

Zen master Tanka Tennen (Dānxiá Tānrán)² burned a wooden statue of the Buddha. Although it seemed to be nothing but an evil deed, his deed was a means of showing the dharma. When we read the record of this master's deeds, we find that his sitting was always in accordance with the prescribed rules and while standing he always followed good manners. His manner was always courteous as if he were meeting a noble guest. Even when he sat for a short while, he sat cross legged and held his hands in the *shashu* position³. He protected temple property as though caring for his own eyes. He never failed to offer praise when he saw someone practicing diligently. Even if they were small, he appreciated good deeds. His own actions in his daily life were especially wonderful. His record remains as a mirror in Zen monasteries.

This applies not only to Zen Master Tanka Tennen but to all the various masters who have attained the Way, and to patriarchs who have clarified the Way and have been recognized as exemplars; all maintained the behavior prescribed by the precepts, conducted themselves with dignity, and appreciated even minor goodness. I have never heard of any master of the Way who disregarded goodness.

Therefore students, if you wish to follow the Way of the patriarchs, never make light of goodness. Purify your faith. All goodness gathers together where the Way of the buddhas and patriarchs is practiced. Once you have clarified that all dharmas (beings) are the buddha-dharma, you should know that evil is definitely evil and that it causes one to depart from the Way of the buddhas and patriarchs. Good is always good and connects with the