



MONTHLY GUIDE



International Buddhist Meditation Center

September 2009

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Buddhist Studies International - Los Angeles

Fall Classes 2009

IBMC Fall Classes will start Monday September 6
Enrollment begins August 23, and continues through
the first week of classes.

For more information please see the BSI - Los Angeles
web site at:

<http://bsila.tripod.com>

Mon. 7 PM - Tibetan Buddhism - Palmo Ling Nun- nery - Bhikshuni Kelsang Chitta Karuna

Practice in the major form of meditation in Tibetan
Buddhism from the Gelug tradition, including mantras
and visualizations along with the study of Tibetan medi-
ation texts. Students are required to attend scheduled
retreats

Tue. 7 PM - English Conversation - Palmo Ling Nun- nery. Bhikshuni Chitta Karuna

Basic English conversation practice, including some
reading comprehension

Wed. 7:30 PM - Everyday Buddhism - Zendo Ven. Kusala Bhikshu

Buddhist approaches to everyday situations and problems.
This class involves discussion and finding methods for im-
proving relationships at work, home, and as a member of
society. Also learning how to engage in resolution of conflict
situations without anger or violence. Learning to change
personal attitudes to promote internal balance and harmony;
developing skills of compassion, loving kindness, equanim-
ity, and sympathetic joy, to promote a realistic understanding
of self and others.

Thur. 7PM - Jataka Tales - Palmo Ling Nunnery - Ven Havanpola Shanti

Traditional Jataka Stories - the Bodhisattva Sadarthas'
journey to Buddhahood - told in the time honored style
of the Elders.

Visit to Thien-An's Crypt

We welcome your presence at our annual visit
to the crypt of Venerable Dr. Thich Thien-An.
This year's visit will take place on Saturday, Sep-
tember 12th. We will leave the Center at 1:30
and return by

4 pm. Ride
with Ven.
Karuna or
caravan - we
will gather at
IBMC in
front of the
Zendo at
1PM



Founders' Day Luncheon

Each year we mark the founding of IBMC with
a celebration of Venerable Thien-An's birthday.
This year, it will occur on September 13th at
12:30 pm following Sunday service. Please join
us - and bring drinks or vegetarian food to
share.

6 Month Fundraising Drive !

Keep the Dharma flowing from the halls of IBMC!
You can help IBMC by becoming a monthly supporter.
All pledges of a 6 month commitment will receive one
of the Dharma gifts listed below, after the second do-
nation. All donators will receive a lovely gift at years
end!

\$150+ Monthly Donation...Buddha Statue

\$100 Monthly Donation.....Singing Bowl

\$50 Monthly Donation.....Gold Buddha Pendant

\$25 Monthly Donation.....Temple Hand Bell

Remember all donations are tax deductible.

The Three Yanas

In this, the second installment of the “Three Yana” series, we will continue to share with you the history and teachings of the three schools of Buddhist thought. This month's focus is on the Mahayana. IBMC is unique in that we house teachers from all three schools of Buddhism. IBMC offers meditation, instruction and guidance from all three traditions, from westerners - from a western point of view - while also keeping the original traditions of all three schools alive in our hearts and minds. IBMC offers training in the Monastic path as well as in the path of the householder. Please join us each Sunday morning for our Dharma talks and during the week for classes in meditation, Sutra study, and group practice. All class and meditation times can be found on the back page of this Guide.

See You Along the Path....

Mahayana Buddhism

The Mahayana is more of an umbrella body for a great variety of schools, including the Pure Land sect, whose essential teaching is that salvation can be attained only through absolute trust in the saving power of Amitabha, longing to be reborn in his paradise through his grace. It is generally accepted that what we know today as the Mahayana arose from the Mahasanghikas sect who were the earliest forerunners of the Mahayana. They took up the cause of their new sect with zeal and enthusiasm and in a few decades grew remarkably in power and popularity. They adapted the existing monastic rules and thus revolutionized the Buddhist Order of Monks. Moreover, they made alterations in the arrangements and interpretation of the Sutra (Discourses) and the Vinaya (Rules) texts. And they rejected certain portions of the canon, which had been accepted in the First Council. The ideal of the Mahayana school is that of the Bodhisattva, a person who delays his or her own enlightenment in order to compassionately assist all other beings and ultimately attains to the highest Bodhi.

Chinese Buddhism

Buddhism had been transmitted to China during the Ch'in and Han Dynasties some five hundred years after the Parinirvana of Sakyamuni Buddha. Buddhism in China had risen and fallen according to the law of constant changes during those past two thousand years. Buddhism, when introduced into the well

-cultured land of China, flourished abundantly and developed fruitfully.

The golden age of Chinese Buddhism was from the age of Three Kingdoms to the T'ang Dynasty. During this period the various Schools in Buddhism evolved their irrefragable and infallible theories based on the doctrine of Sakyamuni Buddha. Historically speaking the rise and fall of the various schools were closely connected to the evolution of cultural thoughts and current events in China.

Now we will take a brief look at the ten schools of Chinese Buddhism:

The Ten Schools of Chinese Buddhism:

1. Kosa School: The foundation text is the *Abhidharma-kosa-sastra* by Vasubandhu. The Sastra was translated and introduced to China from India by Shuan-chuang. His disciples Yu-kuang and Fa-pau who wrote these and other commentaries on the Sastra propagated this school. The Sastra classifies all phenomena of the cosmos under seventy-five categories. A student of this school learns the way of liberating one-self from the passions and attains subsequent annihilation of suffering. He bases his learning on the Four Noble Truths: 1. Suffering. 2. Cause of suffering. 3. Cessation of Suffering. 4. The Noble Eightfold Path. This school teaches Theravadan Buddhism. It was popular in China during the T'ang Dynasty only. Modern Chinese scholars of this school are the late Ven. Fa-fang and Mr. Chang-si-shen.

2. Satyiddhi School: Based upon the *Satyasiddhi Sastra* by Harivarman (4th century A.D.) translated into Chinese by Kumarajiva (5th century). This School flourished during the Six-Dynasty and T'ang Dynasty (5th & 6th century). It teaches one to look upon the cosmos in realms: the worldly realm and the supreme realm. A student is to meditate on the unreality of self and the unreality of things in order to enter Nirvana.

3. Three Sastra School: Based its tenets on the *Madhyamika Sastra*, *Dvadasanikaya Sastra* by Nagarjuna and the *Sata Sastra* by Aryadeva. These three Sastras were translated by Kumarajiva (5th century). It teaches one to dispose of the Eight Misleading Ideas (birth, death, end, permanence, identity, difference, coming, and going) and establish correct thinking. One will discover the truth between the relative sense and the absolute sense, for the truth lies between them. Rev. Yin-sun propagates this school, and has published a modern commentary on the Madhyamika.

4. The Lotus School: It is also called the T'ien-t'ai school. This name is attributed to the Tien-tai Mountain in Che-chiang Province. The school was founded by Chih-che during the Sui Dynasty (6th century). The chief text is the *Lotus Sutra* (the Law-flower Sutra). Others are the Commentary on the *Prajnaparamita Sutra*, the *Mahaparinirvana Sutra*, etc. This school divides each of the ten realms of existence (hells, ghosts, animals, asuras, men, devas, sravakas, pratyeka-buddhas, bodhisattvas, and Buddhas) into ten divisions and each division has ten qualities making a total of one thousand qualities. These qualities are further multiplied by three (past, present, and future) making a total of three thousand qualities. This school teaches one to visualize these three thousand qualities in an

instant. The hundred divisions of realms and the thousand qualities form the sphere of visualization. It teaches one to rest the physical body in three aspects and to gain a clear insight into truth from three views. Chih-che also divided the gospel of Buddha into five periods and the doctrine into eight kinds. The late Ven. T'isien and Shing-ch'e propagate this school.

5. Vatamsaka School: Founded by Tu-shun in the T'ang Dynasty (7th century). The foundation work is the *Garland Sutra*. This school was expanded by Chih-yien, Fa-chang, Ch'en-kuan, Chung-mi and other patriarchs. It treats Buddhism in five schools (Theravada, Proto-mahayana, Mahayana, the Intuitive, and the Perfect). These five are differentiated into ten schools of thoughts. It presents ten Metaphysical propositions and six characteristics of things for meditation. To meditate on the fundamental nature of the universe is the door to enlightenment. The theory is profound. It is said that one will not appreciate the richness in Buddhism until one has studied the *Garland Sutra*. The late Ven. Yue-shia founded the Hua-yen College in Shanghai. The Ven. Ying-ch'ih, Win-chow, Chi-shong are the modern expounders of this school.

6. The Intuitive School: Bodhidharma in the Liang Dynasty established it in China (6th century). This school does not rely on the use of letters. It points directly to the mind and sees into one's own nature. This special transmission outside the scripture was succeeded by Hui-k'o, Shen-ch'an, Tao-sin, Hong-jen, and Hui-neng, the 6th Patriarch. After the 6th Patriarch this school expanded into five and later seven schools. It has been very popular over a thousand years and causes most temples in China to acquire the name of Ch'an Temples. Ven. Shu-yun, the one hundred and twenty years old monk who passed away in 1959, could stay in meditation for ten to twenty days at one stretch. The Ven. Lai-kuo of Kau-wen Temple in Yang-chou, Chiang-su Province has attained identical level of achievement.

7. The Discipline School: Based on the monastic rules laid down by the Buddha. The rules have five divisions. Theravada and Mahayana have separate sets of monastic rules. These rules are the basic moral code of the Buddha. Tao-shuan promoted the Four-division Vinaya and founded this school in the T'ang Dynasty. He wrote several treatises and volumes of commentaries on the Vinaya. The essence of this school is to do good, and cease to do evil. One must follow strictly the code of ethics so as to free oneself from the ocean of misery and prepare oneself for Buddhahood. After Master Ling-chi of Sung Dynasty and Master Yuan-chau of Yuan Dynasty, this school was dormant in China for nearly seven hundred years until the revival of this school by the late Master Hong-it.

8. Esoteric School: Based on the *Vairocana Sutra*, the *Diamond Apex Sutra* and *Susiddhi Sutra*. This school was introduced to China during the T'ang Dynasty by Subhakarasiirha, Vajramati and Amogha. The fundamental concepts are the six elements (earth, water, fire, air, space, and cognition) and four magic circles (pagoda, jewel, lotus and sword), which symbolize the power of the Buddhas and the Bodhisauvas. One is to attain self-realization by the three mystic things of body (its posture and signs), mouth (its voice), and mind (meditation). (The mystic body is associated with earth, water and fire; the words from the mouth

with wind space; the mind with cognition). It maintains that there are two aspects of the cosmos: the phenomenal or material and the absolute or spiritual. After the T'ang Dynasty, it was de-based in China proper. It passed to Tibet and is known as the Tibetan Esoteric School. It also passed to Japan as the Shingon School. The ceremonies and services of this school are very complicated. One can hardly learn about it without a teacher.

9. Dharmalakšana School: The foundation works are the *Sandhi-nirmocana Sutra*, *Abhidharma Sutra*, *Yogacaryabhumi Sutra*, and the *Vijnaptimatrasiddhi Sastra*. This school aims at studying the nature in relation to the phenomenal expression of the cosmic existence. It was advocated by Maitreya and succeeded by Asang, Vasubandhu, Dharmaplala and Silabhadre in India. Shuan-chuang studied this school from Silabhadre at Nalanda Monastery. On his return to China, he translated many sutras and Sastras in the Ch'e-en Temple built by the T'ang Emperor. There were several thousand people including government officials engaged in translating the Buddhist Scriptures into Chinese and thus Shuan-chuang was helped to established this school in China. Wuei-chi, Hui-chau, and Chih-chou succeeded him. It maintains that the three planes of existence are merely the manifestation of the conscious mind and that all phenomena are the reflection of the sub-conscious mind. This mind-evolution teaching is a profound philosophy and it is radical in the modern Buddhist thoughts among the Chinese. In order to grasp the gist, one has to spend a considerable amount of time in solid research. The late Ven. Me-an, Tau-kie, Yuen-ying and Hui-ch'uang, Yan-wen-san of Fu-chien Province especially the Ven. Vai-she were the modern exponents of this school. There are many notable successors such as the Ven. Ch'ang-sing, Ou-ysngu of Nanking and Han-ching-ching of Peking.

10. The Pure-land School: Based on the *Sukhavati Vyuha Sutra*, the *Great Sukhavati Vyuha Sutra*, the *Small Sukhavati Vyuha Sutra*. This school was established by Hui-yuan of the Chin Dynasty (4th century). He set up the Lotus Society at Chiang-si Province. There were one hundred twenty-three distinguished members including the notable poets Vau-yen-ming and Liu-wei-min. This organization greatly incited the zeal of studying Buddhism among the Chinese. San-tau and Kuang-ming of T'ang Dynasty undertook to popularize this school and were succeeded in spreading it to almost every household. It teaches one to set the mind solely on Amitabha, to recite the holy name and to recite the holy name repeatedly, and one may gain salvation to the Pure-land of Amitabha. The method employed is simple thus it is suited to everyone who has faith in Amitabha, and who resolves to be reborn in the Pure land. The late Ven. Yin-kuang greatly promoted this school. He persuaded people to do good, at the same time, so merits may be brought to the Pure-land, the ideal final resort.

Next Month, we will continue our study of the Mahayana with the Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese schools.

September Events

10 AM - 108 Bows

10:30 AM - Meditation

11 AM - Sunday Dharma Talks

9/6 - Ven. Kusala Bhikshu

9/13 - Ven. Karuna Dharma

9/20 - Rev. K'shanti Karuna

9/27 - Ven. Havanpola Shanti

Special Events

September 12th. - 1:00 PM - Visit to Venerable Thich Thien-An's Crypt

**** Gather at IBMC ****

September 13th. - 12:30 Pm - Founders Day Lunch - Zendo Garden

Meditation Times

Friday: 7:30 PM Zendo - led by Ven. Kusala

Sunday: 10:30 AM & 7:30 PM Zendo - led by Ven. Kusala

IBMC Classes

Mon. 7 PM Tibetan Buddhism - Palmo Ling Nunnery - Bhikshuni Chitta Karuna

Tue. 7 PM English Conversation - Palmo Ling Nunnery. Bhikshuni Chitta Karuna

Wed. 7:30 PM Everyday Buddhism - Zendo Ven. Kusala Bhikshu

Thur. 7 PM Jataka Tales - Palmo Ling Nunnery Ven. Havanpola Shanti

IBMC eMail addresses

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www.ibmc.info

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www.urbandharma.org

http://palmoling.tripod.com

http://bsila.tripod.com

IBMC is Going Green!

IBMC now offers it's monthly newsletter online, delivered straight to your inbox, you can also read it in PDF form posted on our web site at www.ibmc.info If you would like to begin receiving our newsletter by email please go to our web site and click on the "newsletter" button at the bottom of the page. Our calendar and special events are also posted at www.ibmc.info

Prison Dharma, a column devoted IBMC's Prison Outreach Ministry.

Please remember to support the Prison Dharma Outreach program all monthly donations help us continue sending the dharma 'inside' and all donations are tax deductible. Make checks payable to IBMC and note in memo section 'Prison Dharma Ministry'

Dear Friends,

Thank you all, for the many donations received for the Prison Dharma Outreach Program. And for the 6 month fund raising drive.

Please remember to put a note in the memo section of your donations checks, as to which program you wish to support, so that all funds will go into the correct accounts.

Thank you again for all your support, every little bit helps to keep this wonderful work going.

"Never underestimate the power of small gifts"

May you have the blessings of the Triple Gem!

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