see wealth and delighted at the sight of fortune? Not to mention the venom of money is worse than snakes, the filth of fortune is even more severe than excrement. More than one, in fact, numerous individuals since ancient times have lost their lives to money. Fortune dirties the bodies and clothing of many as well. Those who are not awake never relinquish love and never suspend greed. Hence they are most pathetic. One may be poor or rich, it is one's fate. Being content with one's fate, one may be poor but happy; discontent, one may be rich but constantly worry. Those who are

content with poverty are happy. They can preserve their life and keep their bodies and garments clean. Therefore we know those greedy for money are raising snakes; those interested in fortune will certainly stain their bodies and clothes.

I do not like being poor, but I stay far away from harmful venom. I do not detest affluence, but I do eliminate defilement. If there is someone who can leave money as if running away from snakes and avoiding fortune like removing excrement, I can guarantee that this person will gradually become someone who understands. Otherwise, one's thick greed and love will never pause in life after life. Such habits will certainly cause harm to one's body and dirty one's clothes. People ought to heed this exhortation.

Dhyana Master Da Hui Answers Governor Sun's Letter

You showed me the *Vajra Sutra* to which you added commentaries. I am honored to read it with delight. Nowadays it is truly rare to see any official willing to pay attention to Buddhist texts like you, Zuoyou. Without understanding the meaning, one will not believe in it sufficiently as you do. Without eyes to read the sutras, one cannot peek into and fathom the profound and wonderful meanings therein. You are a real lotus in the fire.

Having studied your commentaries to the *Vajra Sutra* for a long time, I cannot help but have questions. You condemn how various holy masters' inaccurate translations create confusion over the inherent truth and how the additional and deleted lines of text contradict the intent of the Buddha. You further state, "Since upholding it and reciting it, I notice some mistakes and hope to find a definitive original in order to make the corrections. However, having been used to the false for long, all the current versions of the *Vajra Sutra* seem the same. It was not until I acquired a copy that had been stored at the capital that I used it as a reference. The meaning of Vasubhandu and Asanga's commentaries match this version of the *Vajra Sutra* stored in the capital, thus all my doubts disappeared."

You further considered how the two masters Chang Shui and Gu Shan followed the sutra text but contradicted its true meaning. I do not know if you should dare to criticize in this way. You must have already seen the original Sanskrit version upon which all editions of translation during the Six Dynasty were based, and seen the errors in all those translations. Only then should your doubts disappear. Since there is no Sanskrit edition, you subjectively opine and whittle away at the meaning by sages. We are not even talking about the cause and effect of slandering the holy teachings, which lead to plummeting into the spaceless hells. I am afraid that intelligent individuals such as you, Zuoyou, who pick on the faults of various masters will only be similarly condemned.

You will be blamed when you tell a casual acquaintance what you should only share with close friends. I do not know you, Zuoyou, but you ask me to verify this sutra in the hopes that it may circulate for millions of generations. To plant the seeds of Buddhism in the realm of living beings is the finest thing. Furthermore, you consider me an insider within Buddhism and expect some religious message from me. Therefore, I dare not refuse reporting to you.

In the past when National Master Qing Liang authored the *Commentaries on the Avatamsaka Sutra*, he wished to correct the errors of the translators but could not acquire the Sanskrit edition, so he only added endnotes to the Sutra. For instance, the chapter on “the Buddhas’ Inconceivable Dharmas” says that all Buddhas possess boundless bodies, their physical features are pure and they universally enter various realms without tainted attachments. Master Qing Liang says that in the tenth line of the third page of the upper roll, the chapter on “the Buddhas’ Inconceivable Dharmas,” the word “each” fell away in the phrase “each and every Buddha.” Any omission in the sutra is in an endnote. Master Qing Liang was also a holy master but he did not add or eliminate parts of a sutra. He only dared to write addenda appended to the end of the sutra. Those who know the Dharma fear so. Furthermore, the Sutra says, “There are large lapis lazuli gems.” Master Qing Liang said, “I am afraid it is *vaidurya* but the earlier edition wrote it wrong and I dare not correct it, so I just added an endnote to it.”

The various translation masters during the Six Dynasty were not people with measly intelligence. The translation facilities housed translators of words, translators of meaning, editors who polish the text, people who check the Sanskrit, reviewers who correct the meaning, and people who check the Chinese against the Sanskrit. However, you, Zuoyou, believe that the sagely meanings were translated incorrectly. Zuoyou, you cut and eliminated parts of the text without having acquired a Sanskrit edition. Would it not be difficult for people of latter generations to believe you? Just as Chang Shui’s commentaries followed the lines of the text but contradicted their meaning, without verifying with a Sanskrit edition, how can you judge that he was wrong?

Even though Chang Shui was a lecturer, he was different from other lecturers. He consulted with Master Guang Zhao of Lang Ya on the *Shurangama Sutra* the question of what it means when Purnamaitreyaniputra asked the Buddha, “[The nature] is pure and as it is, why does it suddenly produce mountains, rivers and the great earth?” Lang Ya immediately shouted, “Pure and as it is, why does it suddenly produce mountains, rivers and the great earth?” Chang Shui became greatly enlightened thereafter and wore a lapel and self-proclaimed himself a seated host. Seated hosts usually just go through the lines and talk about their literal meaning. You talk about following the words but not the meaning. Chang Shui was not someone of little sense; he was not someone who just went through the lines and mouthed their literal meaning.

Regarding the sentence “the Buddha attained *anuttara-samyak-sambodhi* not due to the repletion of all marks” in the *Vajra Sutra*. The sutra text is divided into clear paragraphs. This text covers things in a most shallow and tangible way. It must be that you set too extreme a standard, wishing to develop a different understanding and seeking others to follow your opinion. For those who ask, you quote from the commentaries by Asanga, “We should see the Thus Come One with the Dharma body and not one replete with fine features.” If so, the Thus Come Ones should not be seen because they are replete with all fine features. Replete with fine features, they reach *anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*. This is about leaving attachment. The Sutra says, “Subhuti, what do you think? The Thus Come Ones can realize *anuttara-samyak-sambodhi* because of fine features. Subhuti, do not

think like this. This means that a body replete with fine marks is no Bodhi. The cause [of Bodhi] is not being replete with fine features; after all, features are forms from our inherent nature.”

Large sections of this shastra make it clear, but you opine and understand incorrectly. Form results from the conditions of attributes; attributes result from the conditions of the Dharma Realm. Prince Zhao Ming of Liang said, “Do not think that the Thus Come One attained *anuttara-samyak-sambodhi* without being replete with fine features.” Among the 32 means, this means is about no severing and no extinction. He was afraid that Subhuti did not consider [Bodhi] to be based upon the repletion of fine features [when it is]. If so, conditioned arising is extinct. We should know that when Subhuti was in his mother’s womb initially, he already knew emptiness; therefore Subhuti often does not dwell on the mark of conditional arising.

You later quote a line in the conclusion of the *Shastra by the Bodhisattva Who Gives Away Merit*, which says, “When phenomenon manifests, that is true existence; when phenomenon ceases, it is called extinction.” Fearing that people do not understand, it further said, “Why? All dharmas are by nature not produced.” Therefore, all dharmas are far away from the two extremes of annihilism and eternalism. Staying far away from these two extremes is an attribute of the Dharma Realm. Speaking not of the nature but of marks, the Dharma Realm is the conditioned arising of nature. Attributes are the conditioned arising of the Dharma Realm. To not speak of nature but attributes, it is what Liang Zhaoming calls “neither annihilism nor extinction.” This section is even clearer but you, Zuoyou, ask for too much and force tangents to develop.

If the *Vajra Sutra* can be eliminated in part, then anyone who reads the great *Tripitaka* will eliminate parts according to their own ideas and understanding. Just as Tui Zhi pointed out that the character “drawing” in an earlier version of the *Analecst* is a mistake and should be “day.” Tui Zhi believes that the text should be modified, but he only discussed this recommendation in his books, [without actually changing the original text.] Why? It is also because those who know the Dharma are afraid to do that. *Dhyana* Master Zong Mi of Gui Feng authored the *Commentaries and Sub-Commentaries to the Perfect Enlightenment Sutra*. He only dared to write about the parts of the *Perfect Enlightenment Sutra* where he felt he had some insight. The *Perfect Enlightenment Sutra* talks about how all beings certify to Perfect Enlightenment but Gui Feng changed “certify to” to “being replete with.” He says it is the translator’s mistake; but since he did not see the Sanskrit version, he dared only to write this in his shastra and not correct the sutra text. Later Master Zhen Jing of Le Tan wrote the *Shastra on All are Certified*. The shastra criticizes Gui Feng for being a corrupted average man and a smelly man. If all beings were all replete with perfect enlightenment and not certify to it, then animals would remain animals forever and hungry ghosts would remain hungry ghosts forever. Then worlds throughout the ten directions are all but a metal hammer with no holes to nail. If not one person makes the true resolve to return to one’s source of origin, the average men will not seek liberation either. Why? All beings are replete with perfect enlightenment, so they do not need to seek certification.

You believe the imperial sutra text is the authoritative one and used that as a reference. But the imperial edition of the Canon came from elsewhere and then was owned by the government. For example, two sets of the Jing Shan *Tripitaka* were bestowed to the imperial court at the height of its glory. Nevertheless, they were copied by sutra transcribers in outer provinces. If there were a mistake, how do we correct it?

If you do not have marks of self and others, you will definitely consider my words most sincere. There is no need to get stuck on some major error from the past or in the present. Attached to your personal views, you will insist on changes and deletions. If everyone were to spit upon and criticize your commentaries and yet you still insist on printing them, I can only rejoice and praise it.

Since you had someone carry this text to me specifically for the purpose of certifying your commentaries, I feel that we have become close because of the Dharma, although I do not know you. Nevertheless, I cannot help but worry about the contradictions I raise. I see how sincere you are and therefore show no mercy. Zuoyou, since you wish to thoroughly comprehend the teachings and elicit their profound meaning, you ought to find a teacher who is a scholar-practitioner and consult him on his teachings single-mindedly and thoroughly, from beginning to end. That is to pay attention to the teachings. Considering how quickly impermanence arrives, how great the matter of birth and death, and yet you still have not understood your personal business, then you should single-mindedly search for a true *Chan* master. Follow a master who can shatter the nest of birth and death and apply your efforts vigorously. When you suddenly shatter the lacquer barrel, you will reach total enlightenment.

If you just want a supply of conversation topics, go ahead and claim that you have read widely and comprehend those texts thoroughly, and that you know not only *Chan* but also the Teaching School. Furthermore, you may scrutinize the words of various translators and lecturers who came before us, search for their insufficiencies, and show off your ability and understanding. In short, you may deride all the sages of the three major religions. In that case, you do not need to ask anyone to certify your book before it is published. How is that?

Monk Qing, Fo Jian's Letter to Monk Qing, Fo Guo (Then residing at Mt. Jia)

Respectfully submitted by Hui Qing. I have served Elder Master Zu Feng in the past and heard him say:

Nowadays practitioners who practice do not have a good reputation and are vainly distrusted by others. This is because their Brahma conduct is impure and they do not act appropriately. They often wish to act differently for the sake of repute and offerings. They show off their wardrobe and are teased by intelligent individuals. Therefore, hide your intelligence. You may come out to be role models for people and gods when the conditions are ripe later on. Encourage yourself with this.

Upon hearing this, I immediately wrote it down on my belt and stamped it onto my mind.

A dhyana master who visited said *Dhyana* Master Jia Shan, the recipient of this letter, recently consulted Xue Dou on my behalf. The guest has tremendous wit and his quick rebuttals were profound, unprecedented and rather different from others. I could not help but shed tears when I heard him.

How do those who consider themselves lofty reach that level? Why don't you, brother, proclaim the causes and conditions before Bodhidharma arrived to attract students, so as to repay the virtues of past sages? Is it not so wrong to be entangled to such an extent? This is probably because you had read widely the wonderful books of the past and present. You do not detest those strange talks by deviant cults of present times and yet you do not understand the meanings espoused by the ancients. To strive for great achievement, you need to expand your lowly resolves. The wit of past virtuous ones is unveiled precisely to shatter such petty goals. Brilliant individuals with long-term vision will certainly not be bothered by those teachings; for them, neither makes any difference.

I am afraid that newcomers and those of latter generations will be skeptical about those sharp and novel words of yours. Were they to consider them the Buddhadharma, they will sit and guard the transformation city and not proceed to the place of gems. The harm that your words commit is rather significant because they not only hurt the religion, but the students too. With no fear of offense or punishment, I dare report to you what my teachers had passed on to me. If you can encourage yourself with my words, that will be most fortunate. If you dislike me due to my views, at least I did not do you any harm. I will not write anymore in detail.

Monk Tong's Written Response to Tou Zi

Dear Sir,

I heard many monks went to Tou Zi. Those throughout the four directions continuously return to the virtuous one to pay their respects. We know that he is respected by these and other people.

You call me a Dharma relative, but I have a hard time accepting that title because I do not know from which lineage you inherited the Dharma. How fortunate if it were the orthodox Ling Ji School of Fen Yang? Based on those principles secretly transmitted by past patriarchs, we may tell that which is proper or deviant and test people. They are hurdles for testing people and imprints that check the mind. All Buddhas throughout the three periods of time, the six generations of patriarchs, a multitude of sentient and insentient beings were definitely verified by the single seal of the *Samadhi* of the Oceanic Imprint. The seal held no trace of leakage in the universe.

Since Greatly Wise *Dhyana* Master Bai Zhang passed on his lineage to Fen Yang, there are now three levels of lion roar. One, those who surpass their teachers and have different views. Two, those who are at the same level as their teachers and follow in their

footsteps. Three, those who expound their teachers' teachings without any true understanding. Those who surpass their teachers must have views loftier than their teachers before receiving the seed [of the mind]. Those who are on par with their teachers and follow in their footsteps are not worthy of being taught because their virtues are only half that of their teachers. Those who expound their teachers' teachings without any true understanding are just like foxes or wolves that depend on the strength of the lion. Being of a different species, how can they share the mind seal?

When Ci Ming transmitted the mind seal, he said, "Holding the universe in the palm of my hand, all phenomena are illuminated." When Yang Qi transmitted the mind seal, he used a *vajra* ring and thorny chestnuts to test the difference between that which is proper and deviant. The Mountain of Iron Fence can be penetrated, but the *vajra* ring cannot be penetrated. The waters of the great oceans may be swallowed, but clumps of thorny chestnuts cannot be swallowed. Swallow one clump and millions and millions of clumps may be swallowed without obstruction. Penetrate one ring and millions and millions of rings may be penetrated without obstruction. Since Yang Qi transmitted his [Dharma] to Master Duan of Bai Yun, the master passed it on to our former teacher the fifth patriarch. The masters passed it onto newly precepted monks from one generation to the next.

If one is going to differentiate between that which is deviant and proper, one needs to be careful and be afraid that one will hurt the *Chan* lineage and mislead later students. My master has certified me with the mind seal. I hold in my hand the handle of peace, also its deed and order. Light and darkness come together while high and low are seen as the same. The myriad things manifest simultaneously, and yet that which is deviant or proper is evident. I dare not be sloppy and disorganized. Therefore I conclude that those countless different *Chan* talks, which are really confusing, are not beyond the bounds of "a *vajra* ring and thorny chestnuts." If you can swallow one clump or penetrate one fence, you cannot be hindered by millions and millions of clumps or fences. You would be unhindered, at ease and awakened to the truth. If your view matches mine seamlessly, that is quite fortunate. If not, I dare not certify your enlightenment.

I humbly write this letter for your consideration. I will not write anymore in detail.

End of *Advice for Monastics Fascicle Eight*

Advice for Monastics Fascicle Nine

An Imperial Edict by Emperor Wen, the First Emperor of Sui Dynasty

The emperor respectfully asked *Dhyana* Master Zhi Yi of Guang Zhai Monastery:

I very much respect and value Buddhism. In the past, the Buddhadharma was ruined during Emperor Wu of the Zhou Dynasty; therefore I voluntarily made the vow to protect it. When I became the Emperor, I immediately revived Buddhism. Relying on its spiritual powers, the

Dharma wheel turned once again so that beings throughout the ten directions are benefited. Later on, the Chen reign was abusive and violent. People of the southeast were under penal servitude and the misery was insufferable. To end such harm, I ordered generals to go on the attack. The land of Wu and Yue are now free and monastics and laity live in peace again. This deeply befits my intention.

Emperor, I, respectfully observe the orthodox Dharma and want to save living beings and let the fields of blessings keep their bridges forever. Since your master has already left the world, you must personally cultivate and transform others. You must wish to promote the sangha and uphold precepts solidly, so that whoever sees you will respect you, whoever hears about you will give rise to goodness. You are then according with the mind of the great Way, living out the karma of the monastic life.

If one wears monastic robes but one's mind is tainted by secular sense objects, then not only will sentient ones have no refuge, but I am afraid that the wonderful Dharma door will be slandered too. It is best that you persuade and encourage monastics of that type so that my intent may be implemented.

The weather is becoming warmer in spring. I hope this finds you in good health.

January 16th of the tenth year of Kai Huang.

[This imperial order was] read by Lord An Ping, Li Deling of the Department of National History.

Li Yuancao, the Assistant Minister of the Department of National History had a department employee, Pei Juxing, deliver this imperial order.

Commentary on the Lord of Jing (Lord Sui Yang) Receiving the Bodhisattva Precepts

I -- High Prosecutor, Marshal, Lord Taiwei, Military General of Yang Zhou, Governor of Yang Zhou, Lord Jin, and disciple Yang Guang -- bow and respectfully request that for one fleeting moment in this place of practice and by the might of their spiritual power, the following congregate: all Buddhas throughout the ten directions and the three periods of time, Fundamental Teacher Shakyamuni Thus Come One, Maitreya who shall descend upon this land as a future Buddha, all the venerated sutras and infinite Dharma jewels, all venerable *vajra* spirits who are beyond their initial resolve and who will descend upon us, those who are beyond their initial resolve, those who are above the stage of the *vajra* mind, those venerable ones appearing in a lower form, Mahasattvas with great authority, Pratyekabuddhas, Those Enlightened to Conditions, and Solitarily Enlightened Ones, the 27 sages and those who have their spiritual eyes open and on up to the summit of the

three existences, the 18 Brahma Kings, the princes of the Six Desire Heavens, Lord Shakra, the Four Great Kings of Heavens, gods, immortals, dragons, spirits that fly and soar, hide and appear so that they help the world greatly as they traverse it, those who guard stupas and defend the Dharma, those who protect lives of beings, the infinite good spirits who protect the pure precepts of Buddhas.

Please prove that the disciple's vows shall come true and gather-in the disciple's merit.

I humbly believe that recognizing darkness that arises is just the nature of the Thus Come One. Ignorance makes it tumble so the inherent nature cannot manifest. Principles and the development of events all return to the inherent nature, as things revert when they reach an extreme. To make evident the results, accumulate the causes. Therefore the Taming Hero has gone through so many rounds of birth and death that the number cannot be counted by the quantity of grass and trees [in existence]. Though it is difficult to conceive of the accumulation of merit as numerous as the number of sand grains in the Ganges derived from sense objects, when one is deeply tainted by them and grow weary of them, one will part with them.

When the Dharma King started his work, he was to transform Bodhisattvas, like the sun shining upon tall mountains first. Later on, he accorded with potential and did what was expedient to save living beings, just as the multitude of flows gush into the great ocean.

Disciple I was born in a royal family due to my accumulated goodness. I received family education early on and submerged myself in the inherent teachings while young. Though I am replete with blessings and ideas, I still need to awaken that wonderful potential. I am ashamed to travel the tiny crooked paths and hope to ride the Great Vehicle. I laugh at those who stop at the transformation city, so I vow to sail to the other shore [of perfection].

I hear that the goodness of holding precepts in the foremost among tens of thousands of Bodhisattva conducts. Among the Ten Receptions of the Bodhisattvas, for instance, the focused observance [of the precepts] is the most supreme. A foundation is required in the construction of a palace. A palace can never be constructed in air. This is not something mediocre or foolish individuals can ponder. I also hear that Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism help to mold one's character. Without rules and regulations, how could one follow? It is true that Shakyamuni, the One Capable of Being Humane, is our original teaching monk and Mañjuśrī acts as the *Acharya* from behind the scenes; but we must rely on existing teachers to transmit the holy teachings visibly. Let us begin with those who are close by then reach for those who are distant, resonating and understanding them.

Bolun Bodhisattva offered all his marrow to Bodhisattva Dharmodgata. Youth Good Wealth forgot himself in the Dharma Realm. These examples are clearly described in the sutras, so I dare not say without any evidence. I deeply believe in the words of the Buddhas and follow wise teachers. Tian Tai's *Dhyana* Master Zhi Yi is a leader in Buddhism. Having become a monk as a virgin youth, his precept pearl is perfect and

pure. His water of *samadhi* is deep and clear by the time he is almost 60. He developed wisdom in that stillness and acquired unobstructed eloquence in peace. He put others first and himself later; he has a supremely humble and yielding air about him. His reputation is universally regarded and everyone recognizes it so. Disciple, I, thus sincerely pay my respects from afar.

The boat of my fate has been sailing along and I am always afraid of inclement conditions or other difficulties. When I am able to access stillness, my mind opens all of a sudden; like clouds and fog that disperse, my afflictions disappear too.

Now on November 23, the 11th year of the Kai Huang reign, the manager Jin Cheng offers vegetarian food for thousands of monks. I respectfully request *Dhyana* Master, Zhi Yi, to descend here to transmit the Bodhisattva precepts to me.

The precepts are about filiality, which are also called prohibitions. May we expediently save with wisdom and dedicate such merit to our parents. I offer this supreme blessing to the king and the queen to create great adornments like the kind Thus Come Ones and treat the four kinds of beings like their only child, the way that all Buddhas cherish beings. May disciple, I, create karma like that of Rahula on this day so that I return to the family of the Buddha in life after life. Just as the eight princes of Light of Sun and Moon Lamp Buddha and the sixteen *sramaneras* of Great Penetration's Supreme Wisdom Buddha have the affinities to be relatives, may my Dharma companions leave the flow of existence and reach the ground of the unconditioned. May we practice the Six *Paramitas* equally and be in harmony with the four kinds of beings. Living beings are endless and cannot be saved exhaustively. Start with great vows and finally save beings in difficulty out of great compassion. Maintain a scope of mind broad and wide like the Dharma Realm, and ultimate like emptiness. Everything will then be accomplished and the seas of vows fulfilled.

Yang Guang, palms together.

(Yang Guang offered the precept master the following: 58 pieces of fabric and more than 40 characters of Chinese calligraphy that he personally penned in various fonts.)

**An Invitation to Reside in the Mountains Sent to Great Master Yong Jia
Authored by *Dhyana* Master Xuan Lang of Mt. Zuo Xi, Wu Zhou**

Reaching the spiritual brook, my heart is open and relaxed. Striking with my staff, I frequent summits high and low. Wiping off the dust in the stone rooms and boulder altars, I sit there quietly. The pine trees are green, the ponds are blue, and the bright moon rises by itself. I can see out for thousands of miles when I look far. Birds and bees are about to nibble those famed faunas and fragrant fruits. Monkeys sing with a sound that rings far and wide for all to hear. The ax is my pillow and the fine lawn is my mat. The world is ferocious and people compete for self and others. Because their mind grounds have not yet reach awakening, they behave in that way.

If you have any time, please lower yourself to visit me.

A Response in Writing by Yong Jia

Since our parting several years ago, I miss you from afar and it has become a sickness. All of a sudden I receive your letter, which puts me at ease. I do not know if your health is sound after you wrote the letter. With the flavor of Dharma nourishing your spirit, you must be light and joyous. When I first received your invitation, I respectfully recited your letter in its virtuous melody. My respect is beyond words.

Maintaining dignified conduct one remains alone in a quiet valley, which is never visited by friends and relatives but sometimes occasioned by birds and beasts. One continues to meditate quietly throughout the day and night. Afflictions of the mind are silenced. Residing on a lone peak and staying erect beneath the tree, one stops all miscellaneous happening and absorbs only the Way. One should be just that. The proper Way is about being quiet and alone; one might cultivate but it is still difficult to know. Deviant people speak and proclaim; though they did not study much, they are approachable. If one does not truly understand the subtlety of *Chan* and one's conduct does not accord with the truth, one should not stay somewhere quiet and stay a fool because one will only waste one's entire life away.

Instead, one should ask those who are already awakened and sincerely bow to them as masters. Put one's palms together and genuflect, regulate one's thoughts and make proper one's appearance, forget weariness day and night, be sincere from beginning to end, tame one's body and mind, get rid of arrogance, laxness, and do not care about one's body. Those who focus on the ultimate Way are those who focus their minds. Wishing to seize that which is wondrous and reach for the esoteric are indeed difficult. Making decisions based on priority is like walking on thin ice, one must listen carefully by cocking one's ears and eyes to one side and apply the wonderful teachings. One must eliminate [attachment to] sense objects and enjoy subtle principles. Forget words, instead, enjoy the pursuit of goals, wash away afflictions, and take in subtle principles. Be prudent in the evening and make inquiries in the morning. One should not commit transgressions even if they are as minor as a piece of hair or thread. In this way, one can hide in the valleys of mountains and sever interactions with multitudes. There maybe some people whose minds' paths have not yet opened. They see things as obstacles to them. They will never find any place for them to fulfill their wish of escaping noise and finding quietude.

Not to mention in the green forests, along the tall and edgy mountain peaks, birds and beasts howl in dense pine and bamboo jungles. Water flows among rocky stones while wind blows through branches. Vines entangle while clouds and fog encircle. According to season, things deteriorate or flourish, while sunlight sparkles and shines in the mornings and evenings. Are not all those things noise? Therefore we know that one will be hindered by any encounter if one's deluded view remains. One must recognize the Way before residing in the mountains. If one lives in the mountains before understanding the Way, one will see mountains and forget the Way. If one recognizes the Way before residing in the mountains, one will only see the Way and forget the mountains. Forgetting

the mountains and the nature of the Way will soothe the spirit. Forgetting the Way and the shape of the mountains will make one dizzy. Therefore if one can see the Way and forget the mountains, the world will then be quiet. For one who sees the mountains and forgets the Way, the mountains are quite noisy.

If one can truly know that there is no “I” in the skandhas, and since there is no “I,” who resides in the world? If one knows that the skandhas and the faculties are like emptiness, the world is like a collection of emptiness, how is it different from the mountain valleys? If one has not alleviated the three poisons, the six sense objects will continue to bother one’s body and mind; contradictions remain in one’s mind.

How does this relate to any noise in the world and stillness in the mountains? In addition, the nature of the Way is empty and vast, myriad things are essentially not obstacles. Since true compassion is impartial, how can sound and form not be the Way? Only because of deluded views that illusions develop; hence one falls onto the turning wheel. If one understands that sense objects do not really exist, then every place is a place for practice. If one understands that *that which is aware* is fundamentally nonexistent, it will shine without any condition. In this way, the Dharma Realm is perfectly integrated. How are understanding and confusion different? Sentient creatures can tell what compassion is and realize wisdom by thinking. With wisdom realized, one will know the Dharma perfectly; without external events, how could compassion be seen? Compassion and wisdom should both be gathered in noumenon. Without living beings, how could one save others? To save all beings is great compassion; to know all states is perfect wisdom. With perfect wisdom, noise and stillness are considered the same. With great compassion, both enemies and relatives will be saved. If so, why live in the mountain valley? Just go with the conditions wherever one may be.

Furthermore, since integrated dharmas and quiet minds are fundamentally nonexistent, why force one to talk about non-existence? Why disturb that which creates noise? Why silence that which is quiet? What noise can be disturbed? What quietude can be silenced? Were one to know that self and objects are just one, this place and that place are all Way places. In that case, why would one search for noise in society or diffuse quietude in the mountain valleys? Discarding motion in the pursuit of quietude is analogous to the cangue of hatred and the handcuffs of love; parting with enemies in pursuit of dear ones is analogous to the railing of adversity and the cage of fondness. If one can find quietude in the midst of noise, downtown becomes a place for quiet sitting. If one is willing to ask one’s opposition for advice and take suggestions from one’s supporters, one begins to turn debts of resentment into friendship. Along these lines, robbery and humiliation have always been my fundamental teachers; screams, noise and such troubles are nothing but stillness. Therefore one should know that the wonderful Way is invisible and does not contradict the myriad marks. True Suchness is quiet and extinct, and yet all sounds originate from it. Confused about this, one’s view is perverted and illusions arise; awakened to this, there is no contradiction or accord.

Stillness does not exist but come into being when conditions meet. Not that there are no towering mountains, but when the conditions disperse, they cease to be. Ceasing to be is

no ceasing-to-be, with what does one cease the ceasing? Since coming into being is no coming into being, with what does one bring forth the coming into of being? Since coming into being and ceasing to be are illusory, true attributes always abide; therefore the water of *samadhi* laps about, what thoughts could not be washed away? The lamp of wisdom is clear, so what fog of confusion could not be eliminated? Act against it, one falls into cyclic birth among the six realms; know it, one jumps out of the three paths. Hence, why not ride the boat of wisdom and travel the sea of Dharma?

Instead, you wish to ride the broken wheels through the valleys. You ought to know that there is a wide variety of beings and yet their nature is one. The source of the spirit is quiet and knows without looking at things. True mark is inherent; wonderful wisdom is not created. When people are confused, they are lost. When people are awake, they are accomplished. Loss and gain depends on the person. What does it have to do with movement and stillness? For instance, a man who has not untied the ropes anchoring the boat should not blame the tumultuous waters for the boat being at a stand still. If one knows the esoteric tradition and empties one's mind to match it implicitly, then one will always regulate oneself whether moving or still, always accord whether speaking or being silent, and always abide in quiet ease. One can then wander the valleys and relax in the wilderness. Comfortable with one's comportment, one quiets one's mind. With inner peace, one is unrestrained and natural outside. He appears to contain his body, but his mind is vast. His physical form can appear throughout the universe while his mind submerges in the Dharma Realm. In that way, one may respond according to potential, as it is not fixed.

Because of your letter, I say all this in brief. What else is there to say? Were you not a friend who shares the same goals, how would I dare write like this? During break time between your meditation sessions, please think about this for a while. Certainly I have been talking falsely and inappropriately, so please burn my letter in the furnace after you read it. I will not write anymore in detail.

Friend, Xuan Jue, palms together.

Repentance Text by Dharma Master Yuan of Tian Tai

I thought how since time immemorial, I have lost my perfectly bright nature and mingled with wearisome sense objects. I continuously transmigrate on the wheel of birth and death. Experiencing misery, I assume different forms and shapes. With limited goodness in the karma that I accumulated in the past, I was born into the human realm; fortunately I was able to encounter the legacy of the Buddha and become a monk. I wear a sash and shave my head like a *sramana*, however, I violate the precepts and rules of eating, incurring numerous errors. I hurt beings, damage objects without kindness in mind. I eat meat, drink until drunk, nurturing this filthy body. I indulge in and secretly rob others of their money and food. I overuse the resources of the Triple Jewel. I seek inappropriately, such as seeking too much alms, seeking by intimidating and etc. I engage in deviant

livelihood without satiation. I indulge in lust, drink alcohol and become ever more deluded. I slight the Buddhas and Sangha members, slandering the Mahayana. I turn my back on justice, abandon parents and ruin teachers and elders. I cover errors and promote my own virtues. I delight in seeing misfortune befall others and mask others' capabilities. I lie, cheat and bribe, competing for gain and fame. I contend over who is right and who is wrong, battling with people. My thoughts of evil do not pause for a moment. I am skittish, scattered always. I chase after relationships, delving in deeper and deeper. I only recite Buddhist sutras while I am strapped in some miserable situation. I appear to have comportment but that only adds to my deceit. I harbor conceit internally and furthermore am lax and mad. I immerse myself in laziness and indulge in sleep. I am shamelessly miserly, jealous, and greedy.

I am like fields in the wild and a filthy core, what good am I? I am like a corpse in the ocean that will not stay there for long. Since not a single act of goodness comes from this body, I will definitely fall into the three realms and go through various agonies. May my fundamental teachers Limitless Life, Guan Yin, Great Strength and other holy Sanghans, together shine upon me with their awesome light. May they altogether help me and save me from behind the scenes. May all my offense obstacles since time immemorial and in this lifetime, the various errors committed with the six senses and the three karmas, become purified like the Dharma Realm by contemplating that the nature of offenses is empty with one perfected thought.

An Essay on Making Vows

Other than the thought of "Amitabha Buddha" as my lone companion, may I have no other thoughts for the rest of my life. May I always be mindful of the light from his jade hair and never remove my mindfulness from his golden features. If I were to eat the flesh of living beings, drink, lust or do various wrongs, in this life I shall be trapped in *Avīci*, swallowing hot metal and liquid copper for myriad eons. May I be free of illnesses at the time of death, the time that I predicted. I will know beforehand the day that I will die and I will not become drowsy or confused when dying. My good roots and wise thoughts will become increasingly bright; my karmic obstacles and demons of resentment will vanish. A distinct fragrance and heavenly music will arrive from above; jeweled palaces and golden thrones will appear at my command. May I personally behold the Thus Come One's infinite light and sages and worthy ones receive me altogether. In a snap of a finger, I will reach the land of peace and bliss, hear the wonderful Dharma and awaken to nonproduction. I will travel an endless number of Buddhalands, making offerings and receiving predictions personally from the Buddhas.

May my division bodies pervade worlds as many as sands in rivers as I save beings throughout eons as many as dust motes. I vow to enter the Saha World of the five turbidities and universally transform the multitude of confused ones until they reach proper enlightenment. Living beings' karma may end and space may end, but my vows will never move. From this life and until the future, may I cultivate perfectly and unceasingly in thought after thought. May the goodness cultivated with my three karmas be dedicated to space and the Dharma Realm so that the four kindnesses, the three

existences and the multitude of enemies and dear ones all escape the wheel of rebirth and become reborn in the Pureland.

Dedication from Reciting the Sutras by Great Master Jing Xi

Hearing one line of sutra is enough to send one to the other shore. Contemplate and cultivate the sutras because they are forever used as a raft. Delight in seeing and encountering them and let them forever be like companions to the host. Were we to take up or donate sutras, we develop affinities with them once we hear them. Whether we apply or oppose the sutras, we will become liberated ultimately because of the sutras. May the wonderful sutras be constantly proclaimed the day that we are liberated from our dependent retribution and proper retribution.

Every land and every dust most can be of benefit to us. We only hope that all Buddhas will bless and aid us from behind and that all Bodhisattvas will secretly rely on their awesome spirit so as to encourage and request the speaking of Dharma anywhere that it is not proclaimed; furthermore, that they personally attend and make offerings anywhere the Dharma is being spoken. May each line and each verse allow us to advance toward Bodhi so that we will not retreat due to form or scent.

Instructions for the Assembly by *Dhyana* Master Chuan of Ba Jiao

A traveling monk does not rest. Now let me ask you why you are unhappy. In a foreign country you are all guests; you ought to duck because things have nothing to do with you. Walking and standing, sitting and lying down, go ahead and broadcast with your chops. Who can avoid right and wrong? You should also examine your own faults. Monks who try to find bargains should know that an average person could not wear the sash. You do not toil any land and do not take care of your parents, what else should you do but practice? Lord Yama cannot make demands upon you. Depending on the causes you sow, so you shall reap. By the time you call for your grandpa in the Nirvana Hall, you cannot go where you want to go and you cannot sit when you want to sit. Just then, it is you and it is me.

The Preface to and the Ten Verses on Ten Things to Do By *Dhyana* Master Fo Yan of Long Men

The *Avatamsaka* uses the ten dharma realms to gather-in the numerous doors altogether and reveal boundless principles. The *Chan* sect has ten esoteric discussions that offer clarifications about the path. Master Dong Shan uses the ten non-returns to convey transcendental certification. I, the mountain monk, now write ten things to do to instruct future generations. Hopefully they will be of help on this path. For example, just as erigeron grows straight among wheat despite a lack of support, someone will smell good when he or she touches incense. Hopefully the writing below will be of some benefit to others.

On Sitting

*The noumenon of clarity has no body
Returning to the root in a thought, the myriad dharmas are level.
Forgetting the self and objects suddenly, the entire substance is exposed
Do not recall your tasks at hand either.*

On Entering the Master's Quarters

*Inquiring after the Way and drawing near a teacher is about sealing your mind,
Enter the door to visit your soul mate.
Without stepping onto the path of Cao Creek in this lifetime,
How can you transcend the past and present when you are old?*

On Community Work

*Picking up logs or selecting vegetables, imitate masters of old.
Advance in practice and cultivate the body, you shall see ancients.
Be truthful wherever you go.
This Dharma is the one direct path in Buddhism.*

On Eating

*Three beats of the board, birth and death end.
Ten utterances of the Buddha's name pierce the past and present.
You should personally open your sitting cloth and set up your bowl,
Do not be sloppy and stagnate in bitter void.*

On Sweeping

*When there is dust on the ground, sweep it away.
Clean the house and walkways as we live in peace.
Insert incense, sweep the grounds, there is nothing else.
Muffle your brilliance and cover your light to reveal the pearl of wisdom.*

On Doing Laundry

*Wash by the river, do not be lazy.
Entering the assembly in dirty clothes is inappropriate,
You stink up your neighbors ahead of you and behind too.
How could those thoughts that affected their bodies and minds melt?*

On Walking

*Pebbles in the forest align with the path of birds.
With nothing to do, I walk over them after a meal.*

*I tacitly ask my soul's companion upon my return,
"Why is it that you live today?"*

On Reciting Sutras

*The night is quiet and deep while I recite the sutras.
Unruffled in the mind, the demon of sleep is alert.
Although no one sees me in a dark room,
Surely dragons and gods cock their ears to listen.*

On Bowing

*Bowing is about eliminating the defilement of arrogance,
It causes the body to experience refreshing cool.
Pay respects to the words of Xuan Sha:
You right and he wrong only extend phenomenon and noumenon.*

On Conversing

*In encounters, do not converse pretentiously
Or speak loudly while you deride the status quo.
If those words lead you to understand the core and the supercilious,
You must be willing to make strangers your dear friends.*

Essentials of the Mind for Meditators

In contemporary times, the *Chan* tradition often uses a question and answer format without understanding what went on in the past. Always chasing after the ends and not reflect. Strange indeed. People in the past asked out of confusion and sought certification through questions. Use questions to learn about ultimate clarity and reach great awakening. Do not be like people nowadays, asking senseless questions and rushing to respond. They will be laughed at by those who understand.

Warnings Regarding Inquiries

In recent times, questions often invite teasing and slander. That is probably because people do not know what it means to inquire, raise doubts, or consult. Later generation inherited the tradition. More often they are employed as praises or approvals. This is not the way things work in the *Chan* sect. For example, the ancients asked about how to transcend the Triple Realm, how to see through sound and form and the teachings of the *Chan* lineage here. They stand out among the assembly and make a decision on the spot. People nowadays give five or ten *Chan* talks, all of which are not cited. In contemporary times, five out of ten brothers speak obsequiously, flattering officials in the audience into decorating and building hermitages. None of them have the air of monasticism about them. Moreover, when they stand out among the assembly to say a few words, they may say, "I will not speak that way," or "Why does not the monk say this and that?"

Questions should be impassioned and profound; it is not about twisting a few words. The importance lies with being able to bring forth people's faith. And do not ramble because one will be ridiculed by mundane individuals.

A Formal Talk by *Dhyana* Master Zhen of Shen Zhao, Da Sui (I)

The Master said:

Old monk I did not come here for fame and fortune. I need to find somebody. One cannot just trek through green mountains and white clouds. Otherwise, after giving up this retribution body, one will not even have grass to eat. How many golden lions, when they were asked about the path, whined like mules and hissed like horses? Everybody, when the old monk, I, traveled, I went to various temples. Some large ones house one thousand monks and some small ones hold 750 people. I might spend a winter or a summer in a temple without knowing what is considered appropriate manner, and let time go by in vain. I cooked at Mt. Wei for seven years; I chopped wood at Mt. Dong for three years. I chose to do the hard work first. I know that I just need to do appropriate things, what does it have to with other people? For instance, all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are diligent and hard-working for countless eons. They give up valuable positions of gold wheel kings, as well as innumerable heads, eyes, marrows, brains, favorite objects, countries, cities, spouses and children. Hence, they finally became Buddhas.

All you *acharyas*, what have you given up? What hard work have you done? And you claim, 'I know transcendental Dharma.' You don't even know mundane dharma. When states appear before you, you raise your brows and make ferocious your eyes. You cannot even deal with that, how can you talk about liberation! You sit on your bed without moving any of your ten fingers. You have offerings from faithfuls to eat. Whenever you open your eyes and your mouth, you say the offerings you eat are a result of your cultivation and practice. How could you digest that? You are just deceiving yourself.

When monk Bai Zhang gave people assignments in the monastery, he only recruited those who worked. What work can you *acharyas* do? Some people in the monastery do not move their body or hand but are capable of digesting millions of ounces of gold. If you can digest it, how can you have such views? Such deviance cannot come with you and into your mother's womb. If one knows the mundane dharma, just that is called transcendental Dharma. You do not even know mundane dharma, how can you know the Buddhadharma? Just as the teachings of the *Tripitaka* are all secrets proclaimed from the Thus Come One's golden mouth, but always turned into demonic words when you recite them.

How would you know the reason behind your not yet realizing the Way? If you knew, Bodhidharma did not come from the west. After all, before Bodhidharma came to this land, was there any Buddhadharma? How could one respond and say there is no Buddhadharma? For instance, someone drops a gem in the mud and could not find it despite working hard at it for endless eons. However, perhaps someone knows the place where the gem fell very well, so he points directly at the gem in the mud to show the person who lost it. The person who lost the gem sees it and immediately recognizes it as his belonging. When he knows that, there is no losing or attaining the gem. Bodhidharma's coming west is also the same way.

Not only is this old monk, I, a wise teacher, beings throughout the land are wise teachers. It is just that their sight and awakening have not become clear yet. One cannot say that they do not have such sight and awakening. If we say they have the Buddha nature, will everyone be willing to bow to fools as Buddhas? It is like a bright pearl dropped in the mud, how can it come out unless one encounters someone who can point it out to them? Such beings are like insentient objects, stubborn things.

Since we are under the three robes, we must draw near wise teachers. We only get to be monks because we had cultivated for several lifetimes before. We should not enter the six paths of transmigration again. Regarding those who have already attained ease, what is there to tell them? A pot of soup, a stove of coal, a mountain of knives and a forest of swords—among the four kinds of beings and the six realms, they go through all of those as if eating savory foods. For those who have not yet reached that level of ease, they are truly undergoing those retributions. Once we lose our human body, to have what we have now will be fewer than one-in-a-million chance. Do not claim that we attained what we have not, such as claiming that we reached certification when we have not reached certification or claiming that we heard something without having heard it. That is just about deceiving and lying to ourselves, wasting time each day. Each turning [on the wheel of rebirth] is just the burden of ignorance. Only a layperson may do as one wishes without accumulating karma.

Now as *sramanas* we accrue karma everyday. What karma? We walk on the land of the king; we wear clothing from donors; and we eat food donated by faithfuls. Our bones and flesh are substance from our parents, if we do not reach enlightenment, how can we repay them? Therefore, it is said that there is karma [for monks not yet enlightened]. Just as old monk, I, am not an enlightened person. I will go with my karma after giving up this retribution body. Who can say they will acquire it again for sure? Only the Buddhas know that. Then a monk asked me, 'How can we understand without words?' 'You cannot even know with the help of words.' The monk was speechless and then bowed.

A Formal Talk (II)

A Buddhist *sramana* who sees existence as if none, will become accomplished. At all times, be impartial toward ordinary beings and saints. Be impartial toward liberation and one has a slim chance at transcendence. Without doing so, it is most difficult, most difficult. Take care.

Maintaining Traditions by Monk Yue of Yun Feng

Those who maintain the traditions say, “Those who shave their heads and wear the sash ought to practice sagely ways. Extraneous and miscellaneous personal business are just the cause of birth and death.”

The Master said, “All of you who carry poles on your shoulder and wield a stick in your hand, push aside grass and observe the wind, then travel around the world. Just answer me, ‘Are you still standing on the ground?’”

The monk had no response.

The Master concluded, “A man who wastes his life away.”

Instructions by *Dhyana* Master Yong of Bao Ning, Jin Ling

This robe on us is not easy to wear. The food in our bowls is not to be eaten like any average meal. Eat it as if average and typical, then even a drop of water is difficult to digest. If the robe can be worn easily, why leave the homelife?

Straightforwardly and honestly put to practice the rules, a perfectly round light has no inside or out. Do not imitate those ordinary people who are shallow and superficial, bragging about what they have learned in their lives. Indulging in greed and hatred, they are shameless; good and evil retributions are evident and unavoidable. Their future in the three realms and the six destinies will be a blur; they might as well turn around and glance at the ground.

Practices Associated with Thirst and Heat by Virtuous Ones of Old

The sun shines angrily, glistens as if in flight. Fiery clouds burn and smoke flares as if steaming. All the rivers and lakes are baked by the sun, leaving grass and trees half-yellowed and withered. True gold melts and disappears; giant stones are about to crack. Ferocious tigers pant and snakes and dragons salivate. The door is made with grass; the roof of the house has no tiles. There is no net or sheet for sleeping, and many children are crying in the house. Planting sprouts without fatigue; forgetting weariness when irrigating the field. The face is as dark as black paint; the back cracks like a tortoise shell. You, Shakyans, should think about it. You eat without farming; you dress without raising silkworms. Regarding housing, you have art studios and empty rooms. For bathing, you

have pure creeks and pools of crooked shapes; emeralds hang next to the canopy while mats are laid on lapis lazuli. In your free time, you search for springs and rocks then sit and walk as you please. Facing wind and moon quietly, you sing and entertain yourself. Turn your head to take a look at things in society. When you are enjoying the offerings from those hard working people, you need to know when to cross them over without resenting the gods of wind or hating the spirits of rain.

A Preface on Monks Off to an Alms Round
By *Dhyana* Master Hong of Jue Fan

The Sixth Patriarch of Cao Creek arrived in Huang Mei in layman's dress. He hung a rock around his waist as he pounded grain through the night. When the assembly at Niu Tou was short on food, Master Rong went to Dan Yang to beg. He traveled 80 Chinese miles carrying 18 Chinese pecks of rice. Going early in the morning and returning late in the evening was common for him. Propagating and transforming comprehensively, he chopped wood and made shoes. Master Hui Man from Long Hua made shoes out of wood wherever he went. Master Nirvana at Bai Zhang spoke Dharma after disciples worked in the field. The rock that hung around the Sixth Patriarch's waist is still at Dong Shan. Master Hui Man's ax for wood-chopping is still at the City of Ye.

There is the village Fu Mi west of Jiang Ling. There is the Rock Da Yi (Great Meaning) beneath the carriage wheel^{lxxvii}. Monks often visit those places where evidence of ancient masters' conduct cannot be expunged. A long time has passed, now the Way is lost. Those fake and banal beggars enter our Order and their knowledge is not even enough to help, not too mention being able to shoulder the great Dharma. They just make socks with flower patterns and decorate them with colorful silk, how could they pound grain through the night? They use fine fabric for robes and short shirts, how could they chop wood into shoes and wear them? They climb extremely steep mountains^{lxxviii} with servants who sweat blood pulling the carriage. They do not even wish to get out of the carriage, how could they carry rice from far away? They just write in big fonts on their door: "This monastery will not accept any visiting monks." Why would they be willing to speak the Dharma for those who worked in the field?

I once felt sad and patted my heart and sighed. I experienced much trouble because I propagated the Dharma, finally becoming disabled. However, many monks came to follow me because I had served Master Yun An. It is not right to accept them as my disciples, but inappropriate to reject them too. Thus, I just stayed firmly in retreat. Someone knocked on my door and said, "Master Yun An gave Dharma like Master Zhi Jue and cared for the assembly like Master Xue Feng." Monastic disciples are different nowadays, however. These disciples do not respect the Way; instead they want people to respect them. They do not enjoy fine reputation, but they are afraid of people drawing close to them. They look down on meditators as if they have been enemies for hundreds of lives, and yet they treat the powerful and the elite like they have been relatives for countless eons. The master laughed, saying, "Walk away from such filth, who are mostly remaining disciples of Yun An." I got up all of a sudden and said, "So what if there is no food?" He responded, "We will beg from pure donors the way the Thus Come Ones did

and the way the great masters willed it. If you, the elder, is willing to come out of retreat, hopefully the various monasteries will realize that the tradition of Yun An still exists.”

I liked what he said; thus, I write about the conduct of ancient virtuous ones to assure him. Someone should appreciate this.

Without Preparing for These Ten Subjects as Monks, Serving the Buddhas for an Entire Lifetime is Merely in Vain (*Records of High Sanghans*)

Translating Sutras. Converting Sanskrit into Chinese, the sutras can bridge ordinary people and sainthood. They turn the Dharma wheel and are teachers for all Buddhas.

Understanding the Meaning. Searching through the text for meaning, one forgets words when one reaches the meaning. The three kinds of wisdom are complete and the two reliances constantly turn.

Practicing Meditation. Cultivate until there is no thought so that good and bad both end. End the ending; one abides in peace and happiness permanently.

Understanding the Vinaya. Stern and lacking in kindness, rush to protect that which is proper. Attentively guard the three karmas like an impregnable fortress.

Protecting the Dharma. What is the need for worrying about safeguarding and shielding when a good guard is at home? A teacher with clear understanding in the Dharma will defend one against outer humiliation.

Attracting Responses. Defying the usual principles, one immediately connects with response. Responses are difficult to fathom as they occur while one is transforming in the world.

Forsaking the Body. The foremost form of generosity is to give away what is difficult to give with a sense of ease. Dedicate this filthy body to the attainment of the *vajra* body.

Reading and Reciting. This is the best and greatest work among the ten types of work performed by Dharma Masters. Like the medicinal citron at Zhu River, when the fruits of this work are ripe, they are red and abundant.

Building Blessings. Blessings grow and offenses diminish for oneself and others. The benefits of the goodness of the conditioned are immense.

Miscellaneous. Gathering-in all subjects completely; returning to the noble together. Masters lecture sutras and guide beings to glorify the vehicle of Buddhas.

Instructions by *Dhyana* Master Ti of Huo An

How is the poor monk's luggage extraordinary? I do not hide the sharp sword pulled from the box, it can cut any hair blown on it. Chase away the cow plowing in your mind and grab the food of your hungry false mind, so that the true order is full. There shall be no more ghosts to divide up the booty east or west.

Instructions for the Assembly

*Pearls secretly disperse to become pebbles;
Poison dumped in leisure is cream.
Grace paid with resentment wipes out Buddhist clans.
A person who does not see anyone as relatives is a real man.*

*Set your feet on the steep summit where even grass does not grow.
Do not stay in some quiet place and wander freely.
Standing against the wind and open your mouth widely,
But do not end up eating anything with your mouth.*

*Access the stages of no more studies and the unconditioned with secret signals.
First heaven, later earth, then space become alive.
One moves horizontally and vertically to reveal the meaning of patriarchs.
How can one's entire family not affect one's heart?*

*Ripping to pieces your mother's undershirt,
We bare our shoulders and reveal our arms shamelessly.
It is not difficult or easy to see foreigners when foreigners come,
and to see the Chinese when the Chinese come.
Whom else shall we let carry forth the great matter?*

*Another village appears when you leave your hideous life.
The Worthies is an early stage that leaves younger generations in awe.
Letting loose on a lone summit, how should thoughts be killed?
The eye to the stick covers the universe.*

*The world of peace quits warfare,
And yet, you have all so many children.
Throw a straight hook onto a turbulent shore,
Meeting no fish, you only waste your glance^{lxxix}.*

*A man's feet reach Chang An, acquire the seat and robes,
But is he willing to cheat himself?
One meter of cold light illumined by the night's moon,
Strips of autumn water send bursts of chills.*

*No need to rely on the blind mule planting grass.
One can easily win the old pavilion and multiple gates.*

*The lake and ocean are quiet and clear; one walks alone.
Upon achievement, one cuts a giant whale with a one-inch blade.*

*Forsake the body and give up life to seek revenge.
Shooting hot blood at one another, will they ever let go?
Conversely, if everyone does not have an inch of soil,
With a pair of empty hands, one grabs tips of clouds.*

*Lift them all up and use them fully as birds throw themselves into the net.
Eliminate reflection and forget the switch, the tortoise carries pictograms.
Entering this gate, everything is not,
How do we make rise and fall the old foreigner?*

*Sincerely use it everyday, the truth is exposed entirely.
Why bother choosing traveling clouds or valley spirits?
It is up to you as you put your palms together, lower your head, cross your hands,
Or uttering any type of words, regardless of how crude or refined.*

*Apart from marks and name, there is no Dharma of reality.
It is neither the mind nor the Buddha, how could it be fathomed?
Understand the ultimate, it is hard to explain.
Harmonious sounds are sent forth before one notices them.*

*When monks start to cultivate, they have a lot of entanglements.
Hold tight your throat so you cannot be affected.
After you are able to turn around and take a quick breath,
What a pity, the sparrow has already flown over Korea.^{lxxx}*

A Short Dharma Talk

*Baring bones and exhausting strength, I shoulder a single board.
Deluded and ignorant, I suddenly burst like a rascal,
both eyebrows stand straight up.
Those strange behaviors are difficult to describe.
The Buddha is above you, follow the commands.*

A Formal Talk

*A punch is coming right at me
Do not stop until there is win or loss.
Sever and forsake, see nothing except to investigate life to the ultimate.
Suddenly, your mouth become awry and your nose flat, you see the entire thing!*

Praise by Dhyana Master Wen of Zhen Jing

While shaving, shocked to see snowy hair cover all of knife

*Realizing only then, time forgives no one.
Escape birth and death and vigorously work on realizing Buddhahood.
Do not wait for tomorrow or the day after.*

Praise by Vinaya Master Zhao of Ling Zhi

*Pursuing the outer while listening to the teachings and doing Chan,
Without reflecting for a moment in thought,
So when one is about to die, the future is dark,
Only then does one realize that one used the mind wrong all through life.*

Exhortations Left Behind by Virtuous Ones of Old

*It is not necessarily suffering in the hells
But suffering is endless beneath the sash.
Do you know the great matter of birth and death yet?
Do not lie in the midst of white clouds leaning against green mountains.*

Encouragements on Reading Sutras

*It is best to study sutras donated,
Though I am ill at ease with the cost of such gifts.
I urge monks and nuns to read and recite diligently,
Do not wait for chilly flashes of light behind metal bars.*

Encouragements for Dealing with Offerings

*How ridiculous the profession of a monk
One gets to be as busy as ants with one's body and mind.
Turning the pages of sutras, much debt is owed;
Shoulder the current karmic obstacles on one's own.
Disciples waft in offerings the way fish laps in rivers;
Oil and salt purchased disappear like snow in hot water
Years come and years go, when will days like this quit?
Not realizing we shall see Lord Yama in the end.*

Encouragements for Abbots

*It is sad indeed as I heave a sigh and speak of decline:
No one is advocating the Buddhadharmā.
Without having understood and read the text, one is already seated to speak;
Without having traveled, one already ascends onto the podium.
Like a mad dog one begs for money and asks for temples;
Like a mute sheep one has nothing but ambition.
I earnestly advise future generations to discontinue these,
Otherwise the time for bitterness in the hells shall be long.*

Exhortations for Myself
By Monk Dong Shan

*Seeking no fame and gain; seeking no glory.
Going along with conditions this life is spent.
When the three-inch breach ends, who is the master of this body?
Reputation built in a century's lifetime is merely in vain.
Repeatedly patch the rips in clothing,
Constantly garner food when there is none.
How many days can an illusory body last?
One grows ignorance for its sake.*

Dhyana Master Cun of Xue Feng Enters Ming

*Time flies in but a moment
How can we abide long in this world?
At the age of 32 I left the mountains.
I am more than 40-years-old when I enter Ming.
No need to constantly name the faults of others,
But gradually eliminate my own errors.
In informing high-ranking ministers in purple rouge,
Lord Yama is not intimidated by anyone wearing a golden fish.^{lxxxix}*

Dhyana Master Hong Zhi's Instructions for the Assembly

*The new tombs in the wild grass lie mostly youth,
Do not wait for spots of grey on sideburns to cultivate.
The matter of birth and death is great, it is best to awaken.
The time in the hells is long, how can it be treated lightly?
When the Way is not achieved, what is there to rely on?
When will you resume the human form once it is lost?
The future is dark and the road is treacherous,
During all hours of the day, investigate on your own.*

Visiting An Ailing Monk

*Visiting friends and relating feelings is truly sad.
Lying in the Nirvana Hall alone for all these years,
No guest enters the door and no papers on the windows.
The stove contains cold ash and the mat retains frost.
One only begins to know how miserable one can be when ill
Because while healthy one is busy mostly for others.
Old monk I have my own way to relax
And never be bothered by the grilling of the Eight Sufferings.*

Master Da Hui's Instructions for His Disciples

*A monk must set goals to be most diligent,
Also draw near good people always.
Do not follow fools for companions who only set you back.
Wasting time may make you fall into mundane affairs.
Constantly escape unkind juniors,
Frequently draw close to elites who have the truth.
If you rely on these my exhortations,
You are worthy to shoulder the pillars of Buddhism.*

A Verse by Upasaka Pang

*As long as one has no thoughts about myriad things,
Why would one be bothered to have myriad things constantly surround?
An iron ox is not afraid of the roar of a lion
In the same way that a wooden man sees flowers and birds.
The core of a wooden man is insentience,
Hence flowers and birds are not alarmed by straw men.
The mind and surroundings are Thus Thus, just as they are,
So why worry that one will not realize the Bodhi path?*

Inscriptions Regarding Self-Preservation

By Wu Zuo of Gu Su

One who seeks fame without virtue as one's base will earn what is called a bad reputation. One who seeks gain without morality as one's base will earn what is called poor gain. Wise people detest those with a bad reputation; corrupt gain has always been feared due to its associated karma. Laotze warned that the supremely virtuous ones are not virtuous. The Shakyans forbid the four deviances and the five deviances. We would much rather lose over honesty than to gain out of falseness. The petty person chases after a bad reputation; the great man sustains a gain that is great. An extremely affluent person with inferior blessings will certainly experience calamity. Assuming a high position with thin virtues, will do damage to the position soon. Ancients only seek understanding rather than powerful governmental offices. Do not cover others' virtues and do not brag about one's own virtues. If so, one can know one's fate and accord with the Way, and one can protect oneself throughout life.

Dharma Master Zhao of Fo Guang, Shang Zhu, Instructs Junior Monk Zheng Wu
(He once lived in Bei Chan of Wu and goes by the name Dong Ping)

It is difficult to be a human being and not easy to be a teacher. Why? It has to do with natural endowments, learning, views and the air about someone. It is impossible without natural endowments, learning, views and the air about someone. With natural endowments, one develops learning; with learning, one develops views; with views, one

has an air about one. Even so, can one be a human being? Not yet. Why? Someone with few gifts by nature, narrow in the breadth of learning, unclear views and a distasteful air about one cannot be a human being [in the best sense]. With few gifts by nature, one is banal; narrow-minded, one is suffocating; unclear, one waffles; and lacking in grace, one is crude. With plenty of natural endowments, one is wise; with extensive learning, one understands thoroughly; with clear views, one is proper; and with grace, one is elegant.

However, even if these people want to be teachers, they cannot yet. Why is it not so easy? It has to do with principles, meaning and terminology. Without understanding the principles, without knowing the terms, and without analyzing the meaning, one still cannot be a teacher. If one can name the principles, analyze the meaning, and know the terminology, but does not belong to a lineage and does not understand mindstates contemplated, it would be unprecedented for that person to be a teacher. With orthodox lineage and clear contemplation, one who has not awakened to and thoroughly understood what the Buddha meant, one still cannot be a teacher.

Having transcended, awakened, and thoroughly understood, it is still unprecedented for one to be a great teacher if one cannot forget mindstates contemplated, eliminate knowledge and view, and part with the love of Dharma. Someone replete in all three but does not know when to advance and when to retreat, when to gain and when to lose will not do. Therefore, it is difficult to be a human being and not easy to be a teacher.

***Dhyana* Master Gui Feng's Instructions for Disciples Who Feel Wronged**

Once apart, it is normal to miss one another. I do not know your mindstate and how you are applying yourself day and night. Have you been able to turn away from sense objects and merge with awakening? Are you aware that there is no relation between outer states and inner thoughts? Are you comfortable with the light ease of *samadhi* and wisdom? Do you know that demonic karma always presents itself if you forget or lose your Bodhi resolve in cultivation?

Observe frequently and contemplate diligently. When habits occur, stop immediately, neither follow them nor extinguish them. Why? We should not step into the water-like hot air and not quell it. We should not step into it to avoid the indulgent emotions of ordinary beings. We should not extinguish it to avoid falling into the likes of the two vehicles who try to tame it. The perfect and sudden teachings are ultimately this way. You just accord with your own nature; the wisdom of awakening is naturally constant. Long term work cannot be completely described but it is briefly named and divided into major categories here. You only need to work hard. I will not say any more.

Rules for Relieving Ourselves

The *vinaya* is very clear on how to use the restroom. We must want to keep clean and neat when we get close to the vessel.

There are rules and regulations for anyone who wants to keep the body and utensils clean and neat, to draw close to sages and saints, to cleanse one's hands after relieving oneself.

If we do not know these rules well, we will actually end up dirtying our hands. When bowing, chanting, burning incense, putting our palms together, and grabbing things, we could do wrong in every move. How could we not be careful? Now I have slightly modified these earlier rules by adding and deleting some items. Though the practice is difficult to list in detail and comprehensively, most of the rules expediently guard one's mind during use and movement. One should expand upon them accordingly. Does not the *Book of History* say, "Without watching over detailed conduct, even great virtue will eventually be burdened." All the more should monastics do so. I hope those superior ones will encourage the newcomers.

- The sutras say, "Those who use the restroom without rinsing themselves are not considered *bhikshus*. They may not sit on a meditation cushion or step into the Buddha Hall."
- We must know that the rinse bottle is clean inside and dirty outside. Do not place the rinse bottle in the sink to fill water; instead, cup water into the bottle to avoid dirtying a sinkful of water.
- Do not place the rinse bottle on top of the sink and wash the bottom of the bottle so that dirty water goes down the sink.
- Do not put a dirty scrub brush near the sink in case someone who does not know uses it to wash his wash basin.
- Water in the sink must be changed frequently. Insects will grow in water that has been left around for more than three nights; it is fewer than three nights during summer months. Do not keep stagnant water. If the monastery does not have a monk in charge of the restrooms, but relies on workers instead, appropriate measures should be applied so that no creatures are harmed.
- Before entering the restroom, snap your fingers three times to warn the ghosts of filth there. Do not spit into the toilet because that will harm the ghosts of filth. These two anonymous acts of virtue are listed in the Canon of sutras; I will not bother to quote them.
- Dump a little water into the pit when first bending down because for one, it alleviates some stench from the remaining excrement and secondly, the new excrement will go down more easily and not collect in the pit.
- Do not talk and utter sounds in the bathroom.
- The *Mañjuśrī Sutra* says, "While relieving yourself, your body and mouth should be like a log or a piece of rock. No sounds."
- Do not graffiti the walls or write in the bathroom. Whenever I see respectable elders, they pick up papers on the ground and put them in clean places or toss them in the water. Out of respect for words and drawings they dare not let them be strewed about, not to mention writing on them in a stinky bathroom. Will that not hurt your blessings?
- While washing, keep pouring from the bucket with your right hand. Catch the water with your left hand. Use your ring finger to wash it well, seven times. Do not cup water straight from the bucket and dirty the bucket.

- Always cut the nail to your left ring finger so that it does not accumulate dirty things. The *Essential Reading for Shakyans* says, “The Buddha ordered that whenever the *bhikshus*’ nails are more than one wheat’s length, they should clip them.” Now there are monastics who cherish their nails and let them grow an inch or more and think they are beautiful. They indulge in their filthy bodies and do not engage in pure practices.
- I often see people who try to be frugal wash their hands in the bucket after they are done relieving themselves. They actually dirty the bucket. Or they dip their hands into the bucket to get water, which is also not allowed.
- It is beneficial to rinse your private parts with cold water; hot water will cause intestinal bleeding, etc.
- Use ash to clean your hands seven times to eliminate filth. Do so to the back of your hands too. Next clean them with mud seven times. Do the same with the back of your hands. After that, use soap, wood ash or two mulberry leaves.
- The *Miscellaneous Records of Brooks Hall* says:

Dharma Master Zhi Chao of Si Chuan during Yuan Yo often recited the *Avatamsaka Sutra*. After doing so for 30 years, he incidentally saw a boy who looked quite fresh and clean greet the Dharma Master with his palms together. Chao asked, ‘Where are you from?’

He answered, ‘From Wu Tai.’

Chao said, ‘Why have you come from so far away?’

He replied, ‘I would like to offer some guidance.’

Chao said, ‘Tell me.’

He replied, ‘It is excellent that the Master recites sutras, but you lose out when you clean yourself in the bathroom. After you rinse the back of your hands with water, you do not wash them with ash and mud. The *vinaya* regulates the use of ash and mud seven times. You only do it two or three times, so filth remains; hence when you bow to the Buddhas or recite the sutras, you are incurring offenses.’ He disappeared after saying this.

Chao was ashamed and changed.

Those who know may say this must be a transformation of Mañjuśrī who appeared to warn Chao. Therefore we should know that hand-washing requires one to adhere to the Dharma. The *Sutra of Cause and Effect* says, ‘Requesting sutras with dirty hands will result in one becoming a dung beetle.’

- Prepare two or three more extra towels on the rack. Change and wash them often so that filth does not dirty clean hands. Wash it once every five days where the community is large; wash it once every ten days where the community is small.
- Twist the towels with which you wipe your hands so that they will dry more easily.
- There are spiritual mantras according to the sutras for entering the restroom and for washing etc. We must observe them. The sutras say, “If we do not uphold and recite this spiritual mantra, we may wash ourselves with the waters of seven Ganges Rivers until the end of *Vajra*, but our bodies and the vessels will never be clean.” Those who recite the mantra should recite each quietly seven times. They will then obtain every

pure blessing and virtue so that all evil ghosts and spirits put their hands together out of respect.

Entering the restroom: *an heng lu tuo ye swo he.*

Rinsing: *an he nan mi li di swo he.*

Hand-washing: *an zhu jie la ye swo he.*

Relieving oneself: *an shi li ye po xi swo he.*

Cleaning the body: *an fa zhe la na jia zhe swo he.*

Instructions for Entering the Restroom

By Vinaya Master Da Zhi

Fold your robes and arrange your shoes neatly. Save on resources and use only drops of water. Remain silent and move with ease. Be mindful that this body is full of feces; it is so stinky it cannot be smelled and it is so filthy it cannot be beheld. The body is like a walking restroom or a skin bag full of excrement; it is indeed despicable. How can we indulge in our physical bodies shamelessly? How can we enjoy fatty and delicious foods? The habit becomes the cause, and the result will definitely accord with the cause. Once we enter the hells, we are stuck for countless eons. Happiness and suffering come from the mind; rising or falling depends on us. It is not that the Way is far away, but that we have not pondered it.

End of Advice for Monastics Fascicle Nine

Advice for Monastics Fascicle Ten

Verse in Praise of the Buddha's Transmission of the Dharma

Bowing to billions upon billions of transformations of Shakyamuni Buddha, who practiced for three *asamkhyeyas* and perfected the merits of myriad conducts. Having eliminated the finest flaws and condensed clarity in the Dharma nature, he is replete with goodness and enjoys subtle and wondrous retribution and transformation bodies. Later he became reborn in the Tushita Heaven then descended into the royal palace. At the age of 30, he became a Buddha while staying beneath the Bodhi tree. He taught for 49 years while in the world, spoke Dharma on 350 occasions and vastly proclaimed the 84,000 practices.

Kings and ministers protect externally throughout the four seas and nine continents. The Teacher and the Sangha transmitted the Dharma internally in the human and heavenly realms. The benefit is vast and the transmission of Dharma is inconceivable. Therefore a verse says:

*Even if wearing and carrying it throughout eons as many as dust motes,
Serving our body as a seat throughout the three thousand great thousand worlds,
If we do not transmit the Dharma to save living beings,
We ultimately cannot repay the kindness of Him.*

1. To receive and apply it.
2. To see and read it.
3. To recite and chant it.
4. To explain and speak about it.
5. To copy and write it.

Inner protectors and outer protectors should circulate the Dharma so that the Jewels of the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha will not end.

The Preface to the *Wonderful Records of Dhyana Forest*,

Drafted by Xuan Ze Shr of Xi Ming Monastery, the Capital

All Buddhas have three bodies. One, the Dharma body that is certified to by the perfected mind. Two, the retribution body that is the result of infinite good deeds. Three, the transformation body that appears depending on the conditions. Now, Shakyamuni Buddha has long certified to the Dharma body and long realized the retribution body. He now makes appear transformation bodies. In the past, Shakyamuni Buddha was somewhere where there was a Shakyamuni Buddha and brought forth the Bodhi resolve to have the same name. Hence he became a Buddha also named Shakyamuni.

For three countless eons he cultivated Bodhisattva practices and served infinite Buddhas in each eon. He occasioned the Thus Come One Samadhi Light in the middle of the road and spread his hair over mud for the Thus Come One and offered him golden flowers. Blessed with a future prediction, he attained patience with nonproduction.

When all Buddhas are about to become Buddhas, they must go through a hundred eons and cultivate the karma of fine features. Though Shakyamuni made his resolve after Maitreya, he had stood on one foot admiring the Thus Come One Tisha for seven days when he met him and praised him with verses. Hence he transcended nine eons and realized enlightenment before Maitreya. When he was about to realize Buddhahood, he was born in the Tushita Heaven and named Universal Light Bodhisattva. When his life in the heavens ended, he came down to Jambudvipa, appearing to ride on a white elephant and entered his mother from her right side. His mother Maya dreamt of being pregnant with a white elephant. When the Brahma immortals prophesized, they said if she dreamt of sun and moon, the baby will become a king. If she dreamt of a white elephant, he will become a holy man. The mother was still and at peace during her pregnancy, developing her compassion and eloquence by the day.

When the Bodhisattva was born, the great earth quaked. His body was of a purple golden hue and replete with 32 features and 80 subsidiary characteristics. His aura was nearly three meters in diameter. As soon as he was born, he took seven steps toward each direction to tame demons and Brahmans. He spoke plainly, "The heaven above and the earth below, I alone am honored." When he was brought to the temple, the gods rose and the immortal Asita put his palms together and sighed, "With such fine features, he will surely become a Dharma King. I only regret that I will die and not be able to see the

Buddha in my lifetime.” He was referring to King Suddhodana’s prince, Siddhartha. His grandfather was Simhahanu, father Suddhodana and mother Maya. Each generation a wheel turning king with the surname Gautama.

Again, he was also named Shakya because he was capable of many things. He was naturally insightful and replete with various skills in the arts. Although he resided in the five desires, he was not bound by the dusts of desire. He traveled out of the four gates of the capital and saw old age, sickness, death and a *sramana*. He became deeply weary and wished to leave upon his return to the palace. Suddenly at midnight, celestial spirits offered support and he leapt out of the city and left his home on his jeweled stallion. After six years of ascetic practices, he knew that was not the path; hence he relied on proper contemplation to reach Bodhi. At that time a milk maid was cooking milk and preparing gruel, which leapt into the air when boiled. The milk maid was shocked and offered it to the Bodhisattva. The Bodhisattva was full of strength after eating it. He went into the river to wash himself and when he was about to step onto the shore, the tree lowered its branch and invited the Bodhisattva over. The Bodhisattva then accepted the auspicious grass and sat beneath the Bodhi tree. Evil demons became hateful and afflicted at the sight of him, and exclaimed, “This man wishes to empty the bounds of my realm!” They led officers and an entourage of 18 billion to scare the Bodhisattva with articles of torture and made him get up quickly to receive the delights of the five desires. They also sent three heavenly women such as Wonderful Intent to deluge the Bodhisattva. At that time, he entered supreme thought and kind *samadhi*. He was sympathetic. The demon armies naturally fell away and retreated. The three wondrous heavenly women turned into sickly ghosts. After taming the demon army, at dawn on February 8th, he realized proper enlightenment.

Having realized Buddhahood, he contemplated the roots of living beings and knew that they enjoyed the petty and were not yet worthy of the great Dharma. Hence he headed for Benares to save five people, including Ajnatakundaya and others. He turned the Dharma wheel about the Four Noble Truths, which was the start of the Triple Jewel. The sutras have the details about the number of people to whom he spoke Dharma and saved. The great gathering of assemblies of Bodhisattvas, the profound talks on marklessness, and the power of his spiritual penetrations happened later. He also rose to the Triyastrimsha Heaven and stayed there for nine months, speaking Dharma for his mother.

At that time, King of Udan and King Prasenajit admired the virtues of the Buddha and carved images of him with wood and drew images of him on scrolls. Menas carved wood and drew scrolls to make Buddha images. When the Buddha descended from Triyastrimsha Heaven, all image makers rose to leave their seats. The Buddha rubbed their heads and said, “In the future, you will do the Buddha’s work greatly.” That was the start of Buddha images.

When the conditions for his teaching were about to come to an end, the Buddha’s disciples were weary and lazy. The Buddha then predicted future events as detailed in sutras. However, the Thus Come One’s actual body is always present and never extinguished. Therefore the *Dharma Flower Sutra* explains, “He is always at Vulture

Peak and other places. That which came into being and ceased to be now is the Buddha's transformation body. In order to gather-in people, the Buddha became born also as a human; to let people know that conditioned dharmas definitely change, the Buddha manifested his extinction. Furthermore, since living beings' faculties were ripe, he manifested coming into being; whereas the response for living beings ended so he appeared to enter extinction.

After the Buddha entered nirvana, gods and people made offerings for erecting all sorts of jeweled pagodas. Furthermore, Mahakasyapa called on more than a thousand arhats to compile the Dharma treasury. Ananda entered through the keyhole and recited the Buddhist sutras without a word of omission. Just like pouring water from one bottle into a different container. One hundred years later an Iron Wheel King named Asoka ordered spirits and ghosts to erect 84,000 jeweled stupas for *sariras* in the heavens and the human realm in one day. They housed the Buddha's memorabilia such as robes, bowl, staff etc., also his *sariras* and numerous magical occurrences.

During the Han Dynasty in China, the emperor dreamt of someone in a golden body standing six-foot tall and looked like Shakyamuni himself. Furthermore, the Lord of Wu, Sun Quan burnt and smashed *sariras* but they could not be destroyed. And stone sculptures float on rivers and auspicious visages appeared on oceans. Such mystical powers of *prajna* and secret manifestations of Guan Yin are comprehensively recorded elsewhere. They are numerous so we will not record them here.

A Verse in Praise of the Buddha Tisha

*In the heavens above, in all that is below, nothing compares with the Buddha,
Throughout the worlds of the ten directions he is matchless.
Of all I have seen in the world,
There is nothing at all like the Buddha.*

Records of China's Opening to Buddhism and its Teachings During the Time of Emperor Xian of Han Dynasty

The *Records* say, "During the 13th year of Emperor Ming's Yong Ping reign, he dreamt of a god six-foot tall and in gold. Around his head beamed sunlight. When he woke up he asked his various ministers and subordinates about this. Fu Yi responded, "There is a Buddha in India." The emperor sent attendants to ask for him and received sutras, images and two monks. The emperor established a monastery for them. Walls of murals, thousands of vehicles and ten's of thousands of carriages circled the stupa three times. The emperor also arranged for standing images of the Buddha to be at Xianjie Ling above the Gao Yang gate and the Qing Liang Platform at Nan Guan. He had the *Forty-Two Sections Sutra* sealed inside the court of the Secretary of the Arts.

Just as the records show in an earlier compilation by Mouzi:

There were *sramanas* Kasyapamnega and Falan Zhu, whose practices were difficult to fathom and who were meant to be pioneers in the work of transforming living beings. Attendant Cai An invited Kasyapamnega to travel eastward. They did not stay in other areas but went straight to Luo Yang. They explicitly told people the principles and led them to admire the basis of this faith.

The emperor asked Kasyapamnega, ‘Why did the Dharma King who came into the world not transform beings of this country?’

He replied, ‘Kapilavatsu is the center of ten billion solar systems in the trichiliocosm. All Buddhas throughout the three periods of time are born there. Gods, dragons, ghosts, spirits and others also become born there to be properly transformed by the Buddhas. They will become enlightened. While living beings elsewhere do not have the affinities to attract the Buddha [Shakyamuni]; hence the Buddha did not go there. Although the Buddha did not go to those places, wherever the Buddha’s light reached, perhaps 500, 1,000, or 2,000 years later, sages transmitted the oral teachings of the Buddha, transforming, guiding, and speaking on the meanings of the teachings extensively.’

The number of texts describing this is significant; therefore, I will not quote any more.

The *Records* reveal, “On January 1st of the 14th year of Yong Ping, the day after the various Taoists of the five mountains offered their New Years greetings, they read their own future and told each other, ‘The emperor has forsaken Taoism and sought some foreign religion from afar. Now that the officials have gathered for the New Year, we can send in a statement to protest.’”

The statement briefly goes:

The disciples of Taoism in five great mountains, 18 mountains, three superior caves, Zhu Shangxing and others, all together 690 persons dare to speak up despite the possibility of being punished with capital crime.

We understand that the great Way is empty and void, natural; it is before creation. Those in ancient times observed this and hundreds of emperors did not change this. Now emperor, your Tao is in strides with Emperor Xi and your virtue is lofty like Yao and Shun. We overheard that the emperor has abandoned the root and is chasing after the branches in seeking teachings from India. They serve a foreign god and their words do not relate to China. Will the emperor forgive us and allow us to test Buddhism.

Many of us, Taoists from various mountains, have the ability see and hear things afar, and know texts on a wide basis. We are familiar with and capable of reaching the depths of the collection of records and magic

Taoist spells since the first emperor. We are able to command ghosts and spirits, or swallow clouds and drink mists, not be burned in fire, not drown while walking on water, float in the sky during daytime, become invisible and all kinds of other magic.

We wish to contest them so that one, the emperor will enjoy a peace of mind. Two, tell that which is true and that which is false. Three, so the great Tao has a refuge. Four, not disturb the Chinese custom, ministers and others. If we do not win in the competition with Buddhists, we will be sentenced as you please. If we win, then get rid of these pretenders.

The emperor then ordered Secretary Song Yang to lead them to Chang Le Palace. “They can gather at White Horse Monastery on the 15th of this month.” The Taoists then prepared three platforms, each had 24 separate doors. Taoist of Mt. Nan Zhu Shanxing, Taoist of Mt. Hua Liu Zhengnian, Taoist of Mt. Heng Huan Wen Du, Taoist of Mt. Dai Jiao Dexing, Taoist of Gao Song, Lu Huitong, Qi Wenxing and other Taoists of 18 mountains such as Huo Shan, Tian Mu, Wu Tai, Bai Lu etc., all brought magic gems and true texts of the Taoist lord and uttered Sanyuan incantations and records etc. consisting of 509 rolls on the western platform. Twenty-seven Taoist texts by Mao Chengzi, Xu Chengzi, Huang Zi, Laotze etc., 235 rolls in all, were placed in the center platform. Food and offerings for a hundred gods were placed on the eastern platform. The emperor’s xanadu was located at the south gate of the monastery. The Buddha’s *sariras*, sutras and images were placed west of the path.

After the meal on the 15th, the Taoists made a torch of logs, reeds, straws and *chandana* incense. They circled around the sutras and cried, “We pray to the primal god of Taiji , the great Tao, various immortals and hundreds of spirits of the taiji, the great Tao, today a foreign god confused the lord of China into believing in what is deviant. The orthodox teachings are lost as the wind of mystery plummets. We dare place these sutras on the platform and test them by burning them in order to clear up confusion and distinguish between that which is true and false.”

They lit the sutras on fire and they turned into ash. The Taoists looked at one another and in utter embarrassment grew extremely afraid. Some wanted to soar into the sky, some wanted to become invisible. They had no power to stop it. They called out to ghosts and spirits and there was no answer. Each felt ashamed. Taoist of Mt. Nan, Fei Shucui, killed himself.

Lord Zhang Yan told Zhu Xing, “You did not pass the test, hence these are false. You should follow the true teachings that have come westward.”

Zhu Xing said, “Mao Chengzi said that the Tao is the spiritual jewel of the triad god, how can its creation, the so-called fundamental element be false?”

Yan said, “The fundamental element has the reputation of valuing virtue; it is nameless in its teaching of words. Now you say it is a teaching of words, which makes it false.” Xing became quiet.

At that time the Buddha's *sariras* lit with five brilliant colors, shot straight up into the sky and circled above everyone like a canopy that shielded them. At the same time, they were so bright that they overshadowed the sun. Dharma Master Kasyapamnegā leapt into the air high above, sat and reclined in the air and showed off spiritual transformations in innumerable ways. At that time, the heavens rained down jeweled flowers on the Buddhist monks. They then heard heavenly music that tugged at people's emotions. Everyone was unprecedentedly joyous. They all circled around Falan to listen to him speak on the essentials of the Dharma and utter pure sounds that praise the merits of the Buddha. He also had everyone praise the Triple Jewel and explain that good and bad karma all have their effects. The different characteristics of the six realms and the three vehicles are not the same.

He also talked about how blessing is the highest for those who become monks, the quantity of such pure blessings is the same as establishing the first Buddhist monastery. Lord Yangcheng and Minister of Public Works, Liu Jun, and other officials and individuals numbering more than a thousand became monks. Six hundred and thirty Taoists of the four mountains such as Taoist Lu Huitong and others became monks. Madam of the Magistrate, Wang Jiehao, and 230 other women of various palaces became nuns. Ten monasteries were established, seven of which were outside the city for monks and three of which were in the city for nuns.

There is a lot more that followed. The *Records* include five rolls of descriptions. I will not quote all of them here. Some suspect that the *Records* were written recently, and that there was no such competition originally. According to the *Book of Wu*, Fei Shucaī died because of the miraculous response. Therefore, the *Records* are factual.

The Minister of Shang Inquires after the Sage Confucius

Minister Pi asked Confucius: Are you a sage?

Answer: I read widely and forced myself to remember. I am not a sage.

Another question: Are the three kings sages?

Response: The three kings used wisdom and boldness well. I do not know if they are sages.

Another question: Are the five emperors sages?

Answer: The five emperors used humaneness and justness well. I do not know if they are sages.

Another question: Are the three imperial leaders sages?

Answer: The three imperial leaders were good at establishing policy. I do not know if they are sages.

The minister was extremely shocked: Then who is a sage?

Confucius appeared to be stirred up and answered:

I heard there is a sage in the West who does not govern and yet the country does not become chaotic, who does not speak and yet people have faith, who does not change others but conducts himself well. He does not transform, and yet people practice goodness on their own. He is great and yet no one can name him.

Based on his words, Confucius must have known in-depth that the Buddha is a great sage, but since the time and conditions had not yet come together, he only quietly acknowledged him. Since the opportunity arose, he mentioned the Buddha. However, he did not have a chance to talk about the Buddha comprehensively.

Teachings for the Young Monk Fa Hui By *Dhyana* Master Ying, Tie Niu, of Mt. Zhong

Empress Wu Zetian of Tang Dynasty on May 15th of the first year of Yan Zai included all monks and nuns in the Department of Ancestral Temples. A law was established in the sixth year of Tian Bao during Emperor Xuan's reign to require the Department to provide certificates to all monks and nuns. During the first year of Zhi De during Emperor Su's reign, the Department of Ancestral Temples' certificates were granted to ministers to sell.

This tells us that before the year of Yan Zai, people became monks according to the traditions of India; that is, the master gathered-in those whose practice and karma were good enough to receive the Way. Just as the Tang Dynasty Chief of Staff Hui Tong visited *Dhyana* Master Dao Lin of Magpie Nest and said, "Disciple I do not wish to become an official but wish to become a monk out of admiration. Will the monk take me in?"

Dao Lin said, "Nowadays monks' conducts are mostly superficial and abusive."

Tong said, "Fundamental purity requires no polishing and original brightness requires nothing upon which to shine."

Dao Lin said, "If you understand the wonderful and perfect wisdom of purity, then the substance is naturally empty and still, which is to truly leave the homelife, why bother with outer form?"

Tong said, "I wish to be accepted and I vow to follow the teachings of the master." Dao Lin then shaved his head. Later, monks' practices became corrupt; therefore regulations for examining monks were established. That makes sense.

This is why the yellow-faced old man, [the Buddha,] had the king and powerful ministers be responsible for the Dharma. Now our emperor's kindness is vast and copious. The reason that the emperor raised the standard of qualification for people to become monastics is an indication that he values the teachings, respects Sangha members and esteems the Dharma. *Dhyana* Master Gao Song of Ming Jiao said, "A monk has the precepts to guard his body, *samadhi* to collect his mind, and wisdom to clarify. His might is respectable and his comportment is worthy of emulation. Gods and people look on and straighten themselves." It is certainly the fault of monastics that people are more condescending toward Sangha members nowadays.

However, unless one's vows have been great for several lifetimes and that one has become mature by soaking in perfect wisdom, it is not easy for someone to wear a *samghati*. Just as Lord Wenzheng of this dynasty regretted at the time of his death that he chose the wrong path and did not become a monk before, he asked his sons to shave his head, dress him in the three monastic robes, and then put him in the coffin so that he will become a monk in the next life. He willed Assistant Minister Yang Danian to handle his will. Later on, because the country had its rituals for burying a minister, Yang did not follow Wang Wenzheng's will. Instead he simply had the three robes and a shaver placed in his coffin.

Yang also had regrets. He actually investigated *Chan* and awakened to the inherent nature. He was ordered by the emperor to compile *Jing De's Records of Lamp Transmissions* to propagate the Dharma in the west and in this land. Sigh! To become a monk is so difficult. Those who know this, if you are a great man, you should bring forth fierce determination, avoid superficial and abusive conduct, cut away at the heels immediately and peek over at the Buddhas and patriarchs and instantaneously understand. In that case, becoming liberated from the body and mind is not so difficult. One will not worry about not having a charm at hand. Therefore it is said, "The profound meanings of tall mountains and flowing waters are acknowledged with a smile and a nod by those who understand."

Fa Hui has devoted himself to the Bao Gong Temple for years. He is cautious and simple. His determination is firm and he is not superficial or corrupt. Now he wishes to become a monk, and he shall be devoted, faithful, strong, handsome, and outstanding. The great worthy ones will provide the financial support needed for him to realize his goals. Because this scroll is a reply to his request for warning and advice, I offer my warnings once again. With this scroll, I also hope that worthy individuals and great men of the world will glorify and value the teachings and respect the monks. Know that, although some before you were strapped by wealth and honor, they regretted it at the end.

Mid-autumn of the year Ji Wei while residing at Tie Niu, Mt. Zhong.

Records from the Newly Built Dharma Hall of Yong An *Chan* Monastery in Fu Zhou

As drafted by Upasaka Wu Jin

Chen Zongyu of Ling Chuan received the great Dharma in the assembly of elders at Yong An. He enjoyed donating his family fund to build the abbot's quarters and repairing the winding hallways. Just after the trees were collected for the new Buddha hall, [the donor] Zongyu died. His two sons howled, complaining to Chang the monk, "Before my father made offerings to the Buddhas, he was strong and safe. After making offerings to the Buddhas, he got sick and died. Is Buddhism's law of cause and effect believable?"

Chang said, "You as descendants should fulfill your father's wish and finish the Dharma Hall. I am a wild man who cannot offer you any adequate analogies. However, my master has a senior disciple, Upasaka Wu Jin, who attained the Dharma, deeply entered

nonduality and speaks with unobstructed eloquence. He is good at speaking according to the audience. After the Dharma Hall is finished, I will write a letter of inquiry on your behalf, asking him to resolve your doubts.”

In the spring of the first year of Shao Sheng, you, Monk Chang sent a letter to Shanyang. I happened to be called to duty as imperial censor and did not have time. The next year, you came to the capital and waited for my reply at Zhi Hai *Chan* Monastery. At that time, the upasaka sat quietly in the room. Having understood that states are illusory, he was at peace with his body and mind though a metal wheel circled above his head. Ming Jian shed tears like rain and sadly made three requests, “Upasaka with great compassion, kings and ministers are bestowed with the responsibility of protecting the Buddhadharmas on the outside. I only wish Upasaka, you, will act as a great physician and provide medicines of Dharma to the sons of Chen Zongyu.”

Upasaka Wu Jin said, “Excellent, excellent. Since you are willing to come from so far away to request the Thus Come One’s unsurpassed, secret and utmost profound Dharma essentials for the sons of Mr. Chen, take my answer to them:

Good men, in still emptiness, the four marks are falsely produced, accumulating air into wind and accumulating form into earth; accumulating *yang* energy into fire and accumulating *yin* energy into water. When established, it is heaven, earth and people; when dispersed, it is myriad things. All sentient beings come from the interaction of water and fire, the entanglement of form and wind. Each element’s attribute corresponds to the elements in the world. Since we are born, the body needs to be taken care; since we need to be raised, the body needs to be taken care. We need resources. Since we need resources, we need to accumulate. Since there is accumulation, greed develops. Greed becomes competitiveness. Competitiveness turns into hatred. Hatred becomes viciousness. Viciousness turns into stupidity, stupidity turns into delusion.

The Buddha named greed, hatred and delusion the three great *asamkhyeya* eons. During the eon of one’s lifespan, some may live for 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, or 80 years; there is a small eon in a lifetime. Wishing to transcend countless eons in this eon is as impossible as an earthworm wishing to climb onto clouds or smoke. The Buddhas are compassionate and unveil the great expedient of the *dana paramita*, which is to encourage you to give monetary offerings. If you can give up money, then you can give up love; able to give up love, you can give up your body. If you can give up your body, you can give up your thoughts. Since you can give up your thoughts, you can give up the Dharma. Since you can give up the Dharma, you can give up the mind. Able to give up your mind, you will resonate with the Way.

When the Venerable Kasyapa was on his alms round once in the past, a poor elderly woman gave him some water from rinsing rice in a broken

container. The Venerable One drank it then soared into the sky and manifested 18 transformations. The poor elderly woman looked up in admiration and was extremely happy. The Venerable One said, 'With your offering, you will receive endless blessings. As you wish, you can be a human or god, a wheel king, Shakra, or a sage of the fourth fruition or a Buddha.'

The elderly woman said, 'I wish to become born in the heavens.'
The Venerable One said, 'Just as you wish. After you pass away seven days later, you will become reborn in the Triyastimsha Heaven and enjoy supreme bliss.'

At that time King Bibimsara was in the Buddha's assembly listening to the Dharma and stood up saying, 'The emergence of a great sage is difficult to encounter in thousands of eons. I wish to volunteer and build a hermitage. Will the Buddha permit it?'

The Buddha said, 'You may.'

Bibimsara held a stick of bamboo and stuck it in front of the Buddha saying, 'The hermitage is built.'

The Buddha agreed, 'Indeed it is. Indeed it is. This hermitage covers the Dharma Realm. This offering is worth more than the amount of sand grains in the rivers.'

Jian brought those two stories back to the donors and me.

Make a sound decision. Your father built buildings and corridors and received much more blessings than a container of water left over from rinsing rice. He will definitely become born in the heavens and enjoy bliss. If compared to King Bibimsara's one stick of bamboo, which contains one Dharma Realm, your father's donation certainly contains boundless Dharma Realms. To understand this practice, please listen to a verse of mine:

*One stick of bamboo built a hermitage,
And wind blows insects and larva into the south sea,
Which became number two when foul water splashed.
Dullards missed the meaning and ask for these three things.*

Thereafter Ming Jian enthusiastically believed and accepted my words about Buddhism, returning to tell Mr. Chen's sons to write and compile these words. They were inscribed in commemoration.

Emperor Wen of Song Dynasty Gathers All Ministers to Discuss Buddhism

Emperor Wen was the third son of the first emperor of Song. He was intelligent, erudite, refined and understood things thoroughly. He reigned for 30 years. Once there was a

relatively quiet day with some free time, he asked minister He Shangzhi and Personal Minister Yang Xuanbao:

I did not study many sutras and the days have become busy. The reason that I dare not promote other religions, though I have not discussed or paid attention to cause and effect throughout the three periods of time, is because you, the extraordinary people of present time all respectfully believe in it. Fan Tai's Xie Lingyun often says, 'The writings of the Six Texts are fundamental to the politics of dealing with mundane affairs.' Were one to seek true profundity in spirit and nature, how can one not use Buddhist principles as a compass? I recently read Yan Yan's *Treatise in Refuting the Shastra of Reaching the Nature* and Zong Bing's *Questions for the Shastra on Black and White*. I understand that the Buddhadharma is deep and contains principles that are sufficient to uncover and open up minds and intrigue. If everyone in the nation believed in it then I may just sit in peace. What problems will there be?

Shangzhi responded:

Vulgar people mostly do not believe in the Dharma. A mediocre and inferior person like me could hardly praise it or disapprove of it. I dare not respond. As for the talented individuals of earlier generations, they did not disappoint the emperor regarding your question on Buddhism. Bei Song was a long time ago and it is difficult to know the details of people then; however, since crossing the river, these individuals were sincerely determined to take refuge and have full faith. Wang Dao, Zhou Yi, Yu Liang, Wang Meng, Xie Shanghun, Wang Tan, Wang Gong, Wang Mi, Guo Wenju, Xie Fudai, Kui Xuxun, the brothers of the deceased first emperor of Song, the brothers of Wang Yuanlin, Fan Zhu, Sun Shuo, Zhang Xuan, Yin Yi and others who either wore the crowns of ministers or robes of the royal family either had the goal of humans or gods, or fulfilled lofty conducts on par with clouds and fog.

Dharma Master Hui Yuan once said, 'Shakyamuni's teachings are appropriate for all. Entering the Way is certainly at the core of the teachings; helping lay people is also important.' I personally think that this saying accords with essential principles. If every family observed the precepts, then the government would no longer need to punish anyone. What the Emperor calls, 'sit in peace,' is exactly as it should be.

Xuanbo said:

[To take part in] this conversation is probably in the scope of gods. How is it appropriate for me to participate? I think Buddhism is probably not useful when Qing and Chu were discussing how to build a strong military,

or Sun Zi and Wu Zi were exhausting the tactics of swallowing and expanding territory.

The Emperor said, “It is not a tool for warring against other nations, in your words.” Shangzhi responded, “Warriors will relax if hermits were honored; battalion spirit will deteriorate when humaneness and virtues are respected. If one sets goals like those of Sun Zi and Wu Zi, which are about invading other nations, then one would not follow the path of Yao and Shun. Is Buddhism the only thing abandoned then?”

The Emperor concluded, “[The propagation of] Buddhism has you just as Confucianism has Ji Lu.” From then on, Emperor Wen started to pay attention to Buddhist sutras.

When the emperor met Monk Hui Yan, Guan and others, he discussed the meaning of the Way with them and invited them to meet in the imperial court many times. The emperor lowered himself and sat with rows of monks to eat. At that time there was an Indian *sramana* Dao Sheng who stood out among the crowd and was particularly just. The emperor once explained Dao Sheng’s theory of sudden enlightenment, and the monks all asked extremely difficult questions. The emperor said, “If the deceased [Dao Sheng] were to come to life, would you try to subdue him?” The emperor also ordered Dharma Master Yan to list the commonalities and unique aspects of [the Dharma] to the works of the contemporary Yan Yanzhi, such as his *Shastra on Leaving Consciousness*. All day long, Yan Yanzhi and Dharma Master Yan went back and forth discussing this topic, causing the emperor to smile and say, “Today, you two need not feel ashamed about the conversation between Zhi Dun and Xu Xun.”

Records of Commemorative Offerings in the Wilds in the *Book of Latter Han*

The *Record of Commemorative Offerings* says:

‘Buddha’ means an enlightened one. One who enlightens all beings. To summarize the Buddha’s teachings, it is mainly about applying kindness, avoid killing, and focus on purity. The diligent ones are the *sramanas*, which means ceasing the mind. By shaving off one’s hair, leaving the householder’s life, ending emotions and washing away desire, one returns to the unconditioned.

Furthermore, it teaches that people die but their spirits do not extinguish, they assume another form. Whatever good and evil they do, they will face the consequences of them later in life or another life. Buddhism values the practice of goodness to train one’s spirit, training continuously until one reaches the stage of nonproduction, which is Buddhahood.

Golden colored and a little more than five meters in height, [the Buddha] wears the light of sun and moon around his neck. Transforming endlessly and entering all places, he can change and connect with all things and help all beings on a wide basis. Several thousand rolls of sutra texts explain emptiness as the goal. The sutras proclaim grand ideas, which can

nevertheless be sought in the one entity. What is sought is within. What it clarifies is the superficials regarding seeing and hearing; however, what it leads to and relies on is subtle and mystical, profound and unfathomable. Therefore, when the elites like kings and ministers encounter the theory of birth and death, the law of cause and effect, they are suddenly blank with incomprehension.

The *Book of Wei* says:

The Buddhist sutras mainly explain that different types of beings come about because of their karma in their past, present and future lives. The sequence to and the grade of their practice are not the same, but all move from the lowly then advance to the profound, building greatness in small increments. It is mainly about accumulating humaneness and compliance, ending all bad habits and desire, practicing stillness and achieving penetrating reflection.

An Essay on the Dedication of Sweeping the Grounds
By *Dhyana* Master Fa Zhen, Shou Yi, Jing Ci Monastery, Hang Zhou

May the merit of sweeping the ground be dedicated to beings throughout the Dharma Realm. The objects of form are purified through sweeping. Since the sense objects are purified, the eye organ becomes pure. Since the organ is pure, the eye consciousness is pure. May it be the same with sound, scent, taste, sensation and Dharma. Furthermore, may this world become pure and all throughout the Dharma Realm and space become the pure ground for enlightenment, which is the *Sangharama* of Perfect Enlightenment adorned with light and dwelled by all Thus Come Ones. May all forever eliminate their dualistic views of purity and defilement. May they not be touched by a single tainted dust of ordinary beings or sages. In this way, may the wisdom of purity become purified too.

Records from Ling Feng Monastery's Shi Fang (Ten Directions) *Chan* Hall, Da Hong Mountain, Sui Zhou

Mt. Da Hong is southwest of Sui Zhou and covers more than a hundred Chinese miles. From the summit, one can look down to see the various countries of eastern Han. From there, forests, hills, peaks and ridges look like calm plains. The character Hong (洪) in the name of Da Hong Mountain and may mean "foreign" or "lake." What it truly refers to is not clear. Checking today's geography, a great lake used to be among the four mountains. Magic dragons lived there as waves lapped about and brimmed over, the depth of which is unknown. Later two dragons fought there and pushed apart an opening that went through layers of rocks. Water in the lake then flew southward. This is why the village of Fu Shan is called the Channel of the Fallen Lake. This is how Mt. Da Hong got its name.

The Monk Shang Xing in Kai Yuan Monastery, Hong Zhong in the reign Yuan He of Tang Dynasty, is Master Ci Ren of this mountain. The Master was secretly transmitted the mind's essence from Ma Zu. When he traveled north to Wu Tai Mountain to bow to Mañjuśrī, he beheld something supreme. He felt fortunate that he has conditions with Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva, therefore, he vowed to cook for the assembly of monks for three years. The monks in the monastery rejected his request. He sobbed and sighed. There was an old man who told him, 'Your affinities are not here, just go and travel. You should stop when you reach Sui and stop when you reach Hu.' The Master then went south. During July, autumn of the second year of Bao Li, he arrived at Sui Zhou to gaze at peaks from afar. He asked the villagers, 'What mountain is that?'

The villagers said, 'Mt. Da Hu.'

The Master quietly noted how this matched the words of the old man. Then he traversed the mountains and foothills to reach the lake. That year happened to be experiencing an extreme drought. The Master^{lxxxii} asked Villager Zhang Wuling, 'Why are you preparing lambs and pigs?'

He answered, 'To pray to the dragon in the lake.'

The Master was sad to see that and told Wuling, 'Unseasonable rain and sun are a result of people's dark karma. Harming lives to save lives only increases offenses. Better if you do not kill. I just need three days to pray for you.'

Wuling was also an extraordinary man. He respectfully believed in the Master's words after hearing them. The Master then trekked through jungles and climbed boulders to reach a cave north of the mountain. He sat with no wish for fame or wealth, but sat with ease and in calm, sincerely and silently praying. A fierce thunderstorm struck. Several days afterwards it was sunny. Wuling followed the Master's tracks and came and sought the Master. The Master was in *samadhi* with spider webs hanging on his face. Wuling yelled into his ear and tapped his body for a long time before the Master woke up. Wuling then donated this mountain to the Master for building a hermitage and had his two sons be attendants by the Master's side. Many students came to follow the Master, thus forming a Dharma assembly.

On May 29th, the first year of Da He, the Master secretly told the dragon spirit, 'Earlier I asked to replace the sacrificial animals so that you do not have to consume food of blood. I now give up my body to feed you, you may eat my flesh.' He took out a sharp knife and cut off his left knee, then his right knee. His disciples rushed over. Before Ci Ren's knees fall off, white liquid oozed out and he had already entered extinction solemnly. The two sons of Zhang stood there watching and passed away too.

The regional director reported the situation to the emperor. Emperor Wen of Tang Dynasty commended it and granted a sign for the building named You Ji *Dhyana* Courtyard. During the year of Tian Fu of the Jing Dynasty, it was changed to Qi Feng Monastery. During the first year of Yuan Feng of this dynasty, it was again changed to Ling Feng Monastery. All are famous for responses through prayer.

It has been more than 300 years since the Master passed away, but the people throughout the more than a dozen provinces between Han Guang, River Ru and River Fen respected and attended to him as if tied by a contract. Golden fabric and grains of rice line up the path. The resources are rich but the Dharma is weak. The quality of the Sangha dwindled. This mountain here is tall and precipitous. The buildings and pavilions were built based on the shape of the mountain. The ones in the front are different than the ones in the back; they are not in any particular order.

Elder En came here to study and became very familiar with the supreme form here. He opened up a road for entry from the south to correctly position the host and guests. Cliffs were cut flat, creeks were filled, ants were shoveled away and the stairs were repaired. Craggy mountains of lofty heights were turned into flattops. The three doors and the halls extended their wings and lined up as straight as a rope. The hallways and major corridors allowed distant residences to access one another. Pure companions gathered like clouds in innumerable number so the temple became a huge monastery.

The auspicious omen of jewel lamps that appeared at Mt. E Mei, the aura of light by the golden bridge of Mt. Qing Liang and other special spectacles that occurred elsewhere also happened here. While he was demolishing the old and building the new, those *vinaya* disciples who were attached to the old ways nagged.

I happened to be sent down to assume the role of governor and to settle things between the *Chan* and *Vinaya* sects. I told them, ‘The characteristics of the *Vinaya* is A and B, while *Chan* is about the ten directions. The so-called A and B are about where A came from and where B is established.’

So the *vinaya* group will certainly say, ‘We are the descendants of Master Ci Ren.’

‘But now we bring people from the ten directions to this monastery, hence the descendants of Master Ci Ren will become extinct. If B is a descendant, then A is Ci Ren. If B is Ci Ren, then A is Ma Zu. If B is Ma Zu, then A is Nan Yue. If B is Nan Yue, then A is Cao Xi. Tracing back the A's and the B's, the origin is Bodhidharma and the 28 patriarchs in India. Where, after all, are the so-called A and B? As far as those of the ten directions, where did the ten come from? How did the directions

develop? Worldly dharmas produce two out of one, one and two become three, two times three equal six, three times three is nine. Nine is the ultimate, which returns to one. One and nine are ten. This is what ten means.’

‘The so-called direction. Is zenith a direction? Is nadir a direction, is east a direction, is west a direction, is south a direction or is north a direction? If we take zenith to be a direction, it is where all the gods reside and it is not your state. If we take nadir to be a direction, it is where the wheel of wind is upheld, it is not somewhere you may reside. If we take east to be a direction, it is where people of Videha have faces like the half moon. If we take north to be a direction, it is where people of Uttarakuru live long lives. If we take west to be a direction, it is where the waves of Aparagodaniya stretch into the distance. If we take south to be a direction, it is Jambudvipa with elephants, horses and different countries. However, A and B are not fixed; the ten directions are without basis. Competition between *Vinaya* and *Chan*, who is right and who is wrong?’

Disciples of the *vinaya* argued, ‘The World Honored One used to live at Jeta Grove, therefore, if the governor’s words were true, then was the World Honored One false?’

I replied, ‘Have you not heard? The realization of the greatly perfect enlightenment is the *Sangharama* where my body and mind peacefully reside in the wisdom of impartial nature. This is not what I said; it is what the Buddha said.’ Then the *vinaya* disciples quietly walked away.

Chan disciples said, ‘Other than a bottle or a bowl, we ask for nothing from the world. Just as birds fly across space and rest at any branch, or like a turtle swimming in the ocean and float on a log encountered, when things come into existence the way stalks come together, entering extinction is like extinguished bubbles. Do we not know, governor, your A and B and the ten directions?’

I concluded, ‘Excellent, Buddhist disciples. Reside neither inside, outside, nor in the middle. Do not live in the four directions, zenith or nadir. Abide where there is nothing to abide, which is to truly abide in the ten directions. What is there to say? What is there to say?’

Recorded on the 15th of January, the first year of Chong Ning.

**A Song on Listening to and Reciting the *Lotus Sutra*
By Dharma Master Xiu Ya of Tang Dynasty**

The colors of the mountains are dark and the mist in the pine forests is thick. In the empty forest on a rock with legs crossed is a monk who is reciting the *White Lotus Sutra* from morning until night. To the left and right of him are footprints of tigers and wolves. Ten

or five petals of some exotic flower are strewn about. We only occasionally see this monk, yet do not really know him. Do we know if he is a person from the past or the present? Is he Tan Yan or Tan Yi? I hear this sutra contains profound principles, which the King of Enlightenment calls it true and wonderful meaning. I close my eyes, quiet my mind and listen carefully. Creamy butter drips into the intestines. The principles contained in the sutras are the intent of the Buddha, the marrow of the patriarchs, and my mind. It is a pity to see that living beings do not understand that it is just in the snap of a finger or the raising of a hand. It is great; it is strange. Subhuti wanted all beings to acquire light. Eighteen-thousand lands and each is the color of gold. The four births and the six paths are all imbued in that single light.

Wildman I ask Maitreya:

I learned about emptiness and stillness some years ago and rested when I reached the mindstate of no mind. Now that I have personally heard and recited this sutra, I finally realize that a donkey vehicle is not ultimate. I also did not step out of the building back then. I did not want any secular things to touch my steps. Now that I have personally heard and recited this sutra, I am beginning to feel that every step is a place of jewels. I also enjoyed reciting poems back then. I thought pondering hard would disturb *samadhi*. Now that I have personally heard and recited this sutra, why not use pen and ink to serve the true nature? I also enjoyed games back then. I thought half of my time was wasted. I am starting to realize that accumulating sands [of merit] is not a minor issue. I used to travel through mountains and waters, I thought those mountains were not my home town. Now that I have personally heard and recited this sutra, I am starting to believe there is not one inch of land to the mountains or rivers. I used to have an untamed monkey-mind; I often used golden chains to tie it up, though in vain. Now that I have personally heard and recited this sutra, I finally realize that having nothing is sincerity.

The Master recites each word of the sutra and each word is chewed to a mesh so that the flavor of creamy butter seeps out. The flavor of creamy butter is delicious and fine, not tasted with the lips or the teeth, but only with the minds of busy living beings. The Master recited every line to this sutra so that the white ox personally transported each line. The pace of the white ox is like a breeze that neither wafts to the east or west, but only in our daily lives. It is suffering indeed to not know about it in our daily lives. We consist of intestines filled with wine and bodily organs full of food; an elder raises his voice and calls but we do not turn back. How are we different than a mute or a deaf man? It is not that people are hearing-impaired, but the keen ears become deaf on hearing the sutra's meaning. The eyes of the people in the world are not blind; however, the sharp eyes become blind upon seeing the sutra's meaning. One is deaf to what one should listen; one is blind to what one should see. Therefore, one is like a winch bobbing up and down, becoming born and dying in vain.

Though people in the world recognize the Master's voice, who recognizes the Master's mind? Though people in the world recognize the Master's form, who recognizes the Master's name? The Master is called the king of physicians and follows the Buddha's order to come and cure living beings' disease of the mind. He can wake up confused beings, calm those who are insane, purify those who are defiled, rectify those who are deviant, and make holy those who are ordinary. In this way, not only do gods respect him, but people respect him too. The dragons, ghosts, and Buddhas sing praises of him too. How can disciples who have gone against enlightenment and come together with sense objects not take refuge in return?

Emperor Liang's Edict on Giving up Taoism and Serving Buddhism

The first emperor of Liang, Emperor Wu, ascended the throne when he was 34. He governed for 49 years. He managed millions of matters but he was never without a book at hand. He always held some Buddhist or non-Buddhist text. He lectured and commented on all of them, a total of several thousand plus rolls. He was frugal and restrained, never touching silken fabric. He was not lax day or night. Cotton blankets, bulrush sheets, straw sandals, and arrowroot towels were the only things in his room. When he first became the emperor, he was already thrifty. He only ate one meal a day and forever severed the five pungent spices and meats. In the history of emperors, few are of his caliber. He used to be a Taoist, and esteemed Taoist magic symbols and pictograms. He exhaustively investigated their roots and the source, finding them to be false theories.

The emperor then wielded the imperial pen himself and wrote the essay on giving up Taoism, which reads:

On April 8th, the third year of Tian Jian, Emperor Liang Xiao Yan of Lan Ling bow in respect to all Buddhas throughout the ten directions, the venerated Dharma throughout the ten directions, and the holy monks throughout the ten directions.

With all due respect, I have seen the sutras state, 'Bringing forth the resolve for Bodhi is equivalent to the mind of the Buddha.' Its various aspects of goodness cannot be described using metaphors, but in short, the resolve lead living beings to transcend the suffering of the Triple Realm and enter the winning path of the unconditioned. Therefore the Thus Come One ended his outflow while his wisdom congealed into enlightenment. The ultimate way can reach the potentials of different beings, and he had perfected his virtues and reached sainthood. He lit up the torch of wisdom to illuminate the confused; he mirrored the Dharma flow to cleanse the defiled. He manifested auspicious omens in the sky while spirits flicker beyond the visages. He saved multitudes lost in the sea of desire and led

sentient ones to nirvana. He climbed tall mountains of perpetual bliss and left the depths of the river of love. His words were far removed from the four-line verses and hundreds of false talks.

He manifested in the Saha world and was born in the royal palace of Suddhodana. He walked the Triple Realm as a venerable one. He reached enlightenment under the Bodhi tree, the light of which coursed through the Great Thousand Worlds and shimmered. However, since living beings' faculties were shallow and grew weary easily, he expected to enter nirvana by the Twin Trees in February. He finally talked about perfection and permanence clearly, then he again hid his light by the Twin Trees. King Ajsatru ended offenses while Vasitha eliminated catastrophes. Had they never encountered the great and holy Dharma King, who could have saved them or delivered them to the shore of perfection? Though the tracks to the Buddha's great actions became invisible, he was not deficient in the Way.

Disciple I had not read too many sutras, and am confused and lost. I indulged in serving Laotze. Because of my family heritage, I am tainted by Taoism, a deviant dharma. And because goodness in my habitual causes matured, I abandoned confusion and turned back. Now I give up gods previously believed in and return to the One of Proper Enlightenment.

May I become a monk as a young virgin boy in future lives and vastly propagate the sutras, teaching and transforming sentient beings so that all become Buddhas. I would rather be in the proper Dharma and drown in the evil paths for a long time than to temporarily become born in the heavens according to Taoism.
May I wade in the Mahayana resolve and part with any thoughts of the two vehicles. I properly wish all Buddhas certify me and that the Bodhisattvas gather me in.

Disciple Xiao Yan greets with palms together.

End of Advice for Monastics Fascicle Ten

ⁱ (名數)開三界為二十五有。欲界有十四有，四惡趣四洲六欲天也。色界有七有，四禪天及初禪中之大梵天，並第四禪中之淨居天與無想天也。無色界有四有，四空處是也。通三界而有二十五之果報，名二十五有。輔行二曰：“二十五有，總為頌曰：四域（即四洲），四惡趣，六欲並梵王，四禪四無色，無想五那舍（即淨居天）。”涅槃經四曰：“二十五有，如首楞嚴經中廣說。”

ⁱⁱ 孔子曰：君子不可不學

ⁱⁱⁱ 中庸子：A banal man of the Middle Way. A nickname that the author refers him by out of modesty.

^{iv} 《詩經》的一部分。大抵是周初至春秋間各諸侯國的民間詩歌。包括《周南》、《召南》和《邶風》、《鄘風》、《衛風》、《王風》、《鄭風》、《齊風》、《魏風》、《唐風》、《秦風》、《陳風》、《檜風》、《曹風》、《豳風》，也稱為“十五國風”，共一百六十篇。作品大多體現了人民的思想感情，對統治

階級的罪惡有所揭露，廣闊地反映了當時的社會生活。但也不盡是民間作品。雅頌亦作“雅訟”。《詩經》內容和樂曲分類的名稱。雅樂為朝廷的樂曲，頌為宗廟祭祀的樂曲。

v 字彥威。襄陽（今湖北襄樊）人。東晉史學家。

世代為襄陽豪族。初為荊州刺史桓溫別駕，桓溫北伐時，隨從參與機要。因忤桓溫，遷為滎陽（今河南鄭州市）太守。不久辭職返鄉。前秦苻堅攻陷襄陽，將鑿齒和道安法師二人接往長安，說：“朕以十萬師取襄陽，所得唯一人半，安公一人，習鑿齒半人。”[1]後襄陽為晉室收復，習鑿齒被徵以國史職事，未就而卒。

vi “大道既隱，天下為家”：天下為公的大道沒有了，“天下為公”的響亮口號改成了“天下為家”。

vii 314~366) 字道林，世稱支公，亦曰林公，別號支硎。東晉高僧，陳留人。魏晉時代，玄學流行，名士清談，蔚然成風，支遁精通老莊之說，佛學造詣也很深，他家世代崇信佛教，年曾著《聖不辯之論》，《道行旨義》，《學道戒》等論書，在《即色游玄論》中，他提出「即色本空」的思想，創立了般若學即色義，成為當時般若學「六家七宗」中即色宗的代表人物。善草隸，好畜馬。

viii 《湘山野錄》：“李侍讀仲容善飲，真宗飲量無敵，飲則召公，一夕，上命巨觥，仲容曰：‘告關家，免巨觥。’”

ix 阿羅漢雖斷染污無智而證涅槃之真理，然不斷不染污無智，故不得通世間之事相，至為愚蒙，其例如不知赤鹽也。俱舍光記一曰：“諸境中或有阿羅漢不識赤鹽，出有異生是通三藏，是名於境智（阿羅漢人），不及愚（異生）。”止觀四曰：“不識五鹽，名之睡蓋。”赤鹽：赤色的鹽。古代西域等地。

x “劫灰”典出《梁高僧傳》卷一《漢洛陽白馬寺竺法蘭》：“昔漢武穿昆明池底得黑灰。問東方朔，朔云不委，可問西域人。後法蘭既至，眾人追以問之，蘭云：世界終盡劫火洞燒，此灰是也。”

xi 統領全國寺院、僧籍，及僧官補授等事宜。

xii 三緘：“三緘其口”的略語。形容說話極其謹慎、不輕易開口。四實：【一名四實】[出涅槃經]一名謂先陀婆。四實謂水鹽器馬。以譬如來密語。甚深難解。諸大乘經。亦復如是。

xiii 【十利——粥有十利】

〔出摩訶僧祇律〕

律雲：佛住舍衛城時，難陀母作食，先飯比丘，然後自食；復作釜飯，逼上飯汁自飲，即覺身內風除，宿食頓消。由是多水少米合煎，復用胡椒蕞芡調和，以奉世尊。由是佛聽比丘，從今日後，許食粥，有十種利。時世尊即說偈曰：持戒清淨人所奉，恭敬隨時以粥施，十利饒益於行者，色力壽樂辭清辯，宿食風除飢渴消，是名為藥佛所說，欲生人天常受樂，應當以粥施眾僧。（梵語難陀，華言善歡喜。）

- 〔一、資色〕，謂資益身軀，顏容豐盛，故云資色。
- 〔二、增力〕，謂補益羸弱，增長氣力，故云增力。
- 〔三、益壽〕，謂補養元氣，壽算增益，故云益壽。
- 〔四、安樂〕，謂清淨柔軟，食則安樂，故云安樂。
- 〔五、辯說〕，謂滋潤喉吻，論議無礙，故云辯說。
- 〔六、除風〕，謂調和通利，風氣消除，故云除風。
- 〔七、消宿食〕，謂溫暖脾胃，宿食消化，故云消宿食。
- 〔八、辭清〕，謂氣無凝滯，辭辯清揚，故云辭清。

〔九、除飢〕，謂適充口腹，飢餒頓除，故云除飢。

〔十、消渴〕，謂喉吻沾潤，渴想隨消，故云消渴。

xiv

【三德—食三德】

〔出涅槃經〕

經云：諸優婆塞為佛及僧辦諸食具，種種備足，皆是旃檀沈水香薪八功德水之所成熟，其食甘美，有三德焉。（梵語優婆塞，華言近事男。梵語旃檀，華言與藥，能除病故。八功德者，一澄淨、二清冷、三甘美、四輕軟、五潤澤、六安和、七飲時除飢渴等、八長養諸根也。）

〔一、清淨〕，謂奉佛供僧之食，當使精潔，無有葷穢，是名清淨。

〔二、柔軟〕，謂奉佛供僧之食，當須柔軟甘和而不粗澀，是名柔軟。

〔三、如法〕，謂奉佛供僧之食，當隨時措辦，製造得宜，是名如法。

xv

古同“石”，中國市製容量單位，十斗為一石。

xvi

十天或一個月。亦泛指不長的時日。

xvii

《韓非子·觀行》：“西門豹之性急，故佩韋以自緩；董安於之性緩，故佩弦以自急。故以有餘補不足，以長續短之謂明主。”後因以“韋弦”比喻外界的啟迪和教益。用以警戒、規勸。《文選·任昉〈王文憲集序〉》：“夷雅之體，無待韋弦。”

xviii

【捺落迦】（界名）Naraka，又作 Na%raka，即地獄與地獄罪人之梵名也。但諸師多以捺落迦，那落迦混而為一，慈恩分別之而以捺落迦為受苦之處，那羅迦為受苦之人，玄應音義七曰：“梵言泥黎耶，或言泥囉夜，或言那落迦。此云不可樂，亦云非行。謂非法行處也。或在山間，或大海邊，非止地下，言地獄者，一義翻也。”同十曰：“泥犁，或言泥犁耶，亦言泥犁迦，此云無可樂。”同二十三曰：“那羅訶，亦云泥囉夜。此譯有四義：一不可樂，二不可救濟，三闇冥，四地獄。經中言地獄者一義也。”婆沙論一百七十二曰：“有說：捺落，名人。迦，名為惡。惡人生彼處，故名捺落迦。有說：落迦，名可樂。捺，是不義。彼處不可樂，故名捺落迦。”唯識述記五末曰：“捺落迦者，此云苦器，受罪處也。那落迦者，受彼苦者，故二別也。”

xix

指東晉時在廬山東林寺與慧遠大師結蓮社、同修淨土業的著名隱士宗炳、雷次宗。宗炳字少文，河南南陽人，工詩善文，亦好琴能畫，屢徵不仕，隱遁以終。雷次宗字仲倫，江西南昌人，篤志好學，尤明三禮毛詩，隱退不受徵辟，聚徒講學，不入公門，隱遁終生。

xx

《十門辯惑論》大慈恩寺沙門釋復禮撰

xxi

皎然（720-805）本姓謝，字清晝，南朝宋文學家、詩人謝靈運十世孫。皎然幼負異才，性與道合，初脫羈絆，漸加削染，登戒於靈隱戒壇，其師守真屬南山律宗，並由普寂大師傳《楞伽》“心印”，又是楞伽禪宗的傳人，為江左地方禪宗與律宗交融的代表人物。陸鴻漸，名羽，終生不仕，隱居在苕溪（今浙江吳興），以擅長品茶著名，著有《茶經》一書，被後人奉為“茶聖”、“茶神”。唐至德初（756）陸羽寓居妙喜寺，時年 24 歲，而皎然已 37 歲，一個是僧，一個是俗，故稱“緇素忘年之交”。湖州杼山皎然傳載：“晝以陸鴻漸為莫逆之交”。史稱：“皎然，……與顏魯公、於由貢諸群公交。惟陸羽至，清談終日，恥於文章”。

xxii

，（肩披壞服，即是弊袍；肘串絡囊，便同席袋。Those are all comparisons of beggar and monks. Beggar uses 枯藜，破器，弊袍，席袋。Monks use 錫，鉢，壞服，絡囊。）

xxiii

【兜率從悅】（1044~1091）宋代臨濟宗黃龍派僧。虔州（江西贛縣）人，俗姓熊。法號從悅。十五歲出家，十六歲受具足戒，為寶峰克文禪師之法嗣。師學通內外，能文善詩，率眾勤謹，遠近讚仰。因住於隆興（江西南昌）兜率院，故世人尊稱兜率從悅。

xxiv 《韓非子·和氏》載：春秋時，楚人卞和得到一塊璞，即含有美玉的石頭之時未加雕琢顯不出玉的光彩。他先後進獻給楚武王和楚厲王，被誣為誑騙，先後被割支了左右兩足。楚文王即位，使玉工鑿璞，發現是個寶物，遂命名為“和氏璧”。

xxv 贊寧姓高氏。其先渤海人。出家杭之祥符。習南山律。著述毗尼。時謂律虎。賜號明義宗文。太平興國三年。太宗聞其名。召對滋福殿。延問彌日。更賜通慧。敕住右街天壽寺。又作者的題名上冠有右街僧錄的官銜，都是咸平元年以後的事，當是重修時所補入。作者在本書中發表了一些個人的意見。他鄭重提出各種知識的重要性，主張釋子不但要經本業，而且應該鑽研儒、道二教義理，並且主張三教要和平相處，帝王對三教不宜偏廢。

xxvi 謂夏、殷、周也

xxvii 五帝：

①黃帝、顓頊、帝嚳、堯、舜

②宓戲（伏羲）、神農、黃帝、堯、舜

③太昊、炎帝、黃帝、少昊、顓頊

④少昊、顓頊、帝嚳、堯、舜

⑤黃帝、少昊、顓頊、嚳、堯

其中第三種說法最為流行，意指東西南北中五個方位的天神，東方太昊，南方炎帝，西方少昊，北方顓頊，中央黃帝。

另一種解釋為中國上古傳說中的五位聖王，以第一與第四種說法較為常見。

xxviii 《漢書·敘傳下》：“劉向司籍，九流以別。”顏師古注引應劭曰：“儒、道、陰、陽、法、名、墨、從橫、雜、農，凡九家。”

xxix 三愚：1. 云何為三委付不相知供承急性者造次便相捨此謂三愚相。2. 由愚前際諸法因緣故起常見。愚於後際果法相續故起斷見。愚諸煩惱盡處涅槃故起邪見。3. 一唯愚心所總執為我，二唯愚色法執為實我，三愚執色心二法以為實我。

xxx 孔鮒，字甲。生卒年為約前 264—前 208，秦人。代表作品為《孔叢子》。孔鮒，秦末儒生。孔子後裔，居於魏國。孔鮒博通經史，與魏名士張耳、陳余友好。秦始皇統一中國後，孔鮒不仕，令其弟子叔孫通仕秦，後召為魯國文通君，拜少傅。秦相李斯始議焚書之事，孔鮒聽說後，收其家中《論語》、《孝經》、《尚書》等書，藏於祖堂舊壁中，自隱於嵩山，教授弟子百餘人。

xxxi 馬融（79-166），字季長，右扶風茂陵（今陝西興平東北）人。東漢名將馬援的從孫，東漢儒家學者，著名經學家，尤長於古文經學。他一生注書甚多，注有《孝經》、《論語》、《詩》、《周易》、《三禮》、《尚書》、《列女傳》、《老子》、《淮南子》、《離騷》等書，皆已散佚，清人編的《玉函山房叢書》、《漢學堂叢書》都有輯錄。另有賦頌等作品，有集已佚，明人輯有《馬季長集》。他設帳授徒，門人常有千人之多，盧植、鄭玄都是其門徒。

xxxii 戴德、戴聖：【戴聖】字次君，西漢梁（郡治在今河南商丘）人。曾任九江太守，平生以學習儒家經典為主，尤重《禮》學研究。與叔父戴德及慶普等人曾師事經學大師後蒼，潛心鑽研。《禮》學。三人苦心鑽研，各有所得，逐步形成自己的學說體系，成為今文禮學大師。戴德號稱“大戴”，戴聖被稱為“小戴”，二人合稱為“大小戴”。

xxxiii 東晉僧。生卒年不詳。魏郡長樂（河南安陽）人。關中四聖之一。少有出塵之志，十八歲剃髮，師事僧賢，二十歲即博通經論。嘗聽僧朗講《放光般若經》，常加質疑，僧朗頗嘆其才。年二十四時，游歷諸國，從事講說，聽者成群。姚秦弘始三年（401）十二月，鳩摩羅什至長安，師即隨受禪法，且請羅什譯出《禪法要解》三卷，日夜修習，精練不怠。時，司徒姚嵩深相禮敬，秦主姚興亦稱嘆其才器。師曾與道生、僧肇、道融共同參訂羅什之譯經，后人稱師等四人為‘羅什四大弟子’。當鳩摩羅什譯《法華經》時，至《五百弟子授記品》，為‘天見人，人見天’一語之經文漢譯，頗費思量，時師建議改譯為‘人天交接，兩得相見’，羅什甚喜之，一時傳為佳話。後羅什譯出《成實論》，令師講說。其旨甚合羅什之意，羅什稱嘆云：‘吾傳譯經論，得與子相值，真無所恨矣！’僧睿撰《關中出禪經序》。

xxxiv 〔一、作病〕，作者，即生心造作之謂也。謂若有人，言我於本心作種種行，欲求圓覺；彼圓覺性，非作得故，說名為病。

〔二、任病〕，任者即隨緣任性之謂也。謂若有人言，我等今者，不斷生死，不求涅槃，任彼一切

，欲求圓覺。彼圓覺性，非任有故，說名為病。

〔三、止病〕，止者即止妄即真之謂也。謂若有人言，我今永息諸念，寂然平等，欲求圓覺。彼圓覺性，非止得故，說名為病。

〔四、滅病〕，滅者，即寂滅之謂也。謂若有人言，我今永滅一切煩惱，身心根塵，虛妄境界一切永寂，欲求圓覺。彼圓覺性，非滅相故，說名為病。

xxxv 類比丘比丘尼具足戒之稱目也。此有篇門與聚門之別，篇門者，依結成之罪果及急要之義而區別為五篇，聚門者，類聚其罪性及因罪（犯波羅夷僧殘二罪而未成者曰偷蘭遮），而為六聚七聚八聚也。

xxxvi 事鈔：四分律行事鈔之略名。三卷，唐釋道宣(596~667)撰。善見：善見律毘婆娑之略名。（十八卷）蕭齊西域沙門僧伽跋陀羅譯。

xxxvii 又作摩那埵，摩那也，譯曰悅意。比丘犯僧殘罪，行懺悔，得依懺悔洗除罪，自喜使眾僧悅也。又為僧中治罰之名。行事鈔中一曰：“摩那埵者翻為悅眾意，隨順眾教咸生歡喜。”慧琳音義十六曰：“摩那，此云遍淨。”同六十三曰：“古云摩那埵，僧中責罰之名也，此云治罰。”

xxxviii 此云一切有，此部計三世有實，三性悉得受戒。大集云：而復讀誦書寫外典，受有三世，及以內外。破壞外道，善能論義，說一切性悉得受戒。凡所問難，悉能答對，是故名為薩婆多，法名十誦。

xxxix 又作盧至佛，樓由佛，盧遮佛。賢劫千佛中最後之佛也。譯曰愛樂佛，或啼哭佛。玄應音義二十一曰：“盧至佛舊言樓至佛，此云可愛樂，最後佛也。”慧琳音義十一曰：“樓由亦名樓至，皆梵語訛也。”同十八曰：“盧至古云樓至，唐云愛樂。即此賢劫中第一千佛，劫末後成佛，即今之執金剛神是也。亦名密跡金剛。”嘉祥法華義疏十二曰：“樓至此云啼哭佛。”大部補註五曰：“樓至，此云啼泣。又曰盧遮，亦云魯支，此翻愛樂。”

xl 譏下垂衣之一角者。毗奈耶十曰：“著泥洹僧不得如像鼻，如像鼻者不應戒行。”注曰：“其一角當前下垂。”凡著袈裟之法，袈裟右上角搭於左肩上，而垂於後。若置之於肘上或垂於胸前者，此為像鼻之相，不如法也。毗奈耶十曰：“不得垂三衣前角著，著者不應戒行。”注曰：“不抄著肩上，垂之臂上肘前。”行事鈔下之一曰：“以垂臂上名象鼻也。”寄皈傳二曰：“以衣右角寬搭左肩，垂之背後，勿安肘上。”又曰：“袈裟角垂，正當象鼻。梵僧縱至，皆亦雷同。良為絹滑墮肩，遂令正則訛替。後唐三藏來傳搭肩法。然而古德嫌者尚多。黨舊之迷，在處皆有。”

眾學篇罪無眼量故云眾。易犯難持故令學。必欲強立準具五緣。如云一是涅槃僧二知三無緣(病等諸開)。四不齊整五隨著犯。名云涅槃僧者。此云內衣即是裙也。以西土裙法橫疊圍身。長繩四繞抽拔使正。多致不齊。此間作裙並連腰帶。但著有高下亦違律制。當依母論踝上三指。即為齊整。釋不齊中。非法有四。初是高下二象鼻。三多羅葉者。西域記云。形如棕櫚用比兩角。四細褶者止得前後兩跨為四褶。多則非法。今時輩簡同彼女流非道服矣。問。今服長衣為何有過。答。此有多過。一量外犯長提。二著用犯捨衣吉。三長垂肘外有像鼻相。步步吉羅。儻懼因果請從正教。條數中初科條即豎條。五七九至二十五皆從隻數。故徵所以如疏鈔者。

xli 斗：中国市制容量单位。十升为一斗，十斗为一石。

xlii 尼薩耆：出要律儀，舊翻捨墮。聲論：尼翻為盡，薩耆為捨。四分：僧有百二十種，分取三十。因財事生，犯貪慢心，強制捨入僧故，名尼薩耆也。尼薩耆波逸提：Naihsargik-prayascittika），五篇罪之一。尼薩耆為盡捨，波逸提為墮。此罪聚總關於衣鉢等之財物，故以其所犯之財物，捨於眾中而懺悔之，謂之盡捨。若不懺悔，則結墮獄之罪，故曰墮。總有三十種，稱為三十捨墮，行事鈔中之一曰：“波逸提聚義翻為墮，十誦云：墮在燒煮覆障地獄故也。（中略）聲論云：尼翻為盡，薩耆為捨。”四分戒本定賓疏下曰：“尼薩耆者，此翻為盡捨。波逸提者，此翻為墮。謂犯此罪牽墮三惡，若犯此墮，要先捨財，後懺墮罪，故云捨墮。”比丘尼鈔一曰：“捨財捨罪捨心，具此三捨，故云盡捨。”

xliii 比丘、比丘尼、優婆塞、優婆夷之四眾也。又，人、天、龍、鬼之四眾也。

xliv 化制二教是南山律宗對於教相的判釋。該宗把釋迦如來一代的教法區分作化制二教。化教是說如來教化眾生令得禪定及智慧的教法，在三學中是定慧法門，在三藏中是經論二藏，如四阿含等經，發智、六足等論。泛說因果，通化道俗，所以

叫作化教。制教是說如來戒飭眾生控制行為的教法，即諸律中所詮的戒學法門如四分、五分、十誦等律。說諸律儀、唯制內眾，所以叫作制教。化制二教又叫作化行二教，如《四分律比丘含注戒本疏》卷一說：“今以化行二教用分諸藏。”又《四分律行事鈔資持記》卷一說：“一代時教，總皈化行。”其次，南山律宗更把化教就其義理的淺深判作性空教、相空教、唯識圓教三教，又把制教就四分律學各家的戒本論分別判作實法宗、假名宗、圓教宗三宗，這是南山律宗獨有的教判。化制二教的教判，是於唯識宗有其淵源的。道宣很早便參加玄奘法師領導的譯場，掌筆受潤文的任務，受玄奘學說的影響很深，所以在化教中，配合《解深密經》的三時立三教，而以唯識為圓教，又在制教中以心法中的種子為戒體，從而力說《四分律》通於大乘。

^{xlv} 蘭遮之略。（術語）又曰偷蘭遮耶，薩偷羅。梵音 *Sthulatyayas*，譯作大障善道，大罪，粗惡粗過等。六聚罪之一。初二篇之因罪（犯波羅夷與僧殘而未遂者），及五篇不攝之諸果罪（就死屍而淫，盜五錢已下，不在五篇中者）也。故此中於罪體雖有因果之別，輕重之差，而就最重者列於波羅夷僧殘之次，以對於此二者之因罪（即本遂罪）最重故也。行事鈔中之一曰：“善見云：偷蘭名大，遮言障善道，後墮惡道體是鄙惡，從不善體立名者，由能成初二兩篇之罪故也。又翻為大罪，亦言粗惡。聲論云：正音名為薩偷羅，明了論解偷蘭為粗，遮耶為過。”明了論：解偷蘭為粗，遮耶為過。粗有二種：一是重罪方便，二能斷善根。所言過者，不依佛所立戒而行，故言過也。

^{xlvi} 《南海寄歸傳》三十八、燒身不合。諸出家眾內頗有一途，初學之流情存猛利，未聞聖典，取信先人，將燒指作精勤，用然肌為大福，隨情即作，斷在自心。然經中所明，事存通俗，己身尚勸供養，何況諸餘外財？是故經中但言若人發心，不道出家之眾，意者出家之人局乎律藏，戒中無犯方得通經，於戒有違未見其可。縱使香台草茂，豈損一莖？曠野獨飢，寧餐半粒？然眾生喜見，斯乃俗流。燒臂供養，誠其宜矣。可以菩薩捨男捨女，遂遣苾芻求男女以捨之；大士捐目捐身，即令乞士將身日而行施。仙預斷命，豈律者所為？慈力捨身，非僧徒應作。比聞少年之輩勇猛發心，意謂燒身便登正覺，遂相踵習，輕棄其軀，何則？十劫百劫難得人身，千生萬生雖人罕智。稀聞七覺，不過三尊。今既托體勝場，投心妙法，才持一頌，棄沙肌而尚輕；暫想無常，捨塵供而寧重？理應堅修戒品，酬惠四恩，固想定門，冀拔三有。小愆大懼，若越深海之護浮囊；行惠堅防，等履薄冰而策奔駿。然後憑善友力，臨終助不心驚；正念翹懷，當來願見慈氏。若希小果，即八聖可求；如學大因，則三隻斯始。匆匆自斷軀命，實亦未聞其理。自殺之罪，事亞初篇矣，檢尋律藏不見遣為。滅愛親說要方，斷惑豈由燒已？房中打勢佛障不聽，池內存生尊自稱善，破重戒而隨自意，金口遮而不從。以此皈心，誠非聖教。必有行菩薩行不受律儀，亡己濟生，固在言外耳。

^{xlvii} 三命：術數家以受命、遭命、隨命為“三命”。孔穎達疏：“案《援神契》云：‘命有三科，有受命以保慶，有遭命以適暴，有隨命以督行。’受命謂年壽也，遭命謂行善而遇凶也，隨命謂隨其善惡而報之。”唐宋以後，星命術士以人生辰之年、月、日所屬干支推算命數，亦稱“三命”。

^{xlviii} 行事鈔下三之二曰：“毘尼母云：從無夏至九夏是下座，十夏至十九夏名中座，二十夏至四十九夏名上座，五十夏已去一切沙門國王所尊敬，是耆舊長老。”

^{xlix} 一、一體三寶，又云同體三寶，又云同相三寶。三寶一一之體有三寶之義，佛之體上有覺照之義者，佛寶也，有軌則之義者法寶也，無違諍之過者僧寶也，乃至僧有觀智者為佛寶，有軌則者為法寶，和合者為僧寶。二、理體三寶，於真如之體上立三寶。真如之理體視覺性法相，無違諍過。三、化相三寶，又云別體三寶，又云真實三寶。大乘之三寶者，諸佛之三身為佛寶，六度為法寶，十聖為僧寶。小乘之三寶者丈六之化身為佛寶，四諦十二因緣之法為法寶，四果緣覺為僧寶，四、住持三寶，佛滅後住於世間者。木佛畫像，佛寶也，三藏之文句，法寶也，剃髮染衣者，僧寶也。此中前二種局於大乘，後二種通於大小乘。行事鈔資持記上一之一曰：“三寶四種，一體理體就理而論，化相一種局據佛世，住持一位通被三時。”

^l (名數) 翻邪三皈為一，重受三皈有四：一、五戒之三皈，二、八戒之三皈，三、十戒之三皈，四、具足戒之三皈。受諸種之戒時，必先受三皈。通為五種。釋氏要覽上曰：“毘尼母云：有五種三皈：一、翻邪，二、五戒，三、八戒，四、十戒，五、具足戒。”

^{li} 二護：〔一、內護〕，內即自己身心也。謂佛所製大小乘戒，人若受持，則能防護身口意業之非，成就種智菩提之果，此禁戒所以為內護也。

〔二、外護〕，外即族親眷屬也。謂人之修行，須屏絕緣務，凡有所需衣服飲食湯藥之類，必藉族親眷屬左右供給，庶得身心安隱，成辦道業，此族親眷屬所以為外護也。

^{lii} 心地觀經謂四恩者：一父母恩，二眾生恩，三國王恩，四三寶恩。釋氏要覽中謂四恩者：一父母恩，二師長恩，三國王恩，四施主恩。三有：三界之異名也。生死之境界，有因有果謂之有三有者，三界之生死也。一欲有。欲界之生死也。二色有。色界之生死也。三無色有。無色界之生死也。

^{liii} 第十五祖迦那提婆。南天竺國人也。姓毘舍羅。初求福業兼樂辯論。後謁龍樹大士將及門。樹知是智人。先遣侍者以滿鉢。水置於座前。提婆見之。即以一針投之而進。忻然契會。樹即為說法。不起於坐現月輪相。唯聞其聲不見其形。師語眾曰。今此瑞者。師現佛性表說法非聲色也。師得法後至毘羅國。彼有長者。曰梵摩淨德。一日園樹生大耳如菌。味美甚。唯長者與第二子羅睺羅多。取而食之。取已隨長。盡而復生。自餘親屬皆不能見。時尊者知其宿因。遂至其家。長者問其故。尊者曰汝家昔曾供養一比丘然此比丘道眼未明。以虛沾信施故報為本菌。唯汝與子精誠供養。得以享之。餘即否矣。又問。長者年多少。曰七十有九。尊者乃說偈曰。入道不通理。覆身還信施。汝年八十一。此樹不生耳。長者聞偈彌伽嘆伏。

^{liv} 於各僧堂中修行。即預掛念誦牌，灑掃僧堂，屆時備辦香燭，鳴鐘集眾，大眾次第巡堂稱念十佛名號。又分為二：(1)三念誦，指每月逢三日、十三日、二十三日等之念誦。(2)八念誦，指每月逢八日、十八日、二十八日等之念誦。

^{lv} 三輪體空，就布施言，施者、受者和所施之物，謂之三輪，行施後，此三輪相，不存於心，名“三輪體空”。

^{lvi} 五周因果：(名數) 謂綜括華嚴經所詮之義理，有五周之因果也。一所信因果、二差別因果、三平等因果、四成行因果、五證入因果。說見華嚴經疏鈔玄談八。

^{lvii} 信解行證

^{lviii} 【卻刺】為縫製袈裟之針法。又作卻刺。為‘直縫’之對稱。縫製一般衣服時，常自布之一面，一針一針，順固定方向縫起，如此之縫製方法，稱為直縫。然直縫之衣，日久易於斷裂，且斷裂之時，常因一小處斷線而導致整片綻裂，佛陀遂制定比丘縫製袈裟時，應採卻刺之法，即每縫一針即回針返縫，不令布面有空針或跳針而過之情形，如此必堅實而耐久。止觀輔行傳弘決卷二之二(大四六·一九〇中)：‘言單縫者，不許卻刺，若卻刺者，即是大僧受持之衣。’

^{lix} 二嚴：(名數) 一、智慧莊嚴，研智慧而為身之莊嚴者。二、福德莊嚴，積福德而為身之莊嚴者。六度中檀等五者，福德莊嚴也，慧度者智慧莊嚴也。涅槃經二十七曰：“二種莊嚴：一者智慧，二者福德。若有菩薩具足如是二莊嚴者，則如佛性。”唯識述記七末曰：“善資糧者，福智二嚴。”

^{lx} 四種常住：一，常住常住，眾僧之廚庫寺舍眾具華果樹林田園僕畜等也。是永定住於一處，非可分判者，故為常住物中之常住物也。二，十方常住，如日日供僧之常食，是取前常住常住，而入當日之常食者，是為屬十方僧之僧物，故云十方常住。簡言之，即十方僧之常住物也。三，現前現前，各比丘所屬之私物也。是為現前僧之現前物。四，十方現前，如亡僧所遺之經物。是為可分與十方僧為各比丘之現所屬者，故謂之十方現前。見行事鈔中之一。

- lxi 放參: (雜語) 禪林之語。住持有事故或臨時祈禱放免晚參(夜之坐禪也), 是云放參, 即鳴鐘三下, 謂之放參鐘。
- lxii i.e., when you see your inherent nature and become enlightened.
- lxiii 轉語: *a kind of chan reply meant to twist your mind about to the point one sees one's self-nature.*
- lxiv 無慚、無愧、嫉、慳、悔、睡眠、掉舉、昏沉、嗔忿、覆。
- lxv 又曰十大惑。亦曰十根本煩惱。此中分利鈍二種。貪嗔癡慢疑五者, 謂之五鈍使。身見、邊見、邪見、見取見、戒禁取見五者, 謂之五利使。
- lxvi 圭撮: 古代兩種很小的容量單位。比喻微量或微小。
- lxvii 墳典: 三墳、五典的並稱, 後轉為古代典籍的通稱《三墳》(即伏羲、神農、黃帝之書)、《五典》(即少昊、顓頊、高辛、堯、舜之書)。
- lxviii 五燈會元·龍潭信禪師法嗣·德山宣鑑禪師: “這裡無祖無佛, 達磨是老臊胡, 釋迦老子是乾屎橛, 文殊、普賢是擔屎漢。”本指多鬚髯的胡人, 後泛稱絡腮鬚須。Here it probably means Bodhidharma. One receives the singular transmission directly from Bodhidharma.
- lxix 中國古代對出家原無限制。其後因僧數漸增, 庶民常假藉出家以避輸課, 朝廷乃設僧籍加以登錄。且就已出家者授予戒牒, 並嚴禁私自度僧。凡有犯之者, 即敕令還俗。《魏書》卷一一四〈釋老志〉載: “北魏·延興二年(472)四月檢浮浪之僧, 無籍者加以隱括, 有籍者送付州鎮。”《佛祖統紀》卷五十一亦載有“試經度僧”之製。謂梁末時帝敕天下僧尼入京城, 比試經業。《大慈恩寺三藏法師傳》卷一亦載, 隋·大業八年(612), 玄奘年十三, 預試度。其後唐中宗、肅宗、代宗、敬宗、宣宗等朝, 乃至宋、元、明代皆行“試經度僧”之法。此外, 《佛祖統紀》卷五十一載, 隋煬帝時詔七日間度千僧, 後世稱此為“特恩度僧”。唐肅宗至德(756~757)初年, 依宰相裴冕之請, 鬻售度牒 1。此稱之為“進納度僧”。凡此, 皆屬“試經度僧”制之外的特殊度僧方式。
- lxx Hui Neng the Sixth Patriarch
- lxxi the mind
- lxxii (術語) 三因佛性之一。了因: 三因佛性(三佛性)之一。指顯發眾生本具正性之觀智。由此而成般若果德。了是照明了徹, 以智慧立名。因是依緣而能生一切為因。在談佛性時, 正因用以指理性。了因是悟諸法實相, 以表智慧, 以智慧而了證成佛理體。緣因是表示萬行。在“金光明經玄義”卷上“覺智(佛)非常非無常(性), 理智相應, 如人善知金藏, 此智不可破壞, 稱了因佛性。”【三因佛性】智者大師據北本《大般涅槃經》卷二十八, 對一切眾生, 皆具三因佛性, 此因顯著, 即成三德妙果。1. 正因佛性: 正即中正, 中必雙照, 離於邊邪, 照空照假, 非空非假, 三諦具足為正因佛性。即諸法實相之理體, 為成佛之正因。2. 了因佛性: 了即照明, 由前正因, 發此照了之智, 智與理相應, 為了因佛性。3. 緣因佛性: 緣即緣助, 由一切功德善根, 資助了因, 得開發正因之性, 為緣因佛性。
- lxxiii 香積(佛名) 眾香世界之佛名。玄應音義三曰: “香積, 梵言乾陀羅耶。”維摩經香積佛品曰: “上方界分, 過四十二恒河沙佛土, 有國名眾香, 佛號香積, 今現在。其國香氣, 比於十方請佛世界人天之香, 最為第一。(中略)其界一切皆以香作樓閣, 經行香地, 苑園皆香, 云云。”【又】謂僧家之食廚或供料。蓋取香積世界香飯之意也。
- lxxiv 五分法身: (術語) 以五種功德法成佛身, 故曰五分法身。小乘以之為三身中之法身: 一、戒, 謂如來口意三業離一切過非之戒法身也。二、定, 如來之真心寂靜, 離一切妄念, 謂之定法身。三、慧, 如來之真智圓明, 觀達法性, 謂之慧法身。即根本智也。四、解脫, 如來之心身, 解脫一切系縛, 謂之解脫法身。即涅槃之德也。五、解脫知見, 知已實解脫, 謂之解脫知見法身。即後得智也。此五者有次第, 由戒而生定。由定而生慧。由慧而得解脫。由解脫而有解脫知見。前三者。就因而受名。後二者。就果而付名。而總是佛之功德也。以此五法成佛身, 則謂之五分法身。大乘義章二十本曰: “此五種分別為分, 法是其軌則之義, 此之五種成身之軌, 故名為法。身者是體, 此五佛體, 故名為身。”行宗記一上曰: “五分法

身者，戒定慧從因受名，解脫解脫知見從果受號。由慧斷惑，斷惑惑無之處名解脫。出纏破障，反照觀心名解脫知見。”濟緣記三下曰：“五法成身，故名為分。”王介甫金陵話錄曰：“五分法身，所謂戒、定、慧、解脫、解脫知見、此五者，皆以超出五陰故。戒，超色陰；定，超受陰；慧，超想陰；解脫，超行陰；解脫知見，超識陰。”

^{lxxv} 慕德親賢，有意訪僧來蓮舫；忘情遂性，無心送客過虎溪。這是說一個好聽的故事，據傳說東晉時，東林寺主持慧遠在寺院深居簡出，人們稱之為“影不出山，跡不入俗”。他送客或散步，從不逾越寺門前的虎溪。如果過了虎溪，寺後山林中的老虎就會吼叫起來。有一次，詩人陶淵明和道士陸修靜來訪，與慧遠談得投機。送行時不覺過了虎溪橋，後山的老虎就發出警告的吼叫，三人恍然大悟，相視大笑而別。

^{lxxvi} 惡木之陰匪陰。盜泉之水非水。陸機有詩云“渴不飲盜泉，熱不自惡木陰”。說的大概是聖人的德行，反正孔子就曾經不飲盜泉水而備受後人敬仰。據先秦著作《尸子》記載，“孔子過於盜泉，渴矣而不飲，惡其名也”。意思是說，孔子路過“盜泉”，口很渴，但因為泉水的名字為“盜泉”，遂忍耐乾渴，不飲其水。此後，孔子說的“志士不飲盜泉之水，廉者不受嗟來之食”也成為無數人警示自己的格言。

^{lxxvii} 百丈涅槃開田說義：汝等與我開田，我與汝說大義。

^{lxxviii} 九仞：六十三尺。一說七十二尺。常用以形容极高或极深。

^{lxxix} 多羅：(1) *An abbreviation for the translation of pa^tra*(鉢多羅), a flat silver bowl placed in front of the Buddha image at ceremonies for incense, etc. (2) A transliteration of ta^la, a kind of tree. (參見：多羅樹)(tuoluoshou). (3) A transliteration of ta^ra^, the pupil of the eye. (4) An abbreviation of the transliteration of xiuduoluo 修多羅, Sanskrit su^tra. (5) In the Esoteric sect, a transliteration for ta^rani, a female Bodhisattva.

^{lxxx} This is talking about cultivation, 掙定咽喉 means focusing on one Huatou, 轉得身來 means to reach a turning point when the mind is reaching a state without false thoughts, however, it is still a pity if they missed the opportunity of enlightenment, the mind is already flying far away.

^{lxxxii} 朱紫：古代高級官員的服色。如唐代，三品以上官服用紫，五品以上官用朱。因以朱紫代指高級官員。金魚：高級官員的佩飾。唐制，三品以上官員服紫，佩金符，其符刻成鯉魚形，謂之金魚。

^{lxxxii} 僧善信, who is called 慈忍大師 later on