

BODHI BULLETIN

DHARMA NEWS FROM BODHI MONASTERY • JULY/AUG 2004

News Briefs

IMPORTANT:


- The monastery will be closed to the public from July 10th-16th during the Dharma Retreat
- There will be no English lectures on Sat., July 17th

Inspirations from the Natural World

(Part I)

(A discourse given by Ven. Master Jen-Chun at Bodhi Monastery, January 10, 2004)


Today my talk will revolve around four natural phenomena: the sun, space, the ocean, and the mountain peaks. If we are inspired by these four great phenomena of the natural world, we can make the great resolve to acquire the right view that functions effectively within the world and the penetrating vision that transcends the world.

 **The Sun.** “With high spirits, welcome the glorious morning sun. With the light shining through the dark shadows, our eyes open wide and see clearly.” When we get up early in the morning, we feel a pure energy running through us, invigorating us and filling us with vitality. Most of us have dark shadows or blind spots either within us or around us. Therefore, if we can see the sunlight of the Dharma, we will be able to rise up from the dark places in our life and obtain a clear, open vision of everything.

“The Buddha, Offspring of the Sun, awakened and transcended the world.” The Buddha Shakyamuni, like all the other Buddhas, was called the “Offspring of the Sun.” If we can learn from the “Offspring of the Sun,” we will be able to transcend mundane, worldly affairs. Like the sun, the Buddha was so bright that he could shine through everything. His enlightenment goes beyond the mundane world and can enlighten everyone. However, though the Buddha was the Offspring of the Sun, born into the so-called Solar Race, he was not the least bit arrogant or conceited. He always had the most humble attitude.

In the Mahayana scriptures, the Buddha is described as the foremost in brilliance. This means that he is the foremost in conduct. His conduct is most majestic and sublime. There are no inconsistencies between the Buddha’s mental conduct and his bodily and verbal conduct. His mental conduct is most pure. His appearance is most pure. His physical appearance, all his bodily features, manifest his pure state of mind. So he is able to devote his entire life to all sentient beings, and he has the greatest aspiration, the greatest resolve to work for the benefit of everybody. His virtue is the greatest, for it does not center around the self. Because he was able to abandon the self, the ego, he was able to devote himself to delivering all sentient beings from suffering.

“Learn transcendence; with backbones straight, we offer ourselves to the world and obliterate the danger of defilements.” Whether we are monastics or lay persons, we should learn from the Buddha. With this kind of spirit to deliver yourself, when you follow the spirit of the Buddha, you will be able to return to the world and devote yourself purely to the benefit of all sentient beings. All your actions, speech, and mental activities will be consistent with this spirit, and you will be able to totally remove all the terrors of the world.

 **Space.** “Space is a grand opening that is endlessly vast.” The space that we are familiar with is only a small portion of space in its entirety. The greatest space of the world is boundless, vast beyond description.

“With steady footsteps, he marches straightforward into the state of the foremost in meaning.” What is “the state of the foremost in meaning”? It is all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas. They are permanent and not subject to change. Because they are permanent and not subject to change, for them there is no birth, aging, illness, and death. What does this

(continued on back)

Ven. Zu-Lian Fa-shi to Give Lecture on July 24th

Ven. Zu-Lian (Fa Jing), who will be joining the Dharma Retreat this year, will be staying on until late July. He will be giving the Saturday afternoon Dharma talk on July 24th at 12:40 pm. Originally from Singapore, Ven. Zu-Lian was ordained in 1993 and studied in Taiwan at the Fu Yan Buddhist Institute for nine years. He is presently a lecturer at Fu Yan and at Yi Tong Buddhist Institute for Nuns. His lecture will be in English.

Ven. Hui-Yong Given Residency

On June 9, the Bodhi Monastery Sangha admitted the American monk Ven. Hui-Yong to full residential status at the monastery. Ven. Hui-Yong, originally from Texas, was ordained as a novice-monk in Taiwan in 1997 and received higher ordination at Bodh Gaya in India later in the same year. He came to Bodhi Monastery in late January of this year and has been extremely helpful in many ways, especially through his extensive practical skills.

“Exploring the Word of the Buddha” to Resume August 10th

Bhante’s Sutta Study classes usually held every Tuesday evening between 7 pm and 8:30 pm are cancelled from June 29th through August 3rd. We will resume class on August 10th studying within the section, the Training of the Mind. Please review Sutta No. 8 (The Discourse on Effacement) of the Majjhima Nikaya before class.

Youth Dharma Program to Resume in September

These Dharma classes for children between ages 4 and 13 years old usually take place between 9:50 and 11:00 am on specifically scheduled Saturdays and will resume in September. For more information, e-mail Duke at dukede-groat@nac.net or call 862 266 6122.

Inspirations *(continued from front)*

mean? If people maintain the five precepts well, they will be reborn in heaven. However, that kind of rebirth in heaven is tainted. One day, they will lose such merit and will fall down from heaven. However, the attainments of the Buddhas and great bodhisattvas is taintless. They have true brightness, true liberation, and true excellence, and they realize truth without ever falling away from their realization. Because such attainment and realization is not subject to change, this realization transcends the mundane, transcends all phenomena tied up with birth, aging, illness, and death. The great parinirvana attained by the Buddha and the bodhisattvas is not subject to birth, not subject to aging, not subject to illness and death. Therefore, it is called the "taintless attainment." It will never again be touched by affliction and suffering. The Buddha Shakyamuni realized such truth and the truth he realized is so universally true in the world today that we say it is without birth, aging, illness, or death.

"Only when the ground has frozen over and the air is chilling cold can the seed germinate in the barren field." Venerable Master Yin Shun once said that we must have the spirit of a person who is willing to spread the seed in the most barren climate, in chilling cold and on frozen ground. We need to have such spirit and to spread the seed of the Dharma wherever we are. Why is that? If we vow to practice the bodhisattva way among people of good predispositions and under favorable conditions, then when we meet such conditions we will feel satisfied and not want to move forward. When the situation is bad, we will feel frustrated and want to give up the practice. So the seed of the Buddha's Dharma needs to be spread no matter what kind of climate we are in, no matter what our conditions might be. Whether the climate is extremely cold or extremely hot, we must unrelentingly spread the Buddha's Dharma.

"With resilience, we take up our responsibility with humility, humbled by our own inadequacies." We Buddhist followers need to accept responsibility for spreading the Buddha's Dharma both by our own practice and by benefiting others. We need to arouse a great sense of shame and moral dread so that we will not waste our lives. I am warning you here, everyone: if you waste your time, you will never be able to see the Buddha. As I have said again and again, we need to make the great resolve to wholeheartedly devote ourselves to the practice of the six paramitas in order to deliver the sentient beings of the six realms from suffering. Please pay careful attention to this.

(Part II, on The Ocean and The Mountain Peak, will appear in a future bulletin)

Lectures in Chinese Based on Master Yin-Shun's Teachings

Thank You to S.C. Lu

Since May 3rd, Mr. S.C. Lu, a lay Buddhist teacher from Taiwan, has been staying at the Bodhi Monastery and giving regular Saturday lectures. His lectures have covered various topics in Humanistic Buddhism and Buddhist doctrine and he has also been leading a discussion group on Master Yin-Shun's essay *The Timeless Truth with a Timely Approach – Humanistic Buddhism*. While here, on weekdays, he has also given talks to other Buddhist groups in the New Jersey-New York area. He will participate in the first two days of the Dharma Retreat, but must leave for Taiwan on July 12th. We thank him for his methodical lectures, which

have been greatly appreciated by the Chinese-speaking community.

C.C. Chuang to Arrive Soon

Mr. C.C. Chuang, the lay Buddhist teacher from Taiwan, will be arriving at Bodhi Monastery in early July and will stay at the monastery until the end of August. While here, he will resume the course of lectures he began last year on Master Yin-Shun's monumental work, *The Origins and Early Development of Mahayana Buddhism in India*. The lectures (in Chinese only) will be held on Saturdays, from 1:45 pm until 2:45 pm, beginning July 17th and ending August 28th.

July/August Dharma Schedule

IMPORTANT SCHEDULE UPDATES:

- The monastery will be closed to the public from July 10th–16th during the Dharma Retreat
- There will be no English lectures on Sat., July 17th
- Lectures (in Chinese) by C.C. Chuang on Saturdays, July 17th – August 28th, 1:45 pm – 2:45 pm
- Bhante's Sutta Study Classes cancelled between June 29th and August 3rd
- Youth Dharma Program to resume in September.

SATURDAYS:

9:50 - 10:40 am	Dharma discourse by Ven. Jen-Chun
10:45 - 11:15 pm	Work period
11:15 - 12:15 pm	Lunch and cleanup
12:40 - 1:30 pm	Dharma discourse by Ven. Bodhi, Ven. Xin-Xing or guest lecturer
1:45 - 2:35 pm	Dharma discussion (in English)
1:45 - 2:45 pm (July 17 - Aug. 28)	C.C. Chuang Lecture Series (in Chinese)
2:45 - 4:45 pm	Pali class

FIRST SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH:

9:50 - 10:30 am	Dharma discourse by Ven. Jen-Chun
10:40 - 11:10 pm	Devotional Service

(The rest of the schedule follows as above.)

SUNDAYS:

9:00 - 9:30 am (First Sunday of month)	Beginners instruction in meditation each month
9:30 - 11:00 am (Every Sunday)	Meditation Group guided by Bhante
10:00 - 11:30 am (dates to be determined)	Ven. Jen-Chun Dharma Talk at Ch'an Center

WEEKDAYS:

Tuesdays, 9:50 - 10:50 am and 1 - 2 pm	Madhyamaka Philosophy with Ven. Jen-Chun (in Chinese)
Tuesdays,* 7 - 8 pm	Sutta Study Class with Ven. Bhikkhu
*Resumes Aug. 10th	Bodhi (in English)

DAILY:

4:30 - 5 pm	Chanting Liturgy
5:05 - 6 pm	Sitting meditation

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Please contact us for more information on any of our programs: 973 940 0473 or info@bodhimonastery.net

