

# Daily Lectures at Two Chan Weeks

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*given at the Jade Buddha Monastery, Shanghai, in 1953  
By Master Hsu Yun.*

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## **The First Week**

### *The First Day*

THE Venerable Wei Fang, abbot (of this monastery), is very compassionate indeed, and the chief monks are also earnest in their efforts to spread the Dharma. In addition, all the laymen (upasakas) here are keen in their studies of the truth and have come to sit in meditation during this Ch'an week. All have asked me to preside over the meeting and this is really an unsurpassable (co-operating) cause. However, for the last few years, I have been ill and am, therefore, unable to give long lectures.

The World Honored One spent over forty years in expounding the Dharma, exoterically and esoterically, and his teaching is found in the twelve divisions[1] of the Mahayana canon in the Tripitaka. If I am asked to give lectures, the most I can do is to pick up words already spoken by the Buddha and Masters.

As to the Dharma of our sect, when the Buddha ascended to his seat for the last time, he held up and showed to the assembly a golden flower of sandalwood, offered to him by the king of the eighteen Brahmaloakas (Mahabrahma Devaraja). All men and gods (devas) who were present, did not understand the Buddha's (meaning). Only Mahakasyapa (acknowledged it with a) broad smile. Thereupon the World Honored One declared to him: "I have the treasure of the correct Dharma eye, Nirvana's wonderful mind and the formless Reality which I now transmit to you. This was the transmission outside of teaching, which did not make use of scriptures and was the unsurpassed Dharma door of direct realization."

Those who came afterwards, got confused about it and (wrongly) called it Ch'an (Dhyana in Sanskrit and Zen in Japanese). We should know that over twenty kinds

of Ch'an are enumerated in the Mahaprajna-paramita Sutra, but none of them is the final one.

The Ch'an of our sect does not set up (progressive) stages and is, therefore, the unsurpassed one. (Its aim) is the direct realization leading to the perception of the (self-) nature and attainment of Buddhahood. Therefore, it has nothing to do with the sitting or not sitting in meditation during a Ch'an week. However, on account of living beings' dull roots and due to their numerous false thoughts, ancient masters devised expedencies to guide them. Since the time of Mahakasyapa up to now, there have been sixty to seventy generations. In the Tang and Sung dynasties (619-1278), the Ch'an sect spread to every part of the country and how it prospered at the time! At present, it has reached the bottom of its decadence (and) only those monasteries like Chin Shan, Kao Min and Pao Kuan, can still manage to present some appearance. This is why men of outstanding ability are now so rarely found and even the holding of Ch'an weeks has only a name but lacks its spirit.

When the Seventh Ancestor[2] Hsing Szu of Ch'ing Yuan Mountain asked the Sixth Patriarch: "What should one do in order not to fall into the progressive stages?"[3] the Patriarch asked: "What did you practice of late?" Hsing Szu replied: "I did not even practice the Noble Truths." [4] The Patriarch asked: "Then falling into what progressive stages?" Hsing Szu replied: "Even the Noble Truths are not practiced, where are the progressive stages?" The Sixth Patriarch had a high opinion of Hsing Szu.

Because of our inferior roots, the great masters were obliged to use expedencies and to instruct their followers to hold (and examine into) a sentence called hua t'ou. As Buddhists (of the Pure Land School) who used to repeat the Buddha's name (in their practice) were *numerous*, the great masters instructed them to hold (and examine into the hua t'ou): "Who is the repeater of the Buddha's name?" Nowadays, this expedient is adopted in Ch'an training all over the country. However, many are not clear about it and merely repeat without interruption the sentence: "Who is the repeater of the Buddha's name?" Thus they are repeaters of the hua t'ou, and are not investigators of the hua t'ou('s meaning). To investigate is to inquire into. For this reason, the four Chinese characters "chao ku hua t'ou" are prominently exhibited in all Ch'an halls. "Chao" is to turn inward the light, and "ku" is to care for. These (two characters together) mean "to turn inward the light on the self-nature". This is to turn inward our minds which are prone to wander outside, and this is called investigation of the hua t'ou. "Who is the repeater of the Buddha's name?" is a sentence. Before this sentence is uttered, it is called a hua t'ou (lit. sentence's head). As soon as it is uttered, it becomes the sentence's tail (hua wei). In our inquiry into the hua t'ou, this (word) "Who" should be examined: What is it before it arises? For instance, I am repeating the Buddha's name in this hall. Suddenly someone asks me: "Who is repeating the Buddha's name?" I reply: "It is I." The questioner asks again: "If you are the repeater of the Buddha's name, do you repeat it with your mouth or with your mind? If you repeat it with your

mouth, why don't you repeat it when you sleep? If you repeat it with your mind, why don't you repeat it after your death?" This question will cause a doubt to arise (in our minds) and it is here that we should inquire into this doubt. We should endeavour to know where this "Who" comes from and what it looks like. Our minute examination should be turned inward and this is also called "the turning inward of the hearing to hear the self-nature."

When offering incense and circumambulating in the hall, one's neck should touch the (back of the wide) collar of the robe, one's feet should follow closely the preceding walker, one's mind should be set at rest and one should not look to the right or to the left. With a single mind, the hua t'ou should be well cared for.

When sitting in meditation, the chest should not be pushed forward. The prana (vital energy) should neither be brought upward nor pressed down, and should be left in its natural Condition. However, the six sense organs should be brought under control, and all thoughts should be brought to an end. Only the hua t'ou should be gripped and the grip should never loosen. The hua t'ou should not be coarse for it will float up and cannot be brought down. Neither should it be fine, for it will become blurred with the resultant fall into the void. In both cases, no result can be achieved.

If the hua tou is properly looked after, the training will become easier and all former habits will be brought automatically to an end. A beginner will not find it easy to hold the hua t'ou well (in his mind), but he should not worry about it. He should neither hope for awakening nor seek wisdom, for the purpose of this sitting in meditation in the Ch'an week is already the attainment of awakening and wisdom. If he develops a mind in pursuit of these ends, he puts another head upon his own head.[5]

Now we know that we should give rise only to a sentence called hua t'ou which we should care for. If thoughts arise, let them rise and if we disregard them, they will vanish. This is why it is said: "One should not be afraid of rising thoughts but only of the delay in being aware of them." If thoughts arise, let our awareness of them nail the hua t'ou to them. If the hua t'ou escapes from our grip, we should immediately bring it back again.

The first sitting in meditation can be likened to a battle against rising thoughts. Gradually the hua t'ou will be well gripped and it will be easy to hold it uninterruptedly during the whole time an incense stick takes to burn.[6] We can expect good results when it does not escape from our grip any more.

The foregoing are only empty words; now let us exert our efforts in the training.

### *The Second Day*

To sit *in* meditation during a Ch'an week is the best method which sets a time limit for realizing the truth by personal experience. This method was not used in ancient times for the ancients had sharp roots (and did not require it). It has gradually been put into use since the Sung dynasty (fell in 1278). In the Ch'ing dynasty (1662-1910), it was brought into vogue and the Emperor Yung Cheng used to hold frequent Ch'an weeks in the imperial palace. He entertained the highest regard for the Sect and his own attainment of Ch'an samadhi was excellent. Over ten persons realized the truth under the imperial auspices and Master T'ien Hui Ch'e of the Kao Min monastery at Yang Chou attained enlightenment during these meetings (in the palace). The emperor also revised and improved for observance the rules and regulations of the Sect, which flourished and produced so many men of ability. The (strict observance of) rules and regulations is, therefore, of paramount importance.

This method of setting a time limit for personal experience of the truth is likened to a scholars' examination. The candidates sit for it and write their compositions according to the subjects, for each of which a time limit is set. The subject of our Ch'an week is Ch'an meditation. For this reason, this hall is called the Ch'an hall. Ch'an is dhyana in Sanscrit and means "unperturbed abstraction". There are various kinds of Ch'an, such as the Mahayana and Hinayana Ch'ans, the material and immaterial Ch'ans, the Sravakas' and the Heretics' Ch'an. Ours is the unsurpassed Ch'an. If one succeeds in seeing through the doubt (mentioned yesterday) and in sitting on and cracking the life-root,[7] one will be similar to the Tathagata.

For this reason, a Ch'an hall is also called a Buddha's selecting place. It is called a Prajna hall. The Dharma taught in this hall is the Wu Wei Dharma.[8] Wu Wei means "not doing". In other words, not a (single) thing can be gained and not a (single) thing can be done. If there be doing (samskrta),[9] it will produce birth and death. If there is gain, there will be loss. For this reason, the sutra says: "There are only words and expressions which have no real meaning." The recitation of sutras and the holding of confessional services pertain to doing (samskrta) and are only expediencies used in the teaching school.

As to our Sect, its teaching consists in the direct (self-) cognizance for which words and expressions have no room. Formerly, a student called on the old master Nan Chuan and asked him: "What is Tao?" Nan Chuan replied: "The ordinary mind[10] is the truth." Every day, we wear robes and eat rice; we go out to work and return to rest; all our actions are performed according to the truth.[11] It is because we bind ourselves in every situation that we fail to realize that the self-mind is Buddha.

When Ch'an Master Fa Ch'ang of Ta Mei Mountain called for the first time on Ma Tsu, he asked the latter: "What is Buddha?" Ma Tsu replied: "Mind is Buddha." Thereupon, Ta Mei[12] was completely enlightened. He left Ma Tsu and proceeded to the Szu Ming district where he lived in a hermitage formerly belonging to Mei Tsu Chen.

In the Chen Yuan reign (A.D. 785-804) of the T'ang dynasty, a monk who was a disciple of Yen Kuan and went to the mountain to collect branches of trees for making staffs, lost his way and arrived at the hut. He asked Ta Mei: "How long have you stayed here?" Ta Mei replied: "I see only four mountains which are blue and yellow." [13] The monk said: "Please show me the mountain track so that I can get out of here." Ta Mei replied: "Follow the stream." [14]

Upon his return the monk reported what he saw in the mountain to Yen Kuan who said: "I once saw a monk in Chiang Hsi province) but I have had no news of him since. Is it not that monk?"

Then Yen Kuan sent the monk (to the mountain) to invite Ta Mei to come (to his place). In reply, Ta Mei sent the following poem.

A withered log in the cold forest  
Does not change heart for several springs,  
The woodcutter will not look at it.  
How can a stranger hunt it?  
A lotus pond yields boundless store of clothing:  
More fir cones drop from pines than you can eat.  
When worldly men discover where you live  
You move your thatched hut far into the hills. [15]

Ma Tsu heard of Ta Mei's stay on the mountain and sent a monk to ask him this question: "What did you obtain when you called on the great master Ma Tsu and what prompted you to stay here?" Ta Mei replied: "The great master told me that mind was Buddha and that is why I came to stay here." The monk said: "The great master's Buddha Dharma is different now." Ta Mei asked: "What is it now?" The monk replied: "He says it is neither mind nor Buddha." [16] Ta Mei said: "That old man is causing confusion in the minds of others and all this will have no end. Let him say that it is neither mind nor Buddha. As far as I am concerned, Mind is Buddha."

When the monk returned and reported the above dialogue to Ma Tsu, the latter said: "The plum is now ripe." [17]

This shows how the ancients were competent and concise. Because of our inferior roots and perverted thinking, the masters taught us to hold a hua t'ou (in our minds) and they were obliged to use this expedient. Master Yung Chia said: "After the elimination of the ego and dharma, the attainment of reality will destroy the Avici hell in a moment (ksana). If I tell a lie to deceive living beings, I will consent to fall into the hell where the tongue is pulled out (as punishment for my verbal sin)." [18] Master Yuan Miao of Kao Feng said: "Ch'an training is like throwing into a deep pond a tile which sinks to the bottom." When we hold a hua t'ou, we must look into it until we reach its "bottom" and "crack" it. Master Yuan Miao also

swore: "If someone holding a hua t'ou without giving rise to a second thought, fails to realize the truth, I will be (ready) to fall into the hell where the tongue is pulled out." The sole reason why (we do not succeed in our practice) is because our faith (in the hua t'ou) is not deep enough and because we do not put an end to our (wrong) thinking. If we are firmly determined to escape from the round of births and deaths, a sentence of the hua t'ou will never escape from our grip. Master Kuei Shan said: "If in every reincarnation we (can hold it firmly) without backsliding, the Buddha stage can be expected."

All beginners are inclined to give rise to all kinds of (false) thoughts; they have a pain in the legs and do not know how to undergo the training. The truth is that they should be firm in their determination to escape from the round of births and deaths. They should stick to the hua t'ou and no matter whether they walk, stand, sit or lie, they should grasp it. From morning to evening, they should look into this (word) "Who" until it becomes as clear as "the autumn moon reflected in a limpid pool". It should be clearly (and closely) inquired into and should be neither blurred nor unsteady. (If this can be achieved) why worry about the Buddha stage which seems unattainable?

If the hua t'ou becomes blurred, you can open your eyes wide and raise your chest gently; this will raise your spirits. At the same time, it should not be held too loosely, nor should it be too fine, because if it is too fine, it will cause a fall into emptiness and dullness. If you fall into emptiness, you will perceive only stillness and will experience liveliness. At this moment, the hua t'ou should not be allowed to escape from your grip so that you can take a step forward after you have reached "the top of the pole."<sup>[19]</sup> Otherwise, you will fall into dull emptiness and will never attain the ultimate.

If it is loosely gripped, you will be easily assailed by false thoughts. If false thoughts arise, they will be difficult to suppress.

Therefore, coarseness should be tempered with fineness and fineness with coarseness to succeed in the training and to realize the sameness of the mutable and immutable.

Formerly I was at Chin Shin and other monasteries and when the Karmadana<sup>[20]</sup> received the incense sticks which he had ordered (previously), his two feet ran<sup>[21]</sup> with great speed as if he flew (in the air) and the monks who followed him were also good runners. As soon as the signal was given, all of them looked like automata. (Thus) how could wrong thoughts arise (in their minds)? At present (although) we also walk (after sitting in meditation), what a great difference there is between then and now!

When you sit in meditation, you should not push up the hua t'ou for this will cause its dimness. You should not hold it in your chest for it causes pain in the chest.

Neither should you press it down, for it will expand the belly and will cause your fall into the realm of the five aggregates (skandhas)[22] resulting in all kinds of defect. With serenity and self-possession, only the word "Who" should be looked into with the same care with which a hen sits on her egg and a cat pounces on a mouse. When the hua t'ou is efficiently held, the life-root will automatically be cut off.

This method is obviously not an easy one for beginners, but you must exert yourselves unceasingly. Now I give you an example. Self-cultivation is likened to making fire with a piece of flint. We must know the method of producing a fire and if we do not know it, we will never light a fire even if we break the flint in pieces. The method consists in using a bit of tinder and a steel. The tinder is held under the flint and the steel strikes the upper part of the flint so as to direct the spark to the tinder which will catch it. This is the only method of starting a fire (with a flint).

Although we know quite well that Mind is Buddha, we are still unable to accept this as a fact. For this reason, a sentence of the hua t'ou has been used as the fire-starting-steel. It was just the same when formerly the World Honored One became thoroughly enlightened after gazing at the stars at night. We are not clear about the self-nature because we do not know how to start a fire. Our fundamental self-nature and the Buddha do not differ from each other. It is only because of our perverted thinking that we are (still) not liberated. So the Buddha is still Buddha and we are still ourselves. Now as we know the method, if we could inquire into it, it would indeed be an unsurpassing co-operating cause! I hope that everyone here will, by exerting himself take a step forward from the top of a hundred-foot pole and will be elected (Buddha) in this hall so that he can pay the debt of gratitude he owes to the Buddha high above and deliver living beings here below. If the Buddha Dharma does not produce men of ability, it is because no one is willing to exert himself. Our heart is full of sadness when we talk about this (situation). If we really have deep faith in the words uttered under oath by Masters Yung Chia and Yuan Miao, we are sure we will also realize the truth. Now is the time to exert yourselves!

### ***The Third Day***

Time passes quickly (indeed); we have only just opened this Ch'an week and it is already the third day. Those who have efficiently held the hua t'ou (in their minds) have (been able to) clear up their passions and wrong thoughts; they can now go straight home.[23] For this reason, an ancient (master) said:

Self-cultivation has no other method;  
It requires but knowledge of the way.  
If the way only can be known,  
Birth and death at once will end.

Our way consists in laying down our baggage[24] and our home is very near. The Sixth Patriarch said: "If the preceding thought does not arise, it is mind. If the following thought does not end, it is Buddha." [25]

Fundamentally, our four elements are void and the five aggregates (skandhas) are non-existent. It is only because of (our) wrong thoughts which grasp (everything) that we like the illusion of the (impermanent) world and are thereby held in bondage. Consequently, we are unable to (perceive) the voidness of the four elements and (to realize) the nonexistence of birth and death. However, if in a single thought, we can have an experience of that which is not born, there will be no need for those Dharma doors expounded by Sakyamuni Buddha. (If so) can it still be said that birth and death cannot be brought to an end? On that account, the brightness of our Sect's Dharma really illumines the boundless space in the ten directions.

Master Teh Shan was a native of Chien Chou town in Szu Ch'uan. His lay surname was Chou. He left home at the age of twenty. After being fully ordained, he studied the Vinaya-pitaka[26] which he mastered. He was well-versed in the teaching of the noumenal and phenomenal as expounded in the sutras. He used to teach the Diamond Prajna and was called "Diamond Chou".

Said he to his schoolmates:

When a hair swallows the ocean[27]  
The nature-ocean[28] loses naught.  
To hit a needle's point with mustard seed  
Shakes not the needle's point.[29]  
(Of) saiksa and asaiksa[30]  
I know and I alone.

When he heard that the Ch'an Sect was flourishing in the South, he could not keep his temper and said: "All who leave home take a thousand aeons to learn the Buddha's respect-inspiring deportment[31] and ten thousand aeons to study the Buddha's fine deeds; (in spite of this) they are still unable to attain Buddhahood. How can those demons in the south dare to say that the direct indication of the mind leads to the perception of the (self-) nature and attainment of Buddhahood? I must (go to the south,) sweep away their den and destroy their race to repay the debt of gratitude I owe the Buddha."

He left Szu Ch'uan province with Ch'ing Lung's Commentary[32] on his shoulders. When he reached Li Yang, he saw an old woman selling tien hsin (lit. mind-refreshment)[33] on the roadside. He halted, laid down his load and intended to buy some pastries to refresh his mind. The old woman pointed at the load and asked him: "What is this literature?" Teh Shan replied: "Ch'ing Lung's Commentary." The old woman asked: "Commentary on what sutra?" Teh Shin replied: "On the



Diamond Sutra." The Old woman said: "I have a question to ask you; if you can answer it, I will offer you mind-refreshment. If you cannot reply, (please) go away. The Diamond Sutra says: 'The past, present and future mind cannot be found.' What do you want to refresh?"

Teh Shan remained speechless. He (left the place and) went to the Dragon Pond (Lung T'an) monastery. He entered the Dharma hall and said: "I have long desired to see the Dragon Pond, but as I arrive here, neither is the pond seen nor does the dragon appear." Hearing this, (Master) Lung T'an came out and said: "You have really arrived at the Dragon Pond." [34] Teh Shan remained speechless; he then (made up his mind to) stay at the monastery.

One night, while he was standing (as an attendant) by Lung T'an, the latter said to him: "It is late now, why don't you go back to your quarters?" After wishing his master good night, he withdrew but returned and said: "It is very dark outside." Lung T'an lit a paper-torch and handed it to him. When Teh Shan was about to take the torch, Lung T'an blew out the light. [35]

Thereupon Teh Shan was completely enlightened and made his obeisance to the master (to thank him). Lung T'an asked him: "What have you seen" Teh Shan replied: "In future, I will entertain no more doubt about the tips of the tongues of the old monks all over the country." [36]

The following day, Lung T'an ascended to his seat and said to the assembly: "There is a fellow whose teeth are like sword-leaf trees and whose mouth is like a blood bath. [37] He receives a stroke of the staff but does not turn his head. [38] Later, he will set up my doctrine on the top of a solitary peak." [39]

In front of the Dharma hall, Teh Shan laid on the ground all the sheets of the Ch'ing Lung Commentary in a heap and raising a torch said: "An exhaustive discussion of the abstruse is like a hair placed in the great void (and) the exertion to the full of all human capabilities is like a drop of water poured into the great ocean." Then he burned the manuscript. He bade farewell to his master and left the monastery.

He went straight to Kuei Shin (monastery) and carrying his baggage under his arm, he entered the Dharma hall which he crossed from its east to its west side and then from its west to its east side. He looked at the abbot (Master Kuei Shan) and said: "Anything? Anything?" Kuei Shan was sitting in the hall but paid no attention to the visitor. Teh Shan said: "Nothing, nothing." and left the hall. [40]

When he reached the front door of the monastery, he said to himself: "Be that as it may, I should not be so careless." Then, he turned back and again entered the hall in full ceremony. As he crossed its threshold, he took out and raised his cloth rug

(nisidana),[41] calling: "Venerable Upadhyaya !"[42] As Kuei Shan was about to pick up a dust-whisk,[43] Teh Shan shouted[44] and left the hall.

That evening, Kuei Shan asked the leader of the assembly: "Is the newcomer still here?" The leader replied: "When he left the hall, he turned his back to it, put on his straw sandals and went away." [45] Kuei Shan said: "That man will later go to some lonely peak where he will erect a thatched hut; he will scold Buddhas and curse Patriarchs." [46]

Teh Shan stayed thirty years at Li Yang. During the persecution of Buddhists by the Emperor Wu Tsung (A.D. 841-846) of the T'ang dynasty, the master took refuge in a stone hut on the Tu Fou mountain (in A.D. 847). At the beginning of Ta Chung's reign, prefect Hsieh T'ing Wang of Wu Ling restored the veneration of Teh Shan monastery and named it Ko Teh Hall. He was looking for a man of outstanding ability to take charge of the monastery when he heard of the master's reputation. In spite of several invitations, Teh Shan refused to descend the (Tu Fou) mountain. Finally, the prefect devised a stratagem and sent his men falsely to accuse him of smuggling tea and salt in defiance of the law. When the master was brought to the prefecture, the prefect paid obeisance to him and insistently invited him to take charge of the Ch'an hall where Teh Shan spread widely the Sect's teaching.

Later, people talked about Teh Shan's shouting and Lin Chi's[47] caning. If we can discipline ourselves like these two masters, why should we be unable to put an end to birth and death? After Teh Shin, came Yen T'ou and Hsueh Feng. After Hsueh Feng, came Yun Men and Fa Yen,[48] and also state master Teh Shao and ancestor Yen Shou of the Yung Ming (monastery). They were all "produced" by (Teh Shan's) staff.

During the past successive dynasties, the Sect was kept going by great ancestors and masters. You are here to hold a Ch'an week and you understand very well this unsurpassed doctrine which will enable (us) without difficulty to attain direct (self) cognizance and liberation from birth and death. However, if you trifle with it and do not train seriously, or if from morning to evening, you like to behold the "demon in the bright shadow" or to make your plans inside "the den of words and expressions", you will never escape from birth and death.[49] Now, all of you, please exert yourselves diligently.

### ***The Fourth Day***

This is the fourth day of our Ch'an week. You have exerted yourselves in your training; some of you have composed poems and gathas and have presented them to me for verification. This is not an easy thing but those of you who have made

efforts in this manner, must have forgotten my two previous lectures. Yesterday evening, I said:

Self-cultivation has no other method;  
It requires but knowledge of the way.

We are here to inquire into the hua t'ou which is the way we should follow. Our purpose is to be clear about birth and death and to attain Buddhahood. In order to be clear about birth and death, we must have recourse to this hua t'ou which should be used as the Vajra King's[50] precious sword to cut down demons if demons come and Buddhas if Buddhas come[51] so that no feelings will remain and not a single thing (dharma) can be set up. In such a manner, where could there have been wrong thinking about writing poems and gathas and seeing such states as voidness and brightness?[52] If you made your efforts (so wrongly), I really do not know where your hua t'ou went. Experienced C'han monks do not require further talks about this, but beginners should be very careful.

As I was apprehensive that you might not know how to undergo your training, I talked during the last two days about sitting in meditation in a Ch'an week, the worthiness of this method devised by our Sect and the way of making efforts. Our method consists in concentrating pointedly on a hua t'ou which should not be interrupted by day or night in the same way as running water. It should be spirited and clear and should never be blurred. It should be clearly and constantly cognizable. All worldly feelings and holy interpretations should be cut down (by it). An ancient (master) said:

Study the truth as you would defend a citadel  
Which, when besieged, (at all costs) must be held.  
if intense cold strikes not to the bone,  
How can plum blossom fragrant be?

These four lines came from (Master) Huang Po and have two meanings. The first two illustrate those who undergo the (Ch'an) training and who should hold firm the hua t'ou in the same manner as the defense of a citadel which no foe must be allowed to enter. This is the unyielding defense (of the citadel). Each of us has a mind which is the eighth consciousness (vijñāna), as well as the seventh, sixth and the first five consciousnesses. The first five are the five thieves of the eye, ear, nose, tongue and body. The sixth consciousness is the thief of mind (manas). The seventh is the deceptive consciousness (klista-mano-vijñāna) which from morning to evening grasps the eighth consciousness' "subject" and mistakes it for an "ego". It incites the sixth to lead the first five consciousnesses to seek external objects (such as) form, sound, smell, taste and touch. Being constantly deceived and tied the eighth consciousness-mind is held in bondage without being able to free itself. For this reason we are obliged to have recourse to this hua t'ou and use its "Vajra King's Precious Sword" to kill all these thieves so that the eighth consciousness

can be transmuted into the Great Mirror Wisdom, the seventh into the Wisdom of Equality, the sixth into the Profound Observing Wisdom and the first five consciousnesses into the Perfecting Wisdom.[53] It is of paramount importance first to transmute the sixth and seventh consciousnesses, for they play the leading role and because of their power in discriminating and discerning. While you were seeing the voidness and the brightness and composing poems and gathas, these two consciousnesses performed their (evil) functions. Today, we should use this hua t'ou to transmute the discriminating consciousness into the Profound Observing Wisdom and the mind which differentiates between ego and personality into the Wisdom of Equality. This is called the transmutation of consciousness into wisdom and the transformation of the worldly into the saintly. It is important not to allow these thieves who are fond of form, sound, smell, taste, touch and dharma, to attack us. Therefore, this is likened to the defense of a citadel.

The last two lines:

If intense cold strikes not to the bone  
How can plum blossom fragrant be?

illustrate living beings in the three worlds of existence[54] who are engulfed in the ocean of birth and death, tied to the five desires,[55] deceived by their passions, and unable to obtain liberation. Hence the plum blossom is used as an illustration, for these plum trees spring into blossom in snowy weather. In general, insects and plants are born in the spring, grow in summer, remain stationary in autumn and lie dormant in winter. In winter, insects and plants either die or lie dormant. The snow also lays the dust which is cold and cannot rise in the air. These insects, plants and dust are likened to our mind's wrong thinking, discerning, ignorance, envy and jealousy resulting from contamination with the three poisons.[56] If we rid ourselves of these (impurities), our minds will be naturally comfortable and plum blossoms will be fragrant in the snow. But you should know that these plum trees blossom in the bitter cold and not in the lovely bright spring or in the mild breeze of charming weather. If we want our mind-flowers to bloom, we cannot expect this flowering in the midst of pleasure, anger, sorrow and joy or (when we hold the conception of) ego, personality, right and wrong. If we are confused about these eight kinds of mind, the result will be unrecordable.[57] If evil actions are committed, the result will be evil. If good actions are performed, the result will be good.

There are two kinds of unrecordable nature; that of dreams and of dead emptiness. The unrecordable nature of dreams is that of illusory things appearing in a dream and unconnected with usually well-known daily activities. This is the state of an independent mind-consciousness (mano-vijnana).[58] This is also called an independent unrecordable state.

What is the unrecordable dead emptiness? In our meditation, if we lose sight of the hua t'ou while dwelling in stillness, there results an indistinctive voidness wherein there is nothing. The clinging to this state of stillness is a Ch'an illness which we should never contract while undergoing our training. This is the unrecordable dead emptiness.

What we have to do is throughout the day to hold without loosening our grip the hua t'ou which should be lively, bright, undimmed and clearly and constantly cognizable. Such a condition should obtain no matter whether we walk or sit. For this reason, an ancient master said:

"When walking, naught but Ch'an; when sitting, naught but Ch'an. Then body is at peace whether or not one talks or moves."

Ancestor Han Shan said:

High on a mountain peak  
Only boundless space is seen.  
How to sit in meditation, no one knows.  
The solitary moon shines o'er the icy pool,  
But in the pool there is no moon;  
The moon is in the night-blue sky.  
This song is chanted now,  
(But) there's no Ch'an in the song.[59]

You and I must have a co-operating cause, which is why I have this opportunity of addressing you on the (Ch'an) training. I hope you will exert yourselves and make steady progress, and will not wrongly apply your minds.

I will tell you another story, a kung an (or koan in Japanese). After the founder of the Hsi T'an (Siddham in Sanskrit) monastery on the Cock's Foot (Chi Tsu) mountain had left home, he called on enlightened masters (for instruction) and made very good progress in his training. One day, he stopped at an inn, and heard a girl in a bean-curd shop singing this song:

Bean-curd Chang and Bean-curd Li![60]

While your heads rest on the pillow,  
You think a thousand thoughts,  
Yet tomorrow you will sell bean-curd again.

The master was sitting in meditation and upon hearing this song, he was instantaneously awakened.[61] This shows that when the ancients underwent the training, there was no necessity of doing it in a Ch'an hall for experiencing the truth. The (self-) cultivation and training lie in the One-Mind. So, all of you, please don't allow your minds to be disturbed in order not to waste your time. Otherwise,

you will be selling bean-curd again tomorrow morning.[62]

### *The Fifth Day*

About this method of (self-) cultivation, it can be said that it is both easy and difficult. It is easy because it is really easy and it is difficult because it is really difficult.

It is easy because you are only required to lay down (every thought), to have a firm faith in it (the method) and to develop a lasting mind. All this will ensure your success.

It is difficult because you are afraid of enduring hardships and because of your desire to be at ease. You should know all worldly occupations also require study and training before success can be achieved. How much more so when we want to learn (wisdom) from the sages in order to become Buddhas and Patriarchs. Can we reach our goal if we (act) carelessly?

Therefore, the first thing is to have a firm mind in our self-cultivation and performance of the truth. In this, we cannot avoid being obstructed by demons. These demoniacal obstructions are the (external) karmic surroundings caused by our passions for all form, sound, smell, taste, touch and dharma as enumerated in my talk yesterday. This karmic environment is our foe through life and death. For this reason, there are many sutra expounding Dharma masters who cannot stand firm on their own feet while in the midst of these surroundings because of their wavering religious mind.[63]

The next important thing is to develop an enduring mind. Since our birth in this world, we have created boundless karmas and if we now wish to cultivate ourselves for the purpose of escaping from birth and death, can we wipe out our former habits all at once? In olden times, ancestors such as Ch'an master Ch'ang Ch'ing, who sat in meditation until he had worn out seven mats, and (Ch'an master) Chao Chou who wandered from place to place (soliciting instruction) at the age of eighty after having spent forty years in meditating on the word 'Wu' (*lit.* No) without giving rise to a thought in his mind. They finally obtained complete enlightenment, and the princes of the Yen and Chao states revered them and made offerings to them. In the Ch'ing dynasty, Emperor Yung Cheng (1723-35) who had read their sayings and had found these excellent, bestowed upon them the posthumous title of 'Ancient Buddha'. This is the resultant attainment after a whole life of austerity. If we can now wipe out all our former habits to purify our One-thought, we will be on an equality with Buddhas and Patriarchs. The S'urangama Sutra says:

"It is like the purification of muddy water stored in a clean container; left unshaken in complete calmness, the sand and mud will sink to the bottom. When the clear water appears, this is called the first suppression of the intruding evil element of passion.[64] When the mud has been removed leaving behind only the clear water, this is called the permanent cutting off of basic ignorance." [65]

Our habitual passions are likened to mud and sediment, which is why we must make use of the hua t'ou. The hua t'ou is likened to alum used to clarify muddy water in the same manner as passions are brought under control. If in his training, a man succeeds in achieving the sameness of body and mind with the resultant appearance of the condition of stillness, he should be careful and should never abide in it. He should know that it is (only) an initial step but that ignorance caused by passions is still not wiped out. This is (only) the deluded mind reaching the state of purity, just like muddy water which, although purified, still contains mud and sediment at the bottom. You must make additional efforts to advance further. An ancient master said:

Sitting on a pole top one hundred feet in height [66]

One will still perceive (that) which is not real.

If from the pole top one then takes a step

One's body will appear throughout the Universe.

If you do not take a step forward, you will take the illusion-city for your home and your passions will be able to rise (again). If so, it will be difficult for you to become even a self-enlightened person.[67] For this reason, the mud must be removed in order to retain the (clear) water. This is the permanent wiping out of the basic ignorance and only then can Buddhahood be attained. When ignorance has been permanently wiped out, you will be able to appear in bodily form in the ten directions of the Universe to expound the Dharma, in the same manner as Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva who can appear in thirty-two forms and who, manifesting to teach the Dharma, can choose the most appropriate form to liberate a responsive living being. You will be free from restraint and will enjoy independence and comfort (everywhere) even in a house of prostitution, a public bar, the womb of a cow, a mare or a mule, in paradise or hell.

On the other hand, a discriminating thought will send you down to the turning wheel of births and deaths. Formerly, Ch'in Kuai [68] Who had (in a former life) made offerings of incense and candles to Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva but did not develop an enduring mind (in his training) because of his failure to wipe out his ignorance caused by passions, was the victim of his hatred-mind (in his following reincarnation). This is just an example.

If your believing-mind is strong and your enduring-mind does not retrograde, you will, in your present bodily form, be able to attain Buddhahood, even if you are only an ordinary man.

Formerly there was a poor and miserable man who joined the order (sangha) at a monastery. Although he was keen to practice (self-) cultivation, he did not know the method. As he did not know whom to ask about it, he decided to toil and moil every day. One day, a wandering monk came to the monastery and saw the man toiling. The monk asked him about his practice and the man replied: "Every day, I do this kind of hard work. Please show me the method of (self-) cultivation." The monk replied: "You should inquire into (the sentence:) 'Who is the repeater of Buddha's name?'" As instructed by the visiting monk, the man managed to bear the word "Who" in mind while he did his daily work. Later, he went to stay in a grotto on an islet to continue his training, using leaves for clothing and plants for food. His mother and sister who were still living, heard of his retreat in a grotto on an islet where he endured hardships in his self-cultivation. His mother sent his sister to take him a roll of cloth and some provisions. When she arrived, she saw him seated (in meditation). She called him but he did not reply, and she shook him but he did not move. Seeing that her brother neither looked at nor greeted her but continued his meditation in the grotto, she was enraged, left the roll of cloth and provisions there and returned home. Thirteen years later, his sister went again to visit him and saw the same roll of cloth still lying in the same place.

Later a hungry refugee came to the grotto wherein he saw a monk in ragged garments; he entered and begged for food. The monk (got up and) went to the side of the grotto to pick some pebbles which he placed in a pot. After cooking them for a while, he took them out and invited the visitor to eat them with him. The pebbles looked like potatoes and when the visitor had satisfied his hunger, the monk said to him: "Please do not mention our meal to outsiders."

Some time later, the monk thought to himself: "I have stayed here so many years for my (self-) cultivation and should now form (propitious) causes (for the welfare of others)." Thereupon, he proceeded to Hsia Men[69] where on the side of a road, he built a thatched hut offering free tea (to travelers). This took place in Wan Li's reign (1573-1619) about the time the empress mother passed away. The emperor wanted to invite eminent monks to perform (Buddhist) ceremonies for the welfare of his deceased mother. He first intended to invite monks in the capital but at the time, there were no eminent monks there. (One night) the emperor saw in a dream his mother who said that there was one in the Chang Chou prefecture of Fu Chien province. The emperor sent officials there to invite local monks to come to the capital for the ceremonies. When these monks with their bundles set out on their journey to the capital, they passed by the hut of the poor monk who asked them: "Venerable masters, what makes you so happy and where are you going?" They replied: "We have received the emperor's order to proceed to the capital to perform ceremonies for the spirit of the empress mother." The poor monk said: "May I go with you?" They replied: "You are so miserable, how can you go with us?" He said: "I do not know how to recite sutras but I can carry your bundles for you. It is worth while to pay a visit to the capital." Thereupon, he picked up the bundles and followed the other monks to the capital.



When the emperor knew that the monks were about to arrive, he ordered an official to bury a copy of the Diamond Sutra under the doorstep of the palace. When the monks arrived, they did not know anything about the sutra, crossed the doorstep and entered the palace one after another. When the miserable monk reached the threshold, he knelt upon his knees and brought his palms together but did not enter (the palace). In spite of the door-keepers who called him and tried to drag him in, he refused to enter. When the incident was reported to the emperor who had ordered the burial of the sutra, he realized that the holy monk had arrived and came personally to receive him. He said: "Why don't you enter the palace?" The monk replied: "I dare not, because a copy of the Diamond Sutra has been buried in the ground." The emperor said: "Why don't you stand on your head to enter it?" Upon hearing this, the monk placed his hands upon the ground and somersaulted into the palace. The emperor had the greatest respect for him and invited him to stay in the inner palace.

When asked about the altar and the ceremony, the monk replied: "The ceremony will be held tomorrow morning, in the fifth watch of the night. I will require only one altar with one leading[70] banner and one table with incense, candles and fruit for offerings (to Buddhas)." The emperor was not pleased with the prospect of an unimpressive ceremony and was at the same time apprehensive that the monk might not possess enough virtue to perform it. (To test his virtue), he ordered two maids of honor to bathe the monk. (During and) after the bath, his genital organ remained unmoved. The maids of honor reported this to the emperor whose respect for the monk grew the greater for he realized now that the visitor was really holy. Preparation was then made according to the monk's instruction and the following morning, the monk ascended to his seat to expound the Dharma. Then he ascended to the altar, joined his palms together (to salute) and holding the banner, went to the coffin, saying:

In reality I do not come;  
(But) in your likes you are one-sided.  
In one thought to realize there is no birth  
Means that you will leap o'er the deva realms.

After the ceremony, the monk said to the emperor: "I congratulate you on the liberation of her majesty the Empress Mother." As the emperor was doubting the efficiency of a ceremony which ended in such a manner, he heard in the room the voice of the deceased saying: "I am now liberated; you should bow your thanks to the holy master."

The emperor was taken aback, and his face beamed with delight. He paid obeisance to the monk and thanked him. In the inner palace, a vegetarian banquet was offered to the master. Seeing that the emperor was wearing a pair of colored trousers, the monk fixed his eyes on them. The emperor asked him: "Does the

Virtuous One like this pair of trousers?" and taking them off he offered them to the visitor who said:

"Thank your Majesty for his grace." Thereupon, the emperor bestowed upon the monk the tide of State Master Dragon Trousers. After the banquet, the emperor led the monk to the imperial garden where there was a precious stupa. The monk was happy at the sight of the stupa and stopped to admire it. The emperor asked "Does the State Master like this stupa?" The visitor replied: "It is wonderful!" The emperor said: "I am willing to offer it to you with reverence." As the host was giving orders to remove the stupa to Chang Chou, the monk said: "There is no need, I can take it away." After saying this, the monk placed the stupa in his (long) sleeve, rose in the air and left. The emperor stunned and overjoyed at the same time, praised the unprecedented occurrence.

Dear friends, it is a (wonderful) story indeed and it all came about simply because from the time he left his home, the monk never used his discriminating mind and had a lasting faith in the truth. He did not care for his sister who came to see him, paid no attention to his ragged garments, and did not touch the roll of cloth lying thirteen years in the grotto. We must now ask ourselves if we can undergo our training in such a manner. It would be superfluous to talk about our inability to follow the monk's example when our sisters come to see us. It is enough to mention the attitude we take after our meditation when, while walking, we cannot refrain from gazing at our leader when he offers incense or at our neighbor's movements. If our training is done in this manner, how can our hua t'ou be firmly held?

Dear friends, you have only to remove the mud and retain the water. When the water is clear, automatically the moon will appear.[71] Now it is time to give rise to your hua t'ou and to examine it closely.

### *The Sixth Day*

The ancients said: "Days and months pass quickly like a shuttle (and) time flies like an arrow." Our Ch'an week began only the other day and will come to an end tomorrow. According to the standing rule, an examination will be held tomorrow morning, for the purpose of a Ch'an week is to set a time limit for experiencing (the truth). By experiencing, it means awakening to and realization (of the truth). That is to say, the experiencing of one's fundamental self and the realization of the Tathagata's profound nature. This is called the experiencing and realization (of the truth).

Your examination is for the purpose of ascertaining the extent to which you have reached attainment during these seven days and you will have to disclose your achievement to the assembly. Usually this examination is called the collection of

(the bill of) fare[72] from all of you. (This means that) you must all appear for this examination. In other words, all of you must be awakened (to the truth) so that you can expound the Buddha Dharma for the liberation of all the living. Today, I am not saying I expect that you must all be awakened to the truth. If even one of you is awakened, I can (still) collect this bill of fare. That is to say, one person will pay the bill for the meals served to the whole assembly. If all of us develop a skilful and progressive mind in quest of the truth, we will all be awakened to it. The ancients said:

"It is easy for a worldly man to win Buddhahood,  
(But) hard indeed is it to bring wrong thinking to an end."

It is only because of our insatiable desires since the time without beginning that we now drift about in the sea of mortality, within which there are 84,000 passions and all sorts of habits which we cannot wipe out. (In consequence), we are unable to attain the truth and to be like Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who are permanently enlightened and are free from delusion. For this reason, (Master) Lien Ch'ih said:

It is easy to be caught up in the causes of pollution,[73]  
(But) to earn truth producing karma is most hard.[74]  
If you cannot see behind what can be seen,  
Differentiated are (concurrent) causes,  
(Around you) are but objects which, like gusts of wind,  
Destroy the crop of merits (you have sown).[75]  
The passions of the mind e'er burst in flames,  
Destroying seeds of Bodhi (in the heart).  
If recollection[76] of the truth be as (intense as) passion,  
Buddhahood will quickly be attained.  
If you treat others as you treat the self;  
All will be settled (to your satisfaction).  
If self is not right and others are not wrong,  
Lords and their servants will respect each other.  
If the Buddha-dharma's constantly before one,  
From all passions this is liberation.

How clear and how to the point are these lines! The (word) pollution means (the act of) making unclean. The realm of worldly men is tainted with desires of wealth, sensuality, fame and gain as well as anger and dispute. To them, the two words "religion" and "virtue" are only obstacles. Every day, they give way to pleasure, anger, sorrow and joy and long for wealth, honor, glory and prosperity. Because they cannot eliminate worldly passions, they are unable to give rise to a single thought of the truth. In consequence, the grove of merits is ruined and all seeds of Bodhi are destroyed. If they are indifferent to all worldly passions; if they give equal treatment to friends and foes; if they refrain from killing, stealing, committing adultery, lying and drinking intoxicating liquors; if they are impartial

to all living beings; if they regard other people's hunger as their own; if they regard other people's drowning as if they get drowned themselves; and if they develop the Bodhi mind, they will be in agreement with the truth and will also be able to attain Buddhahood at a stroke. For this reason, it is said: "If recollection of the truth be (as intense) as passions, Buddhahood will quickly be attained." All Buddhas and saints appear in the world to serve the living, by rescuing them from suffering, by bestowing happiness upon them and by aiding them out of pity.

We can practice self-denial as well as compassion for others, thus foregoing all sorts of enjoyment. (if we can do so), no one will have to endure suffering and there will remain nothing that cannot be accomplished. It will follow that we will be able to obtain the full fruit of our reward, in the same manner as a boat rises automatically with the tide. When dealing with others, if you have a compassionate and respectful mind, and are without self-importance, arrogance and deception, they will certainly receive you with respect and courtesy. On the other hand, if you rely on your abilities and are unreasonable, or if you are double-faced aiming only at (your own enjoyment of) sound, form, fame and wealth, the respect with which they may receive you, will not be real. For this reason, Confucius said: "If you respect others, they will always respect you. If you have sympathy for others, they will always have sympathy for you.

The Sixth Patriarch said:

"Although their faults are theirs and are not ours, should we discriminate, we too are wrong. "[77]

Therefore, we should not develop a mind which discriminates between right and wrong and between self and others. If we serve other people in the same manner as Buddhas and Bodhisattvas did, we will be able to sow Bodhi seeds everywhere and will reap the most excellent fruits. Thus, passions will never be able to hold us in bondage.

The twelve divisions of the Mahayana's Tripitaka were expounded by the World Honored One because of our three poisons, concupiscence, anger and stupidity. Therefore, the aims of the twelve divisions of this Tripitaka are: discipline (s'ila) imperturbability (samadhi) and wisdom (prajna). Their purpose is to enable us to wipe out our desires, to embrace (the four infinite Buddha states of mind): kindness (maitri), pity (karuna), joy (mudita)[78] and indifference (upeksa)[79] and all modes of salvation,[80] to eliminate the delusion of ignorance and the depravity of stupidity, to achieve the virtue of complete wisdom and to embellish the meritorious Dharmakarya. If we can take such a line of conduct, the Lotus treasury[81] will appear everywhere.

Today, most of you who have come for this Ch'an week, are virtuous laymen (upasakas). You should subdue your minds in an appropriate manner and get rid of

all bondages. I will now tell you another kung an so that you can follow the example (given by those mentioned in it). If I do not tell it, I am afraid you will not acquire the Gem and will go home empty-handed, and (at the same time) I will be guilty of a breach of trust. Please listen attentively:

In the T'ang dynasty, there was an upasaka whose name was P'ang Yun, alias Tao Hsuan, and whose native town was Heng Yang in Hu Nan province. He was originally a Confucian scholar and since his youth, he realized (the futility of) passions and was determined in his search for the truth.

At the beginning of Chen Yuan's reign (A.D. 785-804), he heard of master Shih T'ou's learning and called on him (for instruction). (When he saw the master), he asked him: "Who is the man who does not take all dharmas as his companions?"[82] Shih T'ou stretched out his hand to close P'ang Yun's mouth and the visitor immediately understood the move.[83]

One day, Shi T'ou asked P'ang Yun: "Since you have seen this old man (i.e. me), what have you been doing each day?" P'ang Yun replied: "If you ask me what I have been doing, I do not know how to open my mouth (to talk about it)." Then he presented the following poem to Shih T'ou:

There is nothing special about what I do each day;  
I only keep myself in harmony with it,[84]  
Everywhere I neither accept nor reject anything.  
Nowhere do I confirm or refute a thing.[85]  
Why do people say that red and purple differ?  
There's not a speck of dust on the blue mountain.[86]  
Supernatural powers and wonder-making works  
Are but fetching water and the gathering of wood,[87]

Shi T'ou approved of the poem and asked P'ang Yun: "Will you join the Sangha order or will you remain a layman (upasaka)?" P'ang Yun replied: "I will act as I please," and did not shave his head.[88]

Later, P'ang Yun called on (master) Ma Tsu and asked him: "Who is the man who does not take all dharmas as his companions?" Ma Tsu replied: "I will tell you this after you have swallowed all the water in the West River." [89] Upon hearing this, P'ang Yun was instantaneously awakened to the profound doctrine. He stayed two years at the monastery (of Ma Tsu).

Since his complete realization of his fundamental nature, the Upasaka gave up all worldly occupations, dumped into the Hsiang River his whole fortune amounting to 10,000 strings of gold and silver (coins) and made bamboo-ware to earn his living.

One day, while chatting with his wife on the doctrine of the unborn, the Upasaka said: "Difficult! Difficult! Difficult! (It is like unpacking and) distributing ten loads of sesame seeds on the top of a tree." [90]

His wife interjected: "Easy! Easy! Easy! A hundred blades of grass are the masters' indication." [91]

Hearing their dialogue, their daughter Ling Chao said laughingly: "Oh, you two old people! How can you talk like that?" The Upasaka said to his daughter: "What, then, would you say?" She replied: "It is not difficult! And it is not easy! When hungry one eats and when tired one sleeps." [92]

P'ang Yun clapped his hands, laughed and said: "My son will not get a wife; my daughter will not have a husband. We will all remain together to speak the language of the un-born." [93] Since then, his dialectic powers became eloquent and forcible and he was admired everywhere.

When the Upasaka left (master) Yo Shan, the latter sent ten Ch'an monks to accompany him to the front door (of the monastery). Pointing his finger at the falling snow, the Upasaka said to them: "Good snow! The flakes do not fall elsewhere." A Ch'an monk named Ch'uan asked him: "Where do they fall?" The Upasaka slapped the monk in the face, and Ch'uan said: "You can't act so carelessly." The Upasaka replied: "What a Ch'an monk you are! The god of the dead will not let you pass." Ch'uan asked: "Then what does the (Venerable) Upasaka mean?" The Upasaka slapped him again and said: "You see like the blind and you talk like the dumb." [94]

The Upasaka used to frequent places where sutras were explained and commented on. One day, he listened to the expounding of the Diamond Sutra, and when the commentator came to the sentence on the non-existence of ego and personality, he asked: "(Venerable) Sir, since there is neither self nor other, who is now expounding and who is listening?" As the commentator could not reply, the Upasaka said: "Although I am a layman, I comprehend something." The commentator asked him: "What is the (Venerable) Upasaka's interpretation?" The Upasaka replied with the following poem:

There is neither ego nor personality,  
Who is distant then and who is intimate?  
Take my advice and quit your task of comment  
Since that cannot compare with the direct quest of the truth.  
The nature of the Diamond Wisdom  
Contains no foreign dust. [95]  
The words "I hear", "I believe" and "I receive"  
Are meaningless and used expediently.

After hearing the poem, the commentator was delighted (with the correct interpretation) and praised (the Upasaka).

One day, the Upasaka asked Ling Chao: "How do you understand the ancients' saying: 'Clearly there are a hundred blades of grass; clearly these are the Patriarchs' indication?" Ling Chao replied: "Oh you old man, how can you talk like that?" The Upasaka asked her: "How would you say it?" Ling Chao replied: "Clearly there are a hundred blades of grass; clearly these are the Patriarchs' indication." [96] The Upasaka laughed (approvingly).

(When he knew that) he was about to die, he said to Ling Chao:

"(Go out and) see if it is early or late; if it is noon, let me know." Ling Ghao went out and returned, saying: "The sun is in mid-heaven, but unfortunately is being swallowed by the heaven-dog. [97] (Father) why don't you go out to have a look?" Thinking that her story was true, he left his seat and went outside. Thereupon, Ling Chao (taking advantage of her father's absence) ascended to his seat, sat with crossed legs and with her two palms brought together, and passed away.

When the Upasaka returned, he saw that Ling Chao had died and said, with a sigh: "My daughter was sharp-witted and left before me." So he postponed his death for a week, (in order to bury his daughter).

When magistrate Yu Ti came to inquire after his health, the Upasaka said to him:

Vow only to wipe out all that is;  
Beware of making real what is not. [98]  
Life in this (mortal) world  
A shadow is, an echo.

After saying this, he rested his head on the magistrate's knees and passed away. As willed by him, his body was cremated and the ashes were thrown into the lake.

His wife heard of his death and went to inform her son of it. Upon hearing the news, the son (stopped his work in the field), rested his chin on the handle of his hoe and passed away in a standing position. After witnessing these three successive events, the mother retired (to an unknown place) to live in seclusion.

As you see, the whole family of four had supernatural powers and could do works of wonder and these laymen who were also upasakas like you, were of superior attainments. At present, it is impossible to find men of such outstanding ability not only among you upasakas (and upasikas) but also among monks and nuns who are no better than myself, Hsu Yun. What a disgrace!

Now let us exert ourselves again in our training!

### *The Seventh Day*

Dear friends, allow me to congratulate you for the merits you have accumulated in the Ch'an week which comes to an end today. According to the standing rule, those of you who have experienced and realized (the truth) should come forward in this hall as did candidates who sat for a scholar's examination held previously in the imperial palace. Today, being the day of posting the list of successful graduates, should be one for congratulations. However, (the venerable) abbot has been most compassionate and (has decided to) continue this Ch'an meeting for another week so that we can all make additional efforts for further progress (in self-cultivation).

All the masters who are present here and are old hands in this training, know that it is a wonderful opportunity for co-operation and will not throw away their precious time. But those who are beginners, should know that it is difficult to acquire a human body[99] and that the question of birth and death is important. As we have human bodies, we should know that it is difficult to get the chance to hear the Buddha Dharma and meet learned teachers. Today you have come to the "precious mountain"[100] and should take advantage of this excellent opportunity to make every possible effort (in your self-cultivation) in order not to return home empty-handed.

As I have said, our Sect's Dharma which was transmitted by the World Honored One when he held up a flower to show it to the assembly, has been handed down from one generation to another. Although Ananda was a cousin of the Buddha and left home to follow him as an attendant, he did not succeed in attaining the truth in the presence of the World Honored One. After the Buddha had entered nirvana, his great disciples assembled in a cave (to compile sutras) but Ananda was not permitted by them to attend the meeting. Mahakasyapa said to him: "You have not acquired the World Honored One's Mind Seal, so please pull down the banner-pole in front of the door." Thereupon, Ananda was thoroughly enlightened. Then Mahakasyapa transmitted to him the Tathagata's Mind Seal, making him the second Indian Patriarch. The transmission was handed down to following generations, and after the Patriarchs Asvaghosa and Nagarjuna, Ch'an master Hui Wen of T'ien T'ai mountain in the Pei Ch'i dynasty (A.D. 550-578) after reading (Nargajuna's) Madhyamika Sastra, succeeded in realizing his own mind and founded the T'ien T'ai School.[101] At the time, our Ch'an Sect was very flourishing. Later, when the T'ien T'ai School fell into decadence, State master Teh Shao (a Ch'an master) journeyed to Korea (where the only copy of Chih I's works existed), copied it and returned to revive the Sect.

Bodhidharma who was the twenty-eighth Indian Patriarch, came to the East where he became the first (Chinese) Patriarch. From his transmission (of the Dharma)



until the (time of the) Fifth Patriarch, the Mind-lamp shone brilliantly. The Sixth Patriarch had forty-three successors among whom were (the eminent) Ch'an masters Hsing Szu and Huai Jang. Then came (Ch'an master) Ma Tsu who had eighty-three successors. At the time, the Right Dharma reached its zenith and was held in reverence by emperors and high officials. Although the Tathagata expounded many Dharmas, the Sect's was the unsurpassed one.

As to the Dharma which consists in repeating only the name of Amitabha (Buddha), it was extolled by (Ch'an Patriarchs) Asvaghosa and Nagarjuna,[102] and after master Hui Yuan,[103] Ch'an master Yen Shou of the Yung Ming monastery became the Sixth Patriarch of the Pure Land Sect (Chin T'u Tsung), which was subsequently spread by many other Ch'an masters.

After being propagated by Ch'an master I Hsing, the Esoteric Sect[104] spread to Japan but disappeared in China where there was no one to succeed to the master.

The Dharmalaksana Sect[105] was introduced by Dharma master Hsuan Tsang but did not last very long.

Only our (Ch'an) Sect (is like a stream) which is still flowing from its remote source bringing devas into its fold and subduing dragons and tigers.[106]

Lu Tung Pin, alias Shun Yang, a native of Ching Ch'uan, was one of the (famous) group of eight immortals.[107] Towards the end of the T'ang dynasty, he stood thrice for the scholar's examination but failed each time. Being disheartened, he did not return home, and one day, he met by chance in a wine-shop at Ch'ang An, an immortal named Chung Li Ch'uan who taught him the method of lengthening his span of life infinitely. Lu Tung Pin practiced the method with great success and could even become invisible and fly in the air at will all over the country. One day, he paid a flying visit to the Hai Hui monastery on Lu Shan mountain; in its bell tower, he wrote on the wall:

(After) a day of leisure when the body is at ease,  
The six organs[108] (now) in harmony, announce that all is well.  
With a gem in the pubic region[109] there's no need to search for truth,  
When mindless of surroundings, there's no need for Ch'an.

Some time later, as he was crossing the Huang Lung mountain, he beheld (in the sky) purple clouds shaped like an umbrella. Guessing that there must be some extraordinary person (in the monastery there), he entered it. It happened at the same time that in the monastery, after beating the drum, (Ch'an master) Huang Lung was ascending to his seat (to expound the Dharma). Lu Tung Pin followed the monks and entered the hall to listen to the teaching.

Huang Lung said to the assembly: "Today there is here a plagiarist of my Dharma; the old monk (i.e. I) will not expound it." Thereupon, Lu Tung Pin came forward and paid obeisance to the master, saying: "I wish to ask the Venerable Master the meaning of these lines:

A grain of corn contains the Universe:  
The hills and rivers (fill) a small cooking-pot."

Huang Lung scolded him and said: "What a corpse-guarding devil (you are)." Lu Tung Pin retorted: "But my gourd holds the immortality giving medicine." Huang Lung said: "Even if you succeed in living 80,000 aeons,[110] you will not escape from falling into the dead void." Forgetting all about the (fortitude advocated in his own line:)

"When mindless of surroundings there's no need for Ch'an."

Lu Tung Pin burned with anger and threw his sword at Huang Lung. Huang Lung pointed his finger at the sword which fell to the ground and which the thrower could not get back. With deep remorse, Lu Tung Pin knelt upon his knees and inquired about the Buddha Dharma. Huang Lung asked: "Let aside (the line:) 'The hills, and rivers (fill) a small cooking-pot' about which I do not ask you anything. (Now) what is the meaning of: 'A grain of corn contains the Universe?'"[111] Upon hearing this (question), Lu Tung Pin instantaneously realized the profound (Ch'an) meaning. Then, he chanted the following repentance-poem:

I throw away my gourd and smash my lute.  
In future I'll not cherish gold in mercury.  
Now that I have met (the master) Huang Lung,  
I have realized my wrong use of the mind.[112]

This is the story of an immortal's return to and reliance on the Triple Gem and his entry into the monastery (Sangharama) as a guardian of the Dharma. Lu Tung Pin was also responsible for reviving the Taoist Sect at the time and was its Fifth (Tao) Patriarch in the North. The Taoist Tzu Yang also realized the mind after reading the (Buddhist) collection "Tsu Ying Chi" and became the Fifth (Tao) Patriarch in the South.[113] Thus the Tao faith was revived thanks to the Ch'an Sect.

Confucius' teaching was handed down until Mencius after whom it came to an end. In the Sung dynasty Confucian scholars (also) studied the Buddha Dharma, and among them, (we can cite) Chou Lien Ch'i who practiced the Ch'an training and succeeded in realizing his mind, and others such as Ch'eng Tzu, Chang Tzu and Chu Tzu (all famous Confucians). Therefore, the Ch'an Sect contributed (in no small measure) to the revival of Confucianism.

Nowadays, there are many people who despise the Ch'an Dharma and who even make slanderous remarks about it, thus deserving hell.[114] Today, we have this excellent opportunity of being favored with a co-operating cause (which gathers us here). We should feel joy and should take the great vow to become objects of reverence for dragons and devas and to perpetuate the Right Dharma forever. This is no child's play; so please make strenuous efforts to obtain more progress in your self-cultivation.

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## Proceed to **Week Two of Hsu Yun's Daily Lectures**

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### Notes

[1] The 12 divisions of the Mahayana canon are: (1) sutra, the Buddha's sermons; (2) geya, metrical pieces; (3) gatha, poems or chants; (4) nidana, sutras written by request or in answer to a query, because certain precepts were violated and because of certain events; (5) itivrttaka, narratives; (6) jataka, stories of former lives of Buddha; (7) adbhuta-dharma, miracles; (8) avadana, parables, metaphors, stories, illustrations; (9) upadesa, discourses and discussions by question and answer; (10) udana, impromptu, or unsolicited addresses; (11) vaipulya, expanded sutras; (12) vyakarana, prophecies.

[2] Hsing Szu inherited the Dharma from the Sixth Patriarch and was called the Seventh Ancestor because his two Dharma-descendants Tung Shan and Ts'ao Shan founded the Ts'ao Tung sect, which was one of the five Ch'an sects in China.

[3] Of the method of gradual enlightenment which took many aeons to enable an adherent to attain the Buddha-stage.

[4] The four Noble Truths are: Misery; the accumulation of misery, caused by passions; the extinction of passions, being possible; and the doctrine of the Path leading to extinction of passions.

[5] A Ch'an term which means an unwanted thing which hinders self-realization.

[6] Usually One hour. The longer sticks take an hour and a half to burn.

[7] Life-root. A root, or basis for life, or reincarnation, the nexus of Hinayana between two life-periods, accepted by Mahayana as nominal but not real. The Chinese idiom "to sit on and to crack" is equivalent to the Western term 'to break up'.

[8] Wu Wei. Asamskrta in Sanscrit, anything not subject to cause, condition or dependence; out of time, eternal, inactive, supramundane.

[9] Samskrta. Yu Wei in Chinese, active, creative, productive, functioning. causative, phenomenal, the process resulting from the laws of karma.

[10] Ordinary mind = indiscriminating mind.

[11] Without discrimination, the acts of wearing clothes and eating and all our activities are nothing but the functions of the self-nature; and One reality is all reality. On the other hand if the mind discriminates when one wears one's robe or takes one's meal, everything around one will be the phenomenal.

[12] Ta Mei. In deference to him, the master was called after the name of the mountain where he stayed.

[13] The mountains are immutable and symbolize the unchanging self-nature, whereas their colours (blue and yellow) change and symbolize appearance, i.e. the phenomenal. Ta Mei's reply meant that his self-nature was the same and beyond time.

[14] If your mind wanders outside, it will follow the stream of birth and death.

[15] When the mind is free from passions, it is like a withered log which is indifferent to its surroundings and does not "grow" any more in spite of the spring, the season of the year in which trees begin to grow after lying dormant all winter. A mind free from delusion remains unchanged and indifferent to all changes in its surrounding and to those who hunt after it.

[16] Because his disciples clung to his saying: "Mind is Buddha," Ma Tsu said to them: "It is neither mind nor Buddha" so that they ceased to cling, which was the cause of their delusion.

[17] Ta Mei means "Big Plum". Ma Tsu confirmed that master Ta Mei was ripe, i.e. enlightened.

[18] Quotation from Yung Chia's "Song of Enlightenment". Avici is the last and deepest of the eight hot hells, where sinners suffer, die, and are instantly reborn to suffering, without interruption. Ksana is the shortest measure of time, as kalpa is the longest.

[19] The instant one perceives only stillness and experiences liveliness; it is called in Ch'an parlance "reaching the top of a hundred-foot pole." All masters advised their disciples not to abide in this state which was not real. Master Han Shan composed "The Song of the Board-bearer" to warn his followers against "silent immersion in stagnant water." This state is called "life" and is the fourth of the four signs (laksana) mentioned in the Diamond Sutra. (See Part 3.)

[20] Karmadana: the duty-distributor, second in command of a monastery.

[21] After a meditation, the monks used to march quickly in single file to relax their legs, preceded by the Karmadana and followed by the abbot.

[22] Realm of the five skandhas: the present world as the state of the five aggregates. The best place in which to hold the hua t'ou is between the pit of the stomach and the navel. A meditator may have all kinds of visions before his attainment of enlightenment, and these visions belong to the realm of the five skandhas, i.e. are creations of his mind. His master would instruct him to remain indifferent, to neither "accept" nor "reject" these visions which will disappear before the meditator makes further progress in the right direction.

[23] To go straight home. A Ch'an idiom meaning the return to the self-nature, i.e. realization of the real. "Home" is our self-natured Buddha.

[24] Baggage: our body, mind and all the seeming which we hold dear.

[25] That which has no birth and death, i.e. the eternal self-nature.

[26] Vinaya-pitaka. One of the three divisions of the canon or Tripitaka. It emphasizes the discipline. The other two divisions are: sutras (sermons) and sastras (treatises).

[27] The two forms of Karma resulting from one's past are: (1) the resultant person, symbolized by a hair, and (2) the dependent condition or environment, e.g. country, family, possessions, etc., symbolized by the ocean. These two forms being illusory only, they penetrate each other without changing the self-nature, or the nature-ocean (see note 28) which is beyond time and space.

[28] Nature-ocean. The ocean of the Bhutatathata, the all-containing, immaterial nature of the Dharmakaya.

[29] The appearance of a Buddha is as rare as the hitting of a needle's point with a fine mustard-seed thrown from a devaloka. Even an accurate hit does not move the immutable needle's point.

[30] Saiksa, need of study; asaiksa, no longer learning, beyond study, the state of arhatship, the fourth of the sravaka stages; the preceding three stages requiring study. When the arhat is free from all illusion, he has nothing more to study.

[31] Dignity in walking, standing, sitting and lying.

[32] A Commentary on the Diamond Sutra by Tao Yin of the Ch'ing Lung monastery.

[33] Tien hsin, pastry, snack; refreshment to keep up one's spirits.

[34] Lung T'an was an enlightened master. The sentence: "You have really arrived at the Dragon Pond" means: "You have really attained the state of Lung T'an or enlightenment for the real is invisible and does not appear before the eyes of the unenlightened." Teh Shan did not understand its meaning and remained speechless. This was the second time he remained speechless, the first being when the old woman asked him about the past, present and future mind. He was still unenlightened but became later an eminent Ch'an master after his awakening.

[35] Lung T'an was an eminent master and knew the moment was ripe to enlighten Teh Shan. The latter perceived the master's self-nature through its function which blew out the torch. At the same time, Teh Shan perceived also that which "saw" the torch blown out, i.e. his own nature.

[36] Old monks all over the country: a Chinese idiom referring to eminent Ch'an masters who were intransigent and exacting when teaching and guiding their disciples. Readers may learn about these masters by studying their sayings which seem ambiguous but are full of deep meaning.

[37] A fellow who was awe-inspiring like the two hells where there are hills of swords or sword-leaf trees and blood baths as punishments for sinners. Lung T'an foretold the severity with which Teh Shan would receive, teach and train his disciples. Those wishing to familiarize themselves with these awe-inspiring things should read Dr. W. Y. Evans-Wentz's *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* (Oxford University Press).

[38] Ch'an masters frequently used their staffs to strike their disciples to provoke their awakening. The stroke of the staff here referred to Teh Shan's enlightenment after "seeing" the torch blown out by his master. Teh Shan did not turn his head, because he was really enlightened and did not have any more doubt about his self-nature.

[39] Will be an outstanding Ch'an master.

[40] This walk from east to west and then from west to east meant the "coming" and "going" which were non-existent in the Dharmadhatu wherein the Dharmakaya remained immutable and unchanging. Teh Shan's question: "Anything? Anything?" and the reply: "Nothing, Nothing," served to emphasize the nothingness in space.

[41] Nisidana, a cloth for sitting on.

[42] Upadhyaya, a general term for a monk.

[43] The duster used by the ancients consisted of long horse hairs attached to the end of its handle. It was used to reveal the function of the self-nature.

[44] The shout was to reveal that which uttered it, i.e. the self-nature.

[45] Teh Shan took out and raised his nisidana, calling: "Venerable Upadhyaya" to show the function of that which took out and raised the nisidana and called Kuei Shan. When the latter was about to take the duster to test the visitor's enlightenment, Teh Shan shouted just to indicate the presence of the substance of that which called on the host. Teh Shan left the hall and went away to show the return of function to the substance. Thus Teh

Shan's enlightenment was complete, because both function and substance, or Prajna and Samidhi were on a level. Therefore, he did not require any further instruction and any test of his attainment would be superfluous. For this reason, Kuei Shan praised the visitor, saying: "That man will later go to some solitary peak... will scold Buddhas and Patriarchs."

[46] Teh Shan would "scold" unreal Buddhas and "curse" unreal Patriarchs who existed only in the impure minds of deluded disciples, for the latter's conditioned and discriminating minds could create only impure Buddhas and impure Patriarchs. Teh Shan's teaching was based only on the absolute Prajna which had no room for worldly feelings and discernings, the causes of birth and death.

[47] Lin Chi was the founder of the Lin Chi Sect, one of the five Ch'an Sects of China.

[48] Yun Men and Fa Yen were respective founders of the Yun Men and Fa Yen Sects, two of the five Ch'an Sects in China.

[49] If while sitting in meditation one only takes delight in false visions or in the wrong interpretation of sutras and sayings, one will never attain the real.

[50] The strongest or sharpest precious sword.

[51] i.e. false visions of demons and Buddhas in one's meditation.

[52] Beginners usually see the voidness and brightness as soon as all thoughts are discarded. Although these visions indicate some progress in the training, they should not be taken as achievements. The meditator should remain indifferent to them as they are only the creation of the deluded mind and should hold firm the hua t'ou.

[53] Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch.

[54] World of desire, world of form and formless world.

[55] The five desires arising from the objects of the five senses, things seen, heard, smelt, tasted and touched.

[56] The three poisons are: concupiscence or wrong desire, hatred or resentment, and stupidity.

[57] i.e. neutral, neither good nor bad, things that are innocent or cannot be classified under moral categories.

[58] i.e. when the sixth consciousness is independent of the first five.

[59] Note deleted

[60] Chang and Li are the Chinese equivalents of Smith and Brown. [Editor of the web edition: Two popular family names.]

[61] In his meditation, the master had already discarded all thoughts and upon hearing the song, he instantly perceived that which heard the song, i.e. the self-nature. This is called Avalokitesvara's complete enlightenment by means of hearing, or the successful turning inward of the faculty of hearing to hear the self-nature.--Cf. Surangama Sutra.

[62] Bean-curd is made of soy-bean and is very cheap, so that only poor people make it for sale. For this reason, they are never satisfied with their lot and always want to do something more profitable.

[63] The mind which is bent on the right way, which seeks enlightenment.

[64] Agantu-klesa in Sanskrit, the foreign atom, or intruding element, which enters the mind and causes distress and delusion. The mind will be pure only after the evil element has been removed.

- [65] Water is the symbol of self-nature and mud of ignorance caused by passions.
- [66] A state of empty stillness in which all thoughts have ceased to arise and Prajna is not yet attained.
- [67] In contrast with a Bodhisattva who seeks self-enlightenment to enlighten the multitude.
- [68] A statesman of the Sung dynasty, through whom Yuch Fei, a good commander, was executed; he is universally execrated for this and his name is now synonymous with traitor.
- [69] Hsia Men, Amoy, a town on the south coast of Fukien province.
- [70] To lead the spirit of the deceased to the Pure Land.
- [71] Water is the symbol of self-nature and the moon of enlightenment.
- [72] Lit. cost of the dumplings.
- [73] Nidina or cause of pollution, which connects illusion with the karmic miseries of reincarnation.
- [74] Good karma which leads to enlightenment.
- [75] Accumulation of merits leading to realization of the truth.
- [76] Smrti in Sanskrit.
- [77] Quotation from a hymn chanted by the Sixth Patriarch-(Cf. Altar Sutra, Chapter II).
- [78] Joy on seeing others rescued from suffering.
- [79] Rising above these emotions, or giving up all things, e.g. distinctions of friend and foe, love and hatred, etc.
- [80] The Six Paramitas are: dana (charity), sila (discipline), ksanti (patience or endurance), virya (zeal and progress), dhyana (meditation) and prajna (wisdom).
- [81] Lotus treasury: Lotus store, or Lotus world, the Pure Land of all Buddhas in their Sambhogakaya, or Reward bodies.
- [82] In plain English the question means: Who is the man who has no more attachments to things, or the phenomenal?
- [83] In Shih T'ou's move, P'ang Yun perceived that which stretched out the hand to close his mouth and became awakened to the self-nature which was invisible and manifested itself by means of its function.
- [84] After enlightenment one attends to one's daily task as usual, the only difference being that the mind no longer discriminates and harmonizes with its surroundings.
- [85] Mind is now free from all conceptions of duality.
- [86] The blue mountain symbolizes that which is immutable and free from dust, or impurities. A misprint occurs in the printed text, so I have followed the ancient version of the story of Upasaka P'ang Yun.
- [87] Carrying water and fetching wood are the functions of that which possesses supernatural powers and accomplishes wonderful works; in other words, the self-nature which is immaterial and invisible, can be perceived only by means of its functions which are no longer discriminative.

[88] He did not join the Sangha order.

[89] The one who has no more attachment to worldly things is the enlightened self-nature which is beyond description. Ma Tsu gave this reply, because when one attains enlightenment, his body or substance pervades everywhere and contains everything, including the West River which is likened to a speck of dust inside the immense universe; he knows everything and does not require any description of himself.--A misprint in the text has been corrected.

[90] The Patriarchs' doctrine was very profound and was as difficult to teach as the unpacking and distributing of sesame seeds on the top of a tree, an impossible thing for an unenlightened man.

[91] In order to wipe out the conception of difficulty, the wife said the doctrine was easy to expound for even the dewdrops on blades of grass were used by eminent masters to give the direct indication of that which saw these dewdrops. This was only easy for enlightened people.

[92] If it is said that the doctrine is difficult to understand, no one will try to learn it. If it is said that it is easy to understand, people will take it as easy and never attain the truth. So the daughter took the middle way by saying that it was neither difficult nor easy. Her idea was that one who is free from discrimination and who eats when hungry and sleeps when tired, is precisely the one meant by eminent masters. Therefore, the doctrine is not difficult for an enlightened man and not easy for an unenlightened man, thus wiping out the two extremes which have no room in the absolute.

[93] This sentence is omitted in the Chinese text and is added here to be in accord with Master Hsu Yun's lecture.

[94] All Ch'an masters had compassion for unenlightened people and never missed a chance to enlighten them. Yo Shan sent ten Ch'an monks to accompany the eminent visitor to the front of the monastery so that they could learn something from him. Out of pity, the Upasaka said: "Good snow! The flakes do not fall elsewhere!", to probe the ability of the monks and to press them hard so that they could realize their self-minds for the attainment of Buddhahood. However, the monks seemed ignorant and did not realize that since the mind created the snow, the snow could not fall outside the mind. If they could only perceive *that which* slapped the unenlightened monk in the face, they would realize their self-nature. A serious monk would, under the circumstances, devote all his attention to inquiring into the unreasonable conduct of the visitor and would at least make some progress in his training.

[95] i.e. free from external impurities.

[96] The daughter seemed at first to criticize her father and then repeated the same sentence to confirm what he had said. Similar questions and answers are found frequently in Ch'an texts where Ch'an masters wanted to probe their disciples' abilities by first criticizing what they said. Any hesitation on the part of the disciples would disclose that they only repeated others' sayings without comprehending them. This was like a trap set to catch unenlightened disciples who claimed that they had realized the truth. When a disciple was really enlightened, he would remain undisturbed and would ask back the question. When the master was satisfied that the disciple's understanding was genuine, he would simply repeat the same sentence to give more emphasis to what the disciple had said.

[97] i.e. eclipse of the sun.

[98] Existence and non-existence are two extremes which should be wiped out before one can attain the absolute reality.

[99] i.e. to be reborn in the human world. The realm of human beings is difficult of attainment; it is one of suffering and is the most suitable for self-cultivation, for human beings have more chance to study the Dharma in order to get rid of their miseries. The other five worlds of existence either enjoy too much happiness (devas and asuras) or endure too much suffering (animals, hungry ghosts and hells), thus having no chance to learn the Dharma.



[100] The Sutra of Contemplation of Mind says: "Like a handless man who cannot acquire anything in spite of his arrival at the precious mountain, one who is deprived of the 'hand' of Faith, will not acquire anything even if he finds the Triple Gem."

[101] The nine Patriarchs of the T'ien T'ai sect are: (1) Nagarjuna, (2) Hui Wen of the Pei Ch'i dynasty, (3) Hui Ssu of Nan Yo, (4) Chih Che, or Chih I, (5) Kuan Ting of Chang An, (6) Fa Hua, (7) T'ien Kung, (8) Tso Ch'i and (9) Chan Jan of Ching Ch'i. The 10th, Tao Sui was considered a patriarch in Japan, because he was the teacher of (the Japanese) Dengyo Daishi who brought the Tendai system to that country in the ninth century. The T'ien T'ai (or Tendai in Japanese) Sect bases its tenets on the Lotus, Mahaparinirvina and Mahaprajnaparamita Sutras. It maintains the identity of the Absolute and the world of phenomena, and attempts to unlock the secrets of all phenomena by means of meditation.

[102] The 12th and 14th Patriarchs of the Ch'an sect respectively. Readers will notice that these two Patriarchs and many other Ch'an masters were not sectarian and extolled also the Pure Land School which was also a Dharma door expounded by the Buddha.

[103] Hui Yuan was an eminent master of the Pure Land Sect.

[104] Chen Yen Tsung, also called "True Word" Sect, or Shingon in Japanese. The founding of this Sect is attributed to Vairocana, through Bodhisattva Vajrasattva, then through Nigarjuna to Vajramati and to Amoghavajra.

[105] The Dharmalakšana Sect is called Fa Hsiang in Chinese and Hosso in Japanese. This school was established in China on the return of Hsuan Tsang, consequent on his translation of the Yogacarya works. Its aim is to understand the principle underlying the nature and characteristics of all things.

[106] Maleficent beings.

[107] The immortals practice Taoism and sit in meditation with crossed legs. Their aim is to achieve immortality by putting an end to all passions, but they still cling to the view of the reality of ego and things. They live in caves or on the tops of mountains and possess the art of becoming invisible. A Chinese bhiksu who is a friend of mine, went to North China when he was still young. Hearing of an immortal there, he tried to locate him. After several unsuccessful attempts, he succeeded finally in meeting him. Kneeling upon his knees, my friend implored the immortal to give him instruction. The latter, however, refused saying that the visitor was not of his line, i.e. Taoism. When the young man got up and raised his head, the immortal had disappeared and only a small sheet of paper was seen on the table with the word "Good-bye" on it.

[108] According to the ancients, the six viscera are: heart, lungs, liver, kidney, stomach and gall-bladder.

[109] Pubic region, two and a half inches below the navel, on which concentration is fixed in Taoist meditation.

[110] The digit 8 in 80,000 symbolizes the 8th Consciousness (Vijnana) which is an aspect of the self-nature under delusion. The sentence means that Lu Tung Pin was still unenlightened in spite of his long life.

[111] The grain of corn is created by the mind and reveals the mind which is immense and contains the whole Universe, also a creation of the mind. Being hard pressed, Lu Tung Pin instantly realized his self-mind and was awakened to the real.

[112] In ancient times, Taoists in China claimed to be able to "extract quicksilver by smelting cinnabar", i.e. they knew the method which enabled them to become immortals, or Rsis, in Sanskrit, whose existence was mentioned by the Buddha in the Surangama Sutra. Their meditation aimed at the production of a hot current pervading all parts of the body and successful meditators could send out their spirits to distant places. They differed from Buddhists in that they held the conception of the reality of ego and of dharmas, and could not attain complete enlightenment. They used to wander in remote places, equipped with a gourd, a guitar and a "divine" sword to protect themselves against demons. Today, adherents of the Taoist Sect are still found in great number in the Far East.

[113] Tzu Yang was an eminent Taoist who was well-versed in the Ch'an Dharma and his works attested his realization of the mind. Emperor Yung Cheng considered him a real Ch'an Buddhist and published his works in "The Imperial Selection of Ch'an Sayings".

[114] An evil karma which causes the sinner to be reborn in the Avici hell. Lit: committing the Avici-karma.

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Proceed to **Week Two of Hsu Yun's Daily Lectures**