

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Lesson of the Sixth Patriarch's Platform Sutra



(Based on a **direct transcript** from the **recording** of the  
3<sup>rd</sup> Lesson of the Sixth Patriarch's Platform Sutra class  
[dated 12<sup>th</sup> July 2015]

Conducted by Bro. Teoh at Wu Pin Chin Seah,  
No. 4, Jalan 11/8, Petaling Jaya, Selangor)

For free distribution - to **non-Muslim** only

Donated by:

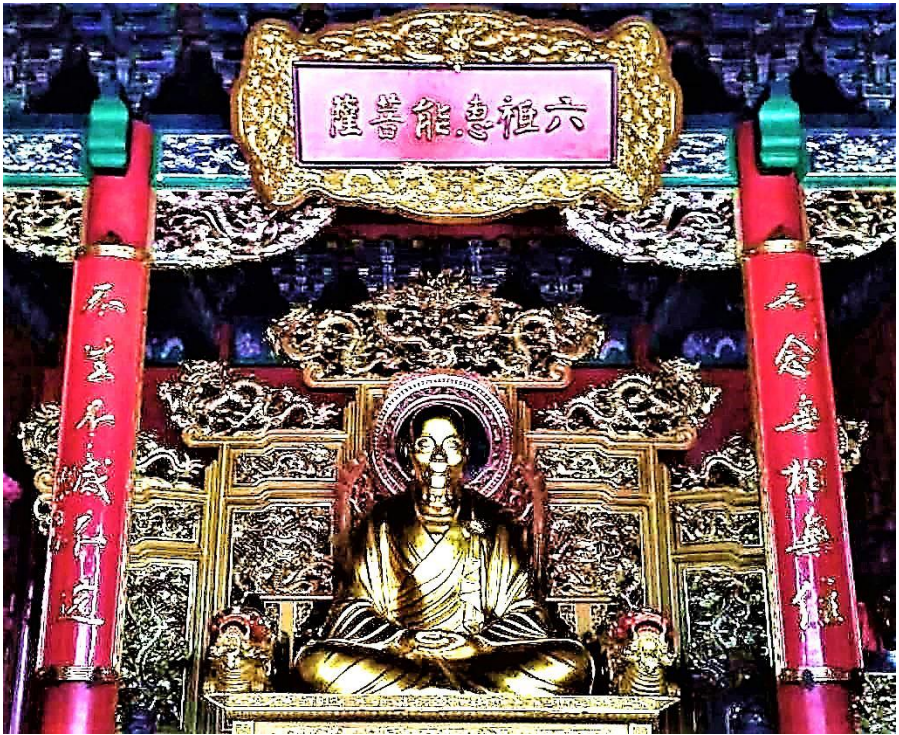
Kalyāṇamitta funds of Bro. Teoh Kian Koon

[teohkiankoon@hotmail.com](mailto:teohkiankoon@hotmail.com)

Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia.

Dated: 30.11.2017





**Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng Bodhisattva**

六祖惠能菩薩



## Contents

1. Preface.....	1
2. Acknowledgement .....	2
3. 3 <sup>rd</sup> Lesson of the 6 <sup>th</sup> Patriarch Platform Sutra dated 12 <sup>th</sup> July 2015 ..	3
3.1. Pūjā .....	3
3.2. Dharma Sharing By Bro. Teoh .....	4

### (Biodata of Bro. Teoh Kian Koon)

Bro. Teoh graduated from University of Malaya in Civil Engineering in 1979. He has been a *spiritual practitioner cum 'Meditator'* since 1971. Since his retirement in 2001 from his **Engineering career**, he has been **sharing** his *understanding* and *experiences* with those who are *keen in their search* for *true happiness, peace* and *liberation* from *birth and death* and *all mental suffering so that they can be a blessing to all of humanity via becoming* a *more virtuous, nobler* and *wiser human being*. He gives **dharma talks** and holds *meditation classes & retreats* and weekly **Dharma classes** at various *meditation centers, Buddhist society* and places that invite him.

For *more detail* of Bro. **Teoh's dharma activities** and his *Kalyāṇamittaship grouping* please login to his recently launched **dharma website** at: <http://broteoh.com>



## 1. Preface

It is Brother Teoh's **sincere** wish that Dharma friends, spiritual practitioners, seekers of truth, and cultivators will be able **to make use** of the enclosed dharma **transcript notes** to develop a **better understanding** of the Buddha **Dharma as taught** by the Buddha so that they may **progress along the path of dharma** to become more **virtuous, nobler** and **wiser** human beings that can be a **blessing** to all *of humanity and the world*.

As these notes were mostly **compiled** based on a **direct transcript** from the recording of the **3<sup>rd</sup> lesson** of the **Sixth Patriarch's Platform Sutra** class (dated 12.7.2015); the text is aligned as closely as possible to the **colloquial speech** in the talk. However some **editorial amendments** have been **made** to the **text without detracting** from the **essence** of the talk. With this, it is hoped that readers can **adjust** themselves accordingly to **better understand** its **true meaning** and **intent**. A **good** way to do this is **to listen** to the recordings **first before** reading the transcript book.

To listen to the **recording (audio file)** you can log on to our <http://broteoh.com> **website** under **Repository** of *Dharma material* OR **Google** '*Bro. Teoh's Kalyāṇamittas – A Repository of Dharma Material*' to view them or **alternatively download** the audio file via this below MP3 audio link:

<http://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/3rd-6th-Patriarchs-class.mp3>

## 2. Acknowledgement

It is the donors' **sincere intentions** that these *dharma transcript book* be **given free** to those who are **interested** and have the **affinity** to receive them. I would like to *take this opportunity to thank* and **rejoice** in the **generosity** and **wholesomeness** of all those **Dharma friends** or **Kalyāṇamittas** who have **donated** and **helped out** in the **transcription, typing, typesetting, formatting, proof reading, etc.** to make this **free distribution** of **dharma dāna** possible.

Special thanks should be accorded to **Sister SK Hoong** (Hoong Suet Kun) who had taken the **initiative** to volunteer to develop the **draft transcript** for my **subsequent editing** thereby enabling this **dharma transcript book** to be printed.

By the **power of all these wholesomeness**, may all beings be **well and happy, free** from all **mental** and **physical sufferings** and **dangers** and may there be **love, peace** and **joy** - deep **within** their hearts. And may it also **pave the way** for there to be **causes and conditions** for all dharma friends who have **donated or helped out** in one way or another to realize their **good** and **noble wishes/aspirations** soonest possible.

With Metta always,

Brother Teoh Kian Koon

(Dated: 30<sup>th</sup> November 2017)



### 3. 3<sup>rd</sup> Lesson of the 6<sup>th</sup> Patriarch Platform Sutra dated 12<sup>th</sup> July 2015

It is exactly 3 pm, so we can start. Please relax body and mind, then compose your mind to develop the faith and prepare for puja.

#### 3.1. Pūjā

We shall recite the salutation following the **Mahayana tradition** first:

Nā Mó Běn Shī Shì Jiā Móu Ní Fó (南无本师释迦牟尼佛) (3x)

Nā Mó Guān Shì Yīn Pú Sà (南无观世音菩萨) (3x)

Námó fó púsà (3x) (南無佛菩薩) (3x)

Now we will chant the Theravada tradition. We will start off with the Salutation to the Triple Gem: the Buddha, Dhamma & Sangha.

#### Vandanā - Salutation to Lord Buddha:-

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammāsaṃbuddhassa (3X)

#### Tisaraṇa - Taking of the Three Refuges:-

Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi,  
Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Dutiyampi Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Dutiyampi Dhammaṃ  
saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Dutiyampi Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Tatiyampi Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Tatiyampi Dhammaṃ  
saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Tatiyampi Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

## Pañca Sīla - Renewing of the Five Precepts:-

Pānātipātā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi;  
Adinnādānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi;  
Kāmesu micchācārā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi;  
Musāvādā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi;  
Surā-meraya-majja-pamā-daṭṭhānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ  
samādiyāmi

**Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu!** (Rejoicing)

Now let us pay respect **mindfully** to Quan Yin Bodhisattva and all the other great beings that are worthy of respect and the **Triple Gems** to end the **pre-pūjā**.

Buddhaṃ pujemi; Dhammaṃ pujemi; Saṅghaṃ pujemi.

### 3.2. Dharma Sharing By Bro. Teoh

A very good afternoon to all, Brothers and Sisters in the Dharma. Last week we didn't have our class because I was away with my wife; we visited Macau. It was in fact **a good experience** because that was **the first time we visited Macau**. There were **many good conditions** behind that trip. It was **a very good trip** and **a lot of things happened** while we were on that trip even though it was just a short visit and we met up with some good people too. Anyway I would like to share something important with you all **before** we start our *6th Patriarch Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra class*.

We were at page 9 and we are supposed to continue from there (where we stop). But before we do that, I just want to share with you all something which I have sent out this morning. It's a write-up on **mindfulness** which I saw in the Star paper.

Nowadays, Western societies are starting to **appreciate** the **great benefits** of a type of **Buddhist meditation as taught** by the Buddha, called **mindfulness meditation** or **sati based meditation** namely the **Four Foundations of Mindfulness** or **sati sampajañña meditation**. This was the meditation they picked up and they had developed **great interest** in it because it **had helped them so much** and this was also the **topic** we went through before we started on the **6th Patriarch Platform Sutra series of dharma sharing**. We covered the **4 Foundations of Mindfulness**. What is interesting about this article is that, even though it's a **short write-up**, they manage to **capture** some of the **key important understanding** of this type of meditation but **without proper** explanation people **may not understand** because what is written here is just a **very brief summary** of what *that thing is supposed to be*. So if you don't have a **clear explanation to link** it **back** to the **Buddha's teaching** you **cannot get much out of it** unless you have the **experience and cultivation developed** on your own during your past lives. That's the reason why when I saw it, I thought **it's a good topic** to share. I shall now read it to you.

This was printed in the Star newspaper today, 12<sup>th</sup> July 2015. The title was '**Meditate on this: Mindfulness as a Meditation tool offers many benefits**'. They also have this understanding. What they have stated here is **very good**. That's the reason why I forwarded it to

you all. It's a **very good write-up on mindfulness**. The write-up is as below:

*'If you have heard or read about **mindfulness as a form of meditation**, - you might be curious about how to practise it...'*

Actually **mindfulness cannot be practiced**. Mindfulness is to be **understood**. The moment you understand, then it will be there. You **cannot practice to be mindful**. You **cannot try** to be mindful because that **trying** is by the thought. **Whenever** there is thought, there is **no mindfulness**. So mindfulness is **not something you can practice**. It is something you **can train** to develop - the **heedless thinking mind** can be **trained to be heedful**, to be **aware** because when this **heedless mind doesn't think, doesn't wander off, doesn't verbalise or chatter, doesn't create, doesn't judge, react and does all those funny things**, then **thoughts will cease to be**, then **mindfulness** will arise **naturally**. **Without thought you are already aware or mindful**.

Always remember - **when you do not think, you are silent**. I used to share this with you all before: - 'the **moment you are silent**, you are **already aware**. You are already **attentive**, do you understand? Your problem is - you **are never silent** or **seldom silent** and before you understand and cultivate all these, **you think a lot**.' That's the reason why the book, 'Emptiness' when it comes out, **you are going to understand a lot more** because I have explained it in a **very clear** and yet **very simple manner** with an in-depth coverage of what this thing is. When you read through this **transcript book** which was based on a 2 hour plus **dharma talk** I delivered in Klang Tiratana

centre, Selangor recently you are going to develop **a lot of understanding** of what this teaching is all about; what **heedfulness** and **mindfulness** are all about; what the **true mind** is all about; and **how that understanding can transform you and bring about great understanding of life; then you can really appreciate and live life to the fullness.**

All **these understanding** are very important but because **people don't understand**, so they use such wrong words to express it, - 'you might be curious about **how to practice it**'.

Actually you **cannot practice to be mindful. Mindfulness cannot be practised.** Mindfulness must be understood. The moment you understand, you will realize it. The **moment you are attentive without thought**; the moment you are silent, you are already **aware**, you are already **mindful** but the **moment you start to look for it, chase after it or practise it, you will never get it.** That's the reason why I always advise you all, 'when you do the bowing, you just do. Don't try to know and there is no thought involved. **Do until sati naturally arises** then the "form and mind" will **understand** what **sati** is.' It's like swimming. The moment you realize or understand what swimming is, what flotation and buoyancy is, you **do not need words** to describe it. You will **understand clearly** because the 'form and mind' experiencing it there and then will understand, no word is needed. And that is **true sati**, not the word used to describe it. So for mindfulness it is the same. I will read on.

*'Mindfulness is the act of **intensely aware.**'*

Ah! This description is correct - when you are **just aware there is no thought**. That's why he used the word, '*intensely aware*', - but you have to be careful because '*intensely aware*' can also be interpreted as you **trying to be very mindful**. The **trying is a resistance**, do you understand? It is supposed to be **a naturally relaxed state of awareness**. You just silent your mind and remain attentive. **Attentive** means **be aware** but **don't force it**. **Don't resist** it. Don't try to understand it. Don't try to do anything about it. Just **maintain silent**. Then the **awareness** will be there. And when awareness is there, it's very **beautiful**.

*'Mindfulness is the act of intensely aware of what you are sensing, feeling at any moment or every moment – without interpretation or judgment.'*

This means every moment, every instance, within the present moment, you are with it. No need to have the word, '*intensely mindful*' of it. No need, you **just silent** your mind and your awareness is just with it, meaning **just aware without interpretation or judgment**.

He used the words correctly, - '*without interpretation or judgment*'. Who interprets? What interprets? Ah! The **thought**, which is the **egoic mind**, interprets. So the moment you are silent there is **no interpretation**, there is **no chattering**, there is **no judgment**, there is **no reaction**, there is **no trying to know or reason**, all **those cease** to be. That's why **without thoughts**, you are *already aware*. The **moment** you are **silent without thought** you are **already aware**; so

don't try and do those funny things that people ask you to do, like noting, verbalizing etc.

You see, this mindfulness sentence may appear to have a lot of dharma, a lot of beautiful things. But when you understand, you will **become very clear** and **very precise**. There are still a lot of things **not 'so correct'** within that sentence. They are still **not sure**, and that's why they **contradict themselves** via using **such wrong words**. They use such words because such words have appeared before; other people have used them before. These people who used them, **don't have clear understanding**. That's why in **many places** they **contradict themselves**. They use the **words practice** and **intensely aware** and at the same time they say **without interpretation, without judgment etc.** These are all words. *If you don't understand, you contradict yourself* **without** understanding *what you are* **describing**. So **understanding** is very important. The moment you understand all these words become **superfluous** and **no longer** necessary. I will read on:

*'Spending too much time planning, problem solving, or thinking negative or random thoughts can be draining. It drains away your mental strength, your energy and can develop a lot of stress. It can also make you more likely to experience stress and anxiety.'*

They also know how a person **becomes depressed**. They think and think and think until it becomes a **cocoon** of thoughts, - keep on repeating those **trains of wrong thoughts** like a **tape recorder**.

Previous Sunday, before I went to Macau, I gave a dharma talk at SJBA and there was this lady who came to see me after the talk **regarding her problem**. She worked for a bank for more than 10 years. After hearing my talk, she **approached me**. She said, "Brother Teoh, I have some problems. What you said in the talk regarding **those first noble truth realities are very true.**" She was facing some **very stressful** moments. The company (Bank) wanted to dismiss her, takes disciplinary action against her and she was **full of fear, worry** and **anxiety** and **she didn't know what to do**. Then when she heard me expounding the **1st noble truth realities** regarding, 'when you are *with people whom you don't like* – like **career related** issues; **management** by *fear and harassment*, etc.' She said all these happened to her and they fitted in exactly. She was subjected to all those realities and she was still having **intense fear** while talking to me.

Since Brother Swee Aun was also there, I said to her, "Please give your contact details to Brother Swee Aun and he can help you." But she insisted on talking to me so I said, 'I can only advise you not to **panic. Don't develop the fear** for it is **not going to help you**, do you understand? When you have these **mental states of fear, worry** and **anxiety**, you will become **very confused** because you **don't have clarity of mind**. These are **negative energy fields**. They **will make you miserable**. It **will not solve your problem**. It will make you **worse**. Why not you **just calm yourself down first** then develop some form of **clear understanding**, and **learn to meditate a bit.**'

*That day, the Dharma talk's title was very relevant and good; I spoke on the topic, 'The **Importance and Great Benefits** of Cultivating the*



*Buddha dharma*. You have to **cultivate** the **Buddha dharma**, before you can understand all these. Then only can you **reap** its **great benefit** to help you **overcome** all of the **1st Noble Truth realities** of **suffering**, the **8 conditions or realities**.”

At that time, she was **not listening**. She **can never be attentive** because the **depressive thoughts** leading to the **fear** were **so overwhelming** and **so intense**. In fact Brother Swee Aun messaged me earlier on and said, ‘Bro. Teoh, you **have to attend to her** because she **is breaking down or going cuckoo already**.’ (It seemed Bro. Swee Aun also could sense it.) She kept on wanting to tell me her problems - like how they **mistreated her**; how they **harassed her** and how they **subjected her** to so **much fear**. Then I told her a **very simply truth**; if you can have the **understanding** of who you are and **what you are** and you are **very clear** about **your rights**, then **you need not fear**. Who fears? Only people who **don't understand**, **deluded**, have **fear**. *Thought projections create fear*. The **thought** that *doesn't understand* develops fear. When things go your way, there is no fear. When you **cannot understand** and when **things don't go your way**, you develop **tremendous fear**.

After I had explained these to her, she **still could not understand**, but she did maintain contact with Brother Swee Aun. What happened was, when she contacted Brother Swee Aun she started to ‘harass’ him until Brother Swee Aun also had **no choice** but to create a group chat on Whatsapp for the 3 of us. He forwarded her *stressful messages* to me. She kept on telling Brother Swee Aun what the company was going to do to her and all those **stressful** and **fearful depressive thoughts** and she **was not listening** to any of the

advice at all. So Bro. Swee Aun forwarded them to me. If I were to read them, like what Bro. Swee Aun did, I might not have a **good holiday** in Macau. But *because of my understanding* I was still able to **have a very good holiday** in Macau. I didn't really want to reply to her because **no point**. Then later on, on the last day before I came back I texted them saying, "I am still overseas. I will only come back tomorrow."

Then what happened was, after I came back, I wrote in the Whatsapp group the same advice I gave her earlier on, i.e. **'do not arise the fear, maintain calm** to have *clarity of mind to resolve all these issues amicably with understanding.*' I was hoping she could remember my advice but she couldn't. Again immediately after that she said; 'I must see you'. Then the problem started again boom, boom and boom - continued. I said, 'If you **continue to panic** and **do that**, you will **never get to understand** your problem and **you can never** overcome your **problem**. So **No point seeing me.**' I then wrote to her and said, 'If you are free and **willing to listen**, you can drop by to discuss your so called problem. *When you understand, there is no more problem.* When you don't understand, you will have **serious, big problem.**' Then luckily she agreed to come.

Last night, she made an appointment to come at 8 pm but she wanted to bring a friend because she was scared. It was her good friend, who received a lot of headache from her recently. She was her university friend and they have been together for very long. What happened was they came a bit late, arriving at 8:30pm because she needed to fetch her friend. They were so surprised because my terrace house was so big. And they commented,

"Wah! Your house is so big, 2 units join together?" I said, "Yes! That's why it **has space**, it has clarity." Otherwise, like your brain, crowded with *so much problems inside*, hence **no space, no clarity because clouded by your fear, worry, anxiety and problems**. I then asked her to sit down to discuss her problems.

Again, before I could explain, she kept on **repeating** (like a tape recorder), those things that **were haunting** her or **causing** her **fear** and **panic attacks**. Luckily her good friend was there. Then I explained to her again. I **reminded** her again and again, "Did you really read what I wrote to you and what I had advised you?" I said, "Don't **allow the fear, worry and anxiety to grip** you and **terrorize** you because this **will not help you**." Again she continued, "But ... (*letting out her so called problems again*)". I reminded her and said, "*Are you listening? If you are not listening, you might as well go home because you come here to seek advice and you are not listening. If you think your old ways can help you solve your problem, then go back. But because you have been doing it for so long and you have become so miserable it means it is not helping you.*"

Then I bring out the **analogy** of the **red hot iron ball**. If this thing (the wrong thought) is **tormenting** you, **burning you out**, and makes you **so miserable**, then why are you **still holding** on to it, **lamenting** and **crying over it** thus making yourself **so fearful** and **so miserable**. If you have *been listening* and you understand all these then *what must you do?* **Put it down, right?** Don't hold anymore. **Calm yourself down**. Develop **clarity** of mind so that you are **more aware**, so that you *can ask yourself*, **'What are my**

**options? How can I move?'** Then you **apply** the **Noble 8-fold path** to **resolve** whatever issues **amicably** so that everybody is happy. If you understand all these, you will **not** have any problem at all.

After that, the friend understood and told her **not to panic**. I said to her, 'if you just tell her this, it is of not much use'. **Even** I tried **to let her understand** **but she was not listening** because she had **OCD (Obsessive, and Compulsive Disorder)** problem; her *obsessive and compulsive thoughts* kept coming and they had become **very intrusive**. That was the sign of **serious depression** and I told her, "You are already in depression." Then she said, "Yah, I know." I said, "Sooner or later, there will be suicidal thoughts." She said, "Not yet. I am not that stupid." Later on I came to understand that she had **other related problems too**: like boyfriend problems, character problem, harassing colleague's problem etc. It was a very good sharing that night but too bad because the advice given to her that night was not recorded.

I questioned her, "Why must you panic and have so much fear? Why can't you just calm yourself down?" Of course, as usual she will tell me how the company **mistreated her** and wanted to do all those things to her. Threatened her, gave her the **warning letter** and **threatened to dismiss her** and **forced her to sign** the dismissal letter. I told her, "Ok. If you receive all these, if you don't have clarity of mind, if you are full of fear, worry and anxiety, **how can you act?** You are incapable of decision and action."

Then she kept on telling me she got an aunty - 'my aunty said this, my aunty said that'. Then I reminded her, 'If what she has advised

you worked, you **will not** be in this state, do you understand? So **forget about** what your aunty said and don't quote her anymore. Forget about **what your office had said** *and what they will do to you* because all these are **wrong thoughts**. The more you think, the **more fear** you will have and the **more miserable** you will become'. So what must you do?

She **still didn't get** the message then I asked her, "Do you have a piece of paper? You better write down all these advice one by one otherwise you won't learn. The first thing you must do is, **don't panic**. Don't allow **fear, worry, anxiety, sorrow** and **lamentation to grip** you". She started to write all these down. The second point is, "*learn to **develop this ability to calm your-self down**, to develop the **positive energy** field within because all those fear, worry and anxiety are very **negative energy** fields."*

Fear, worry, anxiety, sorrow and lamentation will lead to stress because they are part of **the 3 evil roots (roots of all evils) that make you evil and miserable**. And these **negative energies** will set the **condition for negative karma** to arise and you will become worse. This is what you did to people in the past. Now conditions have arisen and you become the victim. If you don't have the **wisdom** and **understanding**, you will have to go through this suffering. What you have done to others earlier on, you don't understand. If **you need to ask for forgiveness** then you ask for forgiveness. That's the reason why I gave her the *chanting book*. Then I advised her to learn **meditation** via giving her the blue transcript book. I also gave her a copy of my **seminar book** to read so that she could understand life better. Then the last thing I

advised her was to learn the teaching of the Buddha via reading the book, “The **Ancient Path by Venerable Piyadassi**. Her friend also wanted those books. I said to her, ‘You have to develop the **proper understanding** in order to solve your problems. If you keep on **panicking** via having all these **fear, worry and anxiety** it **will not help**.’

The third point is very simple. When you have calmed yourself down you will have **clarity** of mind, then you can ask yourself, **is there a real problem? What are my rights?** What have I done? Have I done anything **seriously wrong** like **breaching** the company's rules or society's rules that can allow them to act against me - to dismiss me? **Otherwise, it's wrongful dismissal**. So you don't have to worry and you can be rest assured that you will be **well compensated** by the **industrial court**. You don't have to worry about what happens. For you have worked for them for 10 years. Your **rights are enshrined** there. Did they gave you an **appointment letter**?” She said, “Yes.” They put you under **probation** for how long, 3 or 6 months? Did you pass the probation? “Yes.” They also confirmed you on the job right? And you have worked for 10 years and nothing has happened to you. You **didn't receive** any **warning letter**. Only recently these types of things started, so you just have to reply in a **very simple manner** via saying, ‘*For your information, I was confirmed on the job after going through the probation, which means you accepted me base on my qualifications and experience and you are happy with my performance because for the last 10 years, I have got no issue with the company; there was no warning letter, or any letter to that effect. Only recently - I don't know what really happened, there has*

*been a lot of these things going on, warning letter etc. But as far as I am concerned, I **do not agree** with what is written in your warning letter. I have **tried my best based on my qualifications and experience**. If I have tried my best you **cannot wrongfully dismiss me** just because **you say** I have failed to perform or failed to deliver. All these are what you say. As far as I am concerned, my training and qualifications are like that and I have tried my best, that's it.*

According to her they asked her to **deliver things** that were **beyond her capability** because **she didn't** have **such experience**. And **she could not handle** because there was **no training** given to her. So I told her, *"That is **not** your job scope. You can ignore what they tell you because you don't agree with all those unreasonable accusations."* You can reply to them via telling them, 'If you want me to do those work, you better **promote me** and **send me for training** and **equip me** with the necessary **skills** and **understanding**. Then I will try my best. You cannot just dismiss me over such **unreasonable reason**. This is **wrongful dismissal** (meaning they try to remove you **without any** valid reason)'. So I told her, when you understand all these, you **don't have** to panic. You don't have to be **fearful** *unless* you have done *something wrong*. Even if you have done something wrong, you **don't have to worry too** because the past is already gone. You have to move on. Then only she told me her other office problem involving her 'boyfriend'.

She said, in the office she used to have a boyfriend..... Then I said, "Wait. Don't make it so complicated. Boyfriend means who?" She said, "My Boyfriend, lah!" Is he also a colleague who works in your

office? She said, "Yes." *That's how the whole thing started.* It seemed she told the boyfriend certain things then there was a **misunderstanding**; then the boyfriend decided to avoid her. She then called and texted her boyfriend nearly **400 times a day** until her boyfriend also got **fed-up** with her and *threatened to report her to the management* for doing all those things.

I then said "Eh! That is too complicated because you never tell me the whole truth. You created such big problems yourself." She toned down after that and even her friend who came with her that night laughed and said she had a lot of such problems. Whatever it is, luckily she heard what I said. Since these things already happened - even if you had breached the company's policies, also there was **no problem because what you needed to do was to resolve it amicably**. Then she started to tell me the whole story.

She said this boyfriend actually took advantage of her, played her out on many occasions; wanted money from her and when she refused him, he started to ignore her. Then I said, "Since you already knew all these, why did you still allow yourself to be **taken advantage of**. Who can you blame? When you understand what is going on, then you better wake up and determine to end all these miseries. *Work is work and relationship is a separate matter*". She then said, "I called him only after office hours." I advised her whether during office or after office it is the same because when there is misunderstanding, they **will react**. So what is important is if you need to **sever** this relationship, sever it. Then **accept him for what he is**. **Don't hate him** and **don't get angry**. Don't get yourself entangled with what has happened. Solve your problems one by



one. Then I continued to brief her further, "If you separate these two issues and **don't allow** them **to entangle** you, can you solve your problem now?" She started to develop the understanding via saying, "Oh! Yes! **I do have my rights** as an employee. I don't have to panic, hah. Then after that, I can apply for a job."

I then told her, "The industrial court, maybe after 10 years award you the **compensation** for **unlawful dismissal**. If you win the case, all the salaries plus interests, they have to pay to you and it can be a big sum of money. It's like **your pension** or **windfall coming**. So why do you panic? This is the **best outcome** because your *chance of winning the case is very high*. If they can dismiss you, it's the best." She then said, "Yes, I want to check with the industrial court." Later she told me, 'the Industrial court also said to wait until they dismiss me, then only go and see them. Otherwise, no point.'

She **started to calm down**, then within one and a half hour or so, she was **feeling so much better**. I could see the change in her condition and I told her, 'at least now you look so much better than when you just stepped into my house.' Then she started to smile. After that, she and her friend were very happy. It was so visible. Then she looked at the clock and said, "Wah! 10pm already".

She needed to send her friend back, so I told her, 'if you have already understood the problem, then you can go back.' Remember the 3 points you wrote down: Don't panic, don't react and all those things, then don't go and allow the **negative thoughts** to **continue to haunt you, grip** you and **paralyze** you. Calm yourself down. Then she said, "That's the reason why I like to listen to your dharma

talks. That dharma talk at SJBA was very good but I ***didn't really listen.***" I said, 'you thought you listened but you didn't really listen'. These are the sharing and understanding that can help people. Her case was only one of the many things discussed.

In Macau, there was another lady, also a long time **depression** case but after they saw how our sister Alicia who was **16 years in depression** just turned around **after listening** to my dharma sharing, they were **in disbelief**. Even the Filipino friend of hers also was **very impressed** to see the sudden change in her. He also heard it from Freddy (Alicia's husband) how Alicia turned around and became so 'beautiful' after that. Their long time Filipino friend, Teddy was so keen to talk to me when he finally met me in Macau. He came over from Philippines. He is **a Catholic, Christian**. He said to me, 'I heard you teach Dharma.' I said, 'yes'! Then I inquired – 'are you a Buddhist?' He said, 'No, I am a Catholic.' He then said, 'you have done wonders because Alicia recovered so beautifully and I heard a lot about you. I want to understand more.' He liked good food and he liked to drink too. Over dinner he asked me many questions. The way I answered him did impress him very much. He then suggested to Alicia's husband, Freddy, 'I think the next time I come to Malaysia, we don't go drinking. Instead we go and attend Bro. Teoh's dharma talk.'

That was the most beautiful sharing because he used his Christian teaching to ask me questions and he was a very nice guy, very open-minded. He said he liked to read other religions too. He only believes in one thing: - he said, 'whatever it is, ***he will not harm, cheat or deceive*** people. He will **always be good** to everybody.' I

said, 'Sadhu! That is a **real religious person** and if you can do that, you are **truly religious**.' You don't have to worry about what religious label you carry. The religious label is not important. But he said, 'this was deep in him'. He can **never cheat, deceive and harm others**. That is how he lives his life. That's why his life was good. I said, "it is because you **follow the advice of Jesus**, the **embodiment** of Jesus' **love and compassion**. And you keep his **commandments**." He said, "Yes, the commandments are very good. The commandments can be summarized into one word, '**Love**'. **Love thy neighbour, love everyone**." I said, 'Wah, you are very wise. If you understand true love, you will have no more problems with life.' Then he smiled.

We can learn from all these. These are all dharma, daily life dharma, day to day dharma. So always remember, **do not panic**, do not *create mental negativity*. This is what **mindfulness** is all about. When you are mindful you have clarity and you don't have thoughts, which means you don't project into the future or the past. Then you have **no fear, no worry, no anxiety**. There **cannot** be any **sorrow and lamentation**. Then you won't land yourself into unnecessary negative states of mind, such as depression or problem. You will be beautiful. **But dharma** can play a **great role** to help you **understand life** and **overcome all of your life problems** and **situation**. Ok, we shall read on, so that you can understand better.

So now you understand. Spending too much time, scheming, planning, mundane way of problem solving and thinking **negative thoughts** or random and **heedless** thoughts can be very **stressful** and **draining**. It can also make you **anxious** and **fearful**. This is

happening to most people in this world. That's why that lady said people who **have suffering**, their mental states are more or less the same; they think and think and think and they **project** their thoughts, recall the **unhappy past**, their **scars of memories...** and they become **miserable** and this purple book of mine, - '**Emptiness**' explains a lot on these.

Coming back to the Star newspaper's write up on **mindfulness**, it continues as below:

*Having **mindfulness** or **developing mindfulness exercises** can help you **direct** your **attention** away from **all these kinds of heedless thinking** and **engage** with the world around you. It can have many possibilities or **possible benefits** including **reducing** your **stress, anxiety** and **depression**. **Less negative thinking** and **distraction** will **improve your emotion** or your **mood**. There are several ways to **practice** mindfulness. ...*

Towards the end he used the word, 'several ways to **practice** mindfulness' again. Please remember Mindfulness **cannot** be practiced. It should be how to develop mindfulness. **Paying attention** is the first way, which is a **very good way** to **develop mindfulness**.

*The next time you meet somebody...*

This is what most people **don't do**, to develop the **art of listening**, remember? During our Tuesday class discussion? Go and listen to that recording on the Art of Listening again.

*The next time you meet someone, do listen closely to his or her words. Think about their meaning.*

The correct word should be 'listen **attentively**'. Don't go and use these words, '*think about their meaning and you...*'. Don't go and think. Just **listen attentively**. Then you will understand. You don't think, do you understand? **Understanding** through **attentive listening** is different from thinking about what is being spoken. Can you all see the difference? You better make sure you can see the difference. When you listen **and think**, what happens? It means you are **not listening** anymore because you are **thinking, preoccupied** with what he **has said** and **try to develop** your **understanding** via **comparing it** with **your memory**. When you are doing these thinking, you are lost in thoughts, preoccupied with all these thinking, hence you **can never be attentive** anymore. You are not listening anymore. That's why you **don't go and think**. You just listen, can you all understand? Cannot? Then never mind, just let it pass, then listen attentively again. That is how you listen. You don't go and react, don't go and comment, don't do all those funny things. Just listen. That's the reason why the words they use here are not correct, '*think about their meaning.....*'. Forget about the thinking. Just listen. When you can understand, you will understand what I mean. If you cannot, never mind. But if you want to **contemplate** and **reflect** on what they say, you can do it later after the sharing to develop the **second turning contemplative wisdom**

Then it said,

*Aim to **develop** a habit of understanding others.....*

Ah! see, this one is correct but it is **not** a habit. It is understanding because when you listen you have **an open mind** so that you can understand what is being conveyed, by the message. Forget about right and wrong. **Just listen**. When you are **attentive**, there is **no thought**, there is **clarity**. Then you will understand whether **what is being spoken** has meaning or not, relevant or not? When you do that, more and more, more and more, more and more, you **will transform** from **a heedless way of listening** and become **different** - meaning you have developed the **art of listening via heedfulness**. You become more heedful, less heedless. You *shift over to heedful living listening with heedfulness*. Walking, standing, turning and whatever you do in life, you can maintain the **daily mindfulness**; you are **heedful most** of the **time**, you are **no longer heedless** like before. That is the reason why **paying attention** and being **attentive** is a good training to **develop mindfulness**. That's also the reason why the Buddha said, 'standing - aware, walking - aware, bending, stretching, turning, seeing -also aware, - be attentive all the time. Don't try to know, just do this training until it becomes **a part of you** and you will understand many things naturally. **When sati is there, everything can be understood**.

Here, they still don't understand the real meaning of sati. That's why they still use words that **contradict** themselves but it's already not so bad.

*'The aim to develop a habit of understanding....'* (Is not habit).  
*'Aim to develop a habit of understanding through **listening...**'*  
(Not through **thinking**. Ah! They also used these words):

*'...and **delaying** your judgments and criticism.'*

Forget about delaying..., **don't even criticize** or *judge*. Who is trying to be right? Who is trying to judge? The **egoic** mind, the **personality** that still holds on to a view and opinion isn't it? But when you can accept them for what they are, you **don't have** to judge, you **don't have** to react, you **don't have** to do all those funny things or *criticize* them because **they are just the way they are**; hence no right, no wrong and you just accept them for what they are. And what do you mean by acceptance? **Acceptance** is **peace**, not *reacting*, not *commenting*, not *judging* because you **accept them for what they are**. So acceptance *brings about clarity, brings about peace*. For you **no longer blame, react** and *do all those funny things anymore*. You are at peace. When you are at peace, there is clarity. Then you **can act, you can move, you can live life**. This is **how a heedful living being lives life**, not to be clouded by all these, give meaning, getting yourself entangled, create through your thinking (via your saṅkhāra, your views and your opinions and your reactions to what you hear, what you see, what you smell, what you taste, what you tactilely feel or think). This is what saṅkhāra is all about. This is what **attachment, craving, clinging, grasping** are all about? That's how the *five aggregates of 'form and mind'* become **grasping aggregates**. They are no longer **pure aggregates**.

What do you mean by Pure aggregates? It means when you feel, you just feel, when you perceive, you just perceive; only pure perception: just be with it **attentively** and be **silent** within. Then you will understand many things because understanding doesn't come from the thought. It's **an awakening**. When **you are silent**, you will understand because **there is clarity**. You will know how *you function as a human being, how your mind stirs* into all those mind states, then how the **dependent origination** comes to be, how the teachings come to be. So all these dharma, you will understand them when you have developed the **silent mind**.

I will read on. The second advice is: *'Make the familiar new again.'*

Ah, this is **very important**. Can you all understand this? - *'Make the familiar new again.'* How many of you don't understand this? Just like those things or your **daily routine** that you are very familiar with; every day you do it, you tend to take for granted. Like when you wake up, you will **heedlessly** (without mindfulness) go to your toilet. **Every day** you are **in a rush**. Even when brushing your teeth, you **tend to think a lot** and you are **hardly mindful** of the moment in **silent awareness**. Worry about what to do after office; must go there buy what, deliver what, drink what, see who, attend to what and what, etc... - what are you doing? These are **all familiar old** things and you have been doing it **habitually via habitual tendencies**. And you are **very mechanical**. You don't know what is going on because there is **hardly any** awareness or mindfulness all these while.



So their advice, '*make the familiar new again*' means **every moment, every instant, everything that you want to do like even ringing this bell or drinking a cup of tea or whatever it is** – do it like it is a new experience. You don't go and allow these memories and habitual tendencies make you mechanical. Mechanical means you are thinking, you are lost in thought and you just do it like a machine mechanically, automatically or what they call reflex action. Sometimes when you do it so mechanically, you **don't even know** – like when **you go into the car** and **how you reach your office** because it has become a part of your **habitual tendencies or routines**. That's why when you don't have **heedfulness** and **mindfulness**, you **will not be able to have this ability to be with the moment, to live life, to understand life and to develop the mindfulness training in life**. I will read this to you so that you can develop the understanding:

*'Find a few small familiar objects such as toothbrush, apple, or cell phone in your home or office. Look at the object with **fresh eyes**. Identify one **new detail** about each object you **didn't see before**.'*

This suggestion by them is a very **crude way** of *understanding sati*. In **true Sati cultivation** there is no need for you **to slow down** and **look** as per their suggestion, no need. Just be **attentive**. What does this mean? When your hand is about to go there, hand and mind move as one and **attentively observe** how your hand moves and pick things up. Then when you want to understand it, you really look at it. When you drink the same cup of coffee, **you drink with the silent mind without thoughts running all over, then you are**

*really tasting the coffee and this coffee is ever refreshing.* Even if the person makes it differently, you will know; whether the coffee beans used is which particular type, you will know and how much sugar etc. Because of the silence, you **can taste** it very clearly. Then *everything you see* is **very pristine**. It's like you are looking at the whole thing, you don't look with the 'word' and the 'concept'.

Like this microphone, if you take for granted 'microphone', the **word** and the **concept** will **prevent** you from truly **observing this microphone**. 'Microphone' as a **word is an image**, a **concept** which is not the **reality**. When I say, *'I see things as they are without the words'* it means *I see everything without the words and the labelling or images. Then I have clarity.* That's why he said, 'new details'. Actually it's not 'new details' because when you **really look** at this thing, **without** the word and the **concept** it is the **direct seeing** or **seeing things as they** and this **type of seeing** is very **different**. But when you look at it *without attentively observing it*, what you see is just the **image** which you take for granted. Ah! Microphone, that's it, you didn't look clearly because you are **contented** with the **image** you saw.

Even the art piece hanging on the wall or whatever, you didn't really look. But when you are **attentive** and you look, the *whole of the art piece* becomes **very different** because when you look **attentively** with the **silent mind**, you can see all the **pristine beauty as they are without** word. It's just **pure perception** leading to **understanding**. Everything is **like new** because it's **not accumulated** in memories.

Then if you don't go and **compare**, you will see it **as a completely new thing**. But human beings **like to compare**, and the very comparison is from the memory. If you are aware of this arising of the memory, you are still being aware. But if you are **not aware** of the action that the **mind is going through**, then you are **completely lost in thoughts**, you become **heedless** again. All these are deeper understanding. We shall go on.

*'Focus on your breathing. Sit in a quiet place with your back straight but relax. Feel your breath moving in and out of your lungs. Let your awareness and everything else fall away.'*

See again they use the word 'focus' and 'feel' the breath, etc. When your **mind wanders off**, you are supposed to gently redirect your **attention** back to your breath. Can you remember my instruction? The moment mind wanders off, bring it back. Just **maintain awareness in front of your nostrils** so that the moment the mind detects the breathing you can develop **Ānāpānasati** via mindfulness of the in and out breath. That is, 'Breathing in - aware, breathing out - aware, without thought.' But they didn't give such detailed explanation; that's why you cannot do it. If you try to follow their approach, chances are you will interpret it differently. Their instructions are:

*'...you are simply becoming aware of what's happening around you, breath by breath.'*

This is **not** Ānāpānasati, for Ānāpānasati is just **awareness** or **mindfulness** of the **in and out breath**. You are not trying to be

aware of everything around you, but just awareness of the in and out breath. That is just to train your mind to be aware, **to anchor** it to the breath which is part of the kaya but they forgot the actual teaching. They never go back and check it out. What is the teaching all about? The Buddha explained very clearly. *Why are you not peaceful? Why are you not able to be aware, to be in the meditative state of sati (awareness). It is because of the mental hindrances. And mental hindrances arise because you lack spiritual faculties. These are not taught, that's the reason why you cannot link the teaching.*

If you **know** that you are *heedless*, you *think a lot*, you are *not peaceful* and you **cannot** be mindful is because of the **mental hindrances** which have become **habitual tendencies**, then what must you do? And all these are not taught, not shared. That's the reason why you cannot develop the meditation. I then advise you to develop the *skilful means* to **decondition** your *heedless thinking*. That's how the **mind-sweeping** method comes in. That's how mettā meditation comes in to develop **inner peace leading to inner well-being**. Then only the mind can become peaceful, calm, and quiet. Then you can anchor it to any **skilful means** like Ānāpānasati or whatever method or technique of meditation **to stabilize the mindfulness** and all these should be taught. Hence the reason why you all **don't understand** what they are trying to tell you.

Then on another occasion they said,

*'Awaken your senses. Get a raisin, smell it, feel it and anticipate eating it. When you smell without thoughts it is very different'*

Our Sister Susan replied to me saying that's what she did and she tried to teach this to her children, which was very good. But they forgot the words, 'smell **without** thoughts, feel, taste, (**without** thoughts) and **just eat** (means chew) and experience the taste consciousness **without** thought. If you do it **with clarity, silent** and **without thoughts**, it is **so different**. But as you all do, the **thoughts keep coming out**. For as you do all these, you are thinking, thinking and thinking. There is **no mindfulness** at all.

Reason why they said:

*'Taste the raisin slowly and deliberately chewing it.'*

It should **not** be deliberately chewing it, you **just chew** to experience the taste consciousness. Then whole of that movement, the **awareness** of it, **makes your mind very sensitive** because you are **silent**. That's what I have always told you all: 'when you want to feel something (like when you put your hand on the floor), if you are **not silent** you cannot feel because there are things going on in your head but the moment you are silent, the **whole of the sensation** becomes **very clear**. That's why feeling becomes **pure feeling** and **everything that happens within that tactile consciousness**, you understand, the sensation and the vibration etc. But when you think about it through a dharma or a word or a concept, you are **not sensitive** at all. You totally **cannot** feel because you are **trying to think**. You **can only do one thing at a time**. When you think, you **cannot feel**. That's why when you feel,

you *must feel **without thoughts***. Just be aware and silent your mind then your feeling will become very clear.’ We shall move on.

*‘Paying close attention to your senses **might** reveal insight into your relationship with eating and food.’*

They are not able to explain it. They used the word 'might' - meaning maybe possible but they didn't explain it to you. When you are more and more aware **without thoughts**, you can train your mind to be more **quiet**, more **peaceful**, with **more clarity** and more **heedfulness** and that will **allow you to insight into phenomena**, into the 3 **universal characteristics** of **impermanence**, **suffering state** and **non-self**. These are also not taught, not explained by them. That's why they just use the words, *‘**might** reveal insight into your relationship with eating and food.’*

How can you develop **insight** into your relationship with **eating and food** if they don't explain it to you. You are supposed to train your mind to be **silent**, to be **aware** so that it **can insight** into the **characteristics of nature**. If these are not taught, then all these are only words and they don't have any meaning. It only has meaning to those who understand. Then the last part is the best. They said:

*‘Aim to **practice** mindfulness everyday...’*

There is **no such thing as practicing** mindfulness. It should be ‘aim to be mindful most of the time, throughout the day.’ The reason being **the moment you are silent without thought**, you are already aware or mindful. Hence you don't practice to be mindful because

the practice or doing is by the thought or the so called 'meditator'. Then they continue via saying:

*'If you do it for 6 months, **over time** you might find that **mindfulness becomes effortless.**'*

See, how they contradict themselves? Effortless **means** you *don't go and put in effort to practice*, can you understand? You don't go and think. It becomes automatic. When you are silent without thought, you are **already mindful** throughout the day by itself. That's why I used to advise you all, "when doing the bowing, you just bow", don't try to know. You do the **continuous bowing** until the **body and mind move as one without thought** then **when mindfulness is there**, the 'form and mind' will understand what that mindfulness or sati is.

'Just like swimming, go and swim and develop the understanding that the body is lighter than water hence its **natural tendency is buoyancy**. Just completely allow your body to float **without** struggling then you will understand *what buoyancy, floatation and swimming is.*' You have to do it until it becomes a part of you. Don't try to know when you are doing it. That's the reason why the real training is very different from what is being taught.

Then they continue to say:

*'You might find that **mindfulness becomes effortless**. Think of it as a commitment to reconnect with and nurture yourself.*

This is the series of sharing from the Mayo Foundation, Medical Education and Research, Tribune News Services. This is what I want to share with you all today before we start our class.

So any questions so far? Have you all developed a better understanding of what sati is? After having gone through all these, it is about time most of you have a **clearer understanding** of **what sati is** and how you can **develop the training** to be **more aware** so that all these can be **understood clearly** so that your **cultivation** can become very **different**. With this understanding, you can progress faster.

My usual advices to you are, **throughout the day your cultivation** should be as follows:

- i) Develop this **daily mindfulness** with **understanding** then **stabilize** it.
- ii) Start your **daily** mindfulness cultivation (kāyānupassanā) with your **daily routines** that you do **very often while** at home, then **extend it outwards; to your driving, going to office, shopping** and other activities of the day; after that at your **career environment** (at the place where you work) etc. - until this **daily mindfulness** becomes a part of you; until you can be **ever mindful** during your **entire daily life**.

All these **constitute meditation**, the cultivation of **Sati Sampajañña** (**mindfulness** with **clear comprehension** of all actions and all movements in the present moment) *and this is real*



**meditation.** *Before you can be heedful or mindful in the midst of life, the real meditation has not started yet.* All of your formal meditation, is of **not much use** if you do not have this ability to bring forth the **daily mindfulness**, the **heedfulness in daily life** to **cultivate** the **4 foundations** of mindfulness and the **Noble 8-fold path** in **daily life**.

Okay, any questions, while I take a drink. Anybody, has any questions? Where is the microphone? The mic is here. Anybody who wants to share something or ask any questions, you can. Okay, never mind if there is no question we shall move on to the 6th Patriarch Platform Sutra. Before that maybe we **read the verses for opening the sutra**. Turn back a few pages.

### **Verse for Opening a Sutra**

*The unsurpassed, profound, and wonderful Dharma,  
Is difficult to encounter in hundreds of millions of eons,  
I now see and hear it, receive and uphold it,  
And I vow to fathom the Tathāgata's true meaning.*

You have to fold this page so that next time you can find it easily. Then we turn to page 9.

*'The Five Previous Patriarchs before Master Hui Neng....'*

This part is quite interesting because before the 6th Patriarch, the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5<sup>th</sup> Patriarchs, their lives were really not so fortunate as the 6th Patriarch. They have to go through a lot of, what they call, **very intense** and **tough** conditions and through this understanding of the history behind, you will come to know how

civilizations at times (even when the **real teaching**, the **Buddha dharma** is still around), living beings are **still deluded**, they **cannot see**, they **cannot appreciate** it and they cannot really hold on to it or **go all out to receive it, to cultivate it** and this is something that civilization has to learn. Okay we can start now.

*'It wasn't easy being the Sixth Patriarch. Many people wished to kill him and his disciples as well. For this reason, after the Great Master obtained the Dharma, he went into **hiding, dwelling** among **hunters** for sixteen years. (This refers to Master Hui Neng) Even after establishing his Dharma platform at Nan Hua Temple, followers of other religions still tried to kill him, and so the Great Master hid inside a big rock. He sat there in meditation, and although they set the mountain on fire, he was untouched by the flames. The rock could still be seen when I was at Nan Hua Temple.'* (This refers to Master Hsuan Hua)

*'Who wanted to kill him? In general, it wasn't you and it wasn't me. On the other hand, if you consider the insane things we have done in past lives, it might well have been you or it could have been me. But in this life it wasn't you or me and so there is no need to worry about having broken precepts in this case.'*

*'As I told you, the Great Master is counted as the **Sixth Patriarch** from the **First Patriarch, Bodhidharma**, who was the **Twenty-eighth** Indian Patriarch. "Bodhi" means enlightenment and "Dharma" means law. .... '* (Should be "Dharma" meaning the Truth but Master Hsuan Hua used the word, 'law', maybe he is referring to

**Nature's Law that governs life and existence** which is also the truth).

*When Bodhidharma set off from India, fulfilling Shakyamuni Buddha's **prediction** that the Mahayana teaching would be **transmitted to China** during the time of the Twenty-eighth Patriarch, the Buddha Dharma already existed in China, yet it was as if it were not there at all. Although there were men who studied, there were few who lectured or recited the sutras and **repentance ceremonies** were **seldom** practiced. Cultivation was **superficial**. Scholars debated and argued, but **none of them truly understood**. The **principles** in the Sutras **must be cultivated**, but at that time in China they **were not cultivated** because everyone feared suffering. Now, in America, it is just the same. People sit in meditation. However, as soon as their legs begin to ache, they wince and fidget and then gently unbend them. People are just people and nobody likes to have aching legs.*

*While still in India, the Patriarch Bodhidharma sent two of his disciples, Fo T'o and Yeh She, to China to transmit the sudden enlightenment Dharma door. But no one, not even Chinese Bhikshus, would speak to them. So they went to Lu Mountain where they met the Great Master **Yüan Kung**, who lectured on **mindfulness** of the Buddha.*

*Master Yüan asked, "What Dharma do you transmit that causes people to pay you so little respect?"*

*Fo T'o and Yeh She could not speak Chinese, so they used sign language instead. Raising their arms in the air, they said, "Watch!*

*The hand makes a fist and the fist makes a hand. Is this not quick?"*

*Master Yüan replied, "Quick indeed."*

*"Bodhi (enlightenment) and affliction," they said, "are just that quick."*

See, when you understand what the analogy of a fist and a hand is, you will awaken. So Bodhi and affliction are just that quick. The **moment you understand, no more suffering**. As long as **you don't understand, suffering will continue to grip you, do you understand?**

*'At that moment, Dharma Master Yüan became enlightened...'*

See, I just open my hand and close my hand, - are you enlightened? Hah? That was what my nature was awakened to earlier on when one of my teachers just raised her hand like that. She was explaining to another dharma friend from Singapore. She said, 'you see'. She then moved her hand like that and then like that. She then asked, "What did you see?" The moment her hand moved like that and then like that, I awakened to the **3 universal characteristics straight away, no word, nothing** because I **was mindful** and **silent**. That Singapore friend was not silent. He was **trying to use the thought** to understand. That's why he could not get it. And all these are possible. That **very instant she moved her hand, this nature just understood. No word**. That's why the **real dharma is not thought-based, nothing to do with the word**. All these are possible.

Similarly the sutra said,

*‘At that moment, Dharma **Master Yüan became enlightened**, realizing that **originally Bodhi** and **affliction** are not different, for Bodhi is affliction and affliction is Bodhi. He made offerings to Fo T’o and Yeh She, and shortly thereafter, the two Indian Bhikshus died on the same day, in the same place. Their graves may still be seen at Lu Mountain. (Wah! Just to transmit the dharma.)’*

*‘Patriarch Bodhidharma saw that the roots of the Mahayana, the Great Vehicle Buddha Dharma, were ripe in China. Fearing neither the distance nor the hardship of travel, he took the Dharma there. The Chinese called him “barbarian” because he talked in a way that no one understood.’*

You know Dá mó, 达摩祖师 (dá mó zǔshī), Bodhidharma. He is very fierce. The painting that they paint of him with all the beard and a very fierce look is because he is very strict. When children looked up at the bearded Bodhidharma, they ran away in terror. Adults feared that he was a kidnapper and so told their children to stay away from him.

*Patriarch Bodhidharma went to Nan Ching where he listened to **Dharma Master Shen Kuang** explaining the Sutras. When **Shen Kuang spoke, the heavens rained fragrant blossoms and a golden-petalled lotus rose from the earth for him to sit upon**. However, only those with good roots, who had opened the five*

*eyes<sup>8</sup> and the six spiritual penetrations were able to see that. Now! Isn't this wonderful?*

Now, you look at the note 8's explanation listed at the bottom.

**(Note 8:** Opened through cultivation, the Five Eyes are: 1) the Buddha Eye, 2) the Dharma Eye, 3) the Flesh Eye, 4) the Heavenly Eye, and 5) the Wisdom Eye.)

*After listening to the Sutra, Bodhidharma asked, "Dharma Master, what are you doing?"*

*"I am explaining Sutras," Shen Kuang replied.*

*"Why are you explaining Sutras?"*

*"I am teaching people to end birth and death."*

You have to listen to this. This one is very profound.

*"Oh?" said Bodhidharma, "exactly how do you do that? In this Sutra which you explain, the words are black and the paper is white. How does this teach people to end birth and death?"*

*Dharma Master Shen Kuang had nothing to say. How did he teach people to end birth and death? He **fumed in silence**. ('He fumed in silence' means he was not happy but he kept it inside).*

*Then even though heavenly maidens rained down flowers and the earth gave forth golden lotuses, yet Dharma Master Shen Kuang **got angry**. This is what it means when it says that the Buddha Dharma existed in China, but it was as if it was not there*

at all. (This is because he **still has anger**; because all these are psychic phenomena).

*When angry, Dharma Master Shen Kuang used his heavy iron beads to level opposition. In response to Bodhidharma's question, he **reddened with anger and raged like a tidal wave smashing a mountain**. As he whipped out his beads, he snapped, "You are slandering the Dharma!" and cracked Bodhidharma across the mouth, knocking loose two teeth. Bodhidharma neither moved nor spoke. He hadn't expected such a vicious response.*

*There is a legend about the teeth of holy men. You must not ask about the principle, however, because it is too inconceivable. The legend says that if a sage's teeth fall to the ground, it won't rain for three years. Patriarch Bodhidharma thought, "If it doesn't rain for three years, people will starve! I have come to China to save living beings, not to kill them!" So Bodhidharma did not let his teeth fall to the ground. Instead, he swallowed them and disappeared down the road. Although he had been beaten and reviled, Bodhidharma could not go to the government and file suit against Dharma Master Shen Kuang. Those who have left home have to be patient. How much more so must a patriarch forbear.*

Bodhidharma then met a parrot imprisoned in a wicker cage. This bird was much more intelligent than Dharma Master Shen Kuang. Recognizing Bodhidharma as the First Patriarch, the bird said,

*Mind from the West,*

*Mind from the West,  
Teach me a way  
To escape from this cage.*

Wah! This bird very smart, - 西方四节 (xīfāng sì jié). It knew Bodhidharma was enlightened. It called him by such a nice name, 'Mind from the west, Mind from the West, Teach me a way to escape from this cage',

Although Bodhidharma had received no response from people, this parrot recognized him. Hearing the bird's plea for help, Bodhidharma whispered a secret expedient teaching to teach this bird how to end suffering. He said,

*To escape from the cage;  
To escape from the cage;  
Put out both legs,  
Close both eyes.  
This is the way  
To escape from the cage!*

Do you understand? This is very beautiful. Put out both legs and close both eyes.

*The parrot listened attentively and said, "**All right! I understand,**" and **stuck out his legs, closed his eyes, and waited.** When the bird's owner came home from work, he always played with his parrot. But this time when he looked in the cage he was shocked. (The **owner thought the parrot died.**)*



That's why he was very wise and **knew that the owner would open the cage**).

*The owner was on the verge of tears. He couldn't have been more upset if his own son had died. He pulled open the cage door and scooped up the bird, which **lay still and quiet in his hand**. The body had not yet chilled. The owner looked with disbelief at the little body. He peeked at it from the left and right...it didn't even quiver. Slowly, he opened his hand...PHLLRTTPHLRTTPHLRTT! The bird broke loose from his hand and flew away!*

*Now, like the parrot, we are in a cage. How do we escape? You may say, "I am already free. If I want to eat, I eat; if I want to drink, I drink. I do not have to follow rules. I can do anything."*

*Don't think you are so clever. This is not freedom, it is just confusion. To be free, you **must be free of birth and death**, and then, if you wish to fly into space you can fly into space, and if you wish to drop into the earth, you can drop into the earth. If you can do this, you are truly independent. Like the parrot, you are free.*

*As I explain The Sixth Patriarch Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra, I do not lecture well. This is not polite talk; it's true. Some lecture well, yet do not dare explain. After I have lectured, you of true eloquence may follow. When you have opened your wisdom, you will understand.*

*In his great anger, Dharma Master Shen Kuang knocked out two of Bodhidharma's teeth. He thought he had won a great victory because the Barbarian put forth no opposition. But not long after, the **Ghost of Impermanence**, wearing a high hat, paid a call on Master Shen Kuang:*

*"Your life ends today," said the ghost. "King Yama, the King of the Dead, has sent me to escort you."*

*Master Shen Kuang said, "What? Must I die? When I speak the Dharma, flowers fall from the heavens and the earth bubbles forth golden lotuses, yet I still have not ended birth and death? Tell me, **is there a person in this world who has ended birth and death?**"*

*"There is," came the reply. "Who?" asked Shen Kuang. "Tell me, and I'll follow him to study the Way." "He's that black-faced Bhikshu whose teeth you just knocked out. King Yama bows to him every day."*

Wow, this is really 'gao lat' or what they call in hokkien, 'jiak lak' (吃力). That's why don't end up this way, it's very miserable. Some more he was told, 'our **King Yama bows to him every day.**'

*"Please, Old Ghost, speak to King Yama on my behalf. I want to follow that Bhikshu. I am determined to end birth and death. Can't you allow me some more time?" "All right," said the ghost. "Since you are sincere, King Yama will wait."*

*Dharma Master Shen Kuang was delighted. He was so quick to rush after Bodhidharma that he forgot to thank the Ghost of Impermanence; in fact, he even forgot to put on his shoes. He ran until he met the parrot whom Bodhidharma had freed, and suddenly he understood, "Originally it is just this way! I need only act dead. I need only be a living dead person!"*

*Bodhidharma walked on, ignoring the barefoot Dharma Master following behind. Arriving at Bear's Ear Mountain in Loyang, the **Patriarch sat down to meditate facing a wall.** Dharma Master Shen Kuang knelt close by. For **nine years**, Patriarch Bodhidharma sat meditating and Dharma Master Shen Kuang knelt beside him, **seeking the Dharma.***

Earlier, when I spoke this public record, an eleven year old child asked me, "*During the nine years he knelt, did he eat?*" I replied, "*How could anyone kneel for nine years without eating and still live? When the Patriarch meditated, Shen Kuang knelt, and when the Patriarch ate, Shen Kuang ate.*" But this is not recorded in the books. While the Patriarch was sitting, many people came to bow to him and were received as his disciples.

*One day a great snow fell, and it rose in drifts as high as Shen Kuang's waist, and yet he continued to kneel. Finally, Patriarch Bodhidharma asked him, "Why are you kneeling here in such deep snow?"*

*“I **want to end birth and death**,” replied Shen Kuang. “When I was lecturing Sutras I was unsuccessful. Please, Patriarch, transmit this dharma to me.”*

*“What do you see falling from the sky?” asked Bodhidharma. “Snow,” said Shen Kuang. “What color is it?” asked Bodhidharma. “It’s white, of course.”*

*“When red snow falls from the sky,” said Bodhidharma, “I will transmit the Dharma to you. You knocked out two of my teeth, and I have been **most compassionate in not taking revenge**. Do you really expect me to give you the Dharma?” This was the **test** Patriarch Bodhidharma gave to Master Shen Kuang. (**Master Shen Kuang must be the 2nd Patriarch**). “How did Shen Kuang complete the test? Cultivators of the Way carry a knife to protect the substance of their precepts. A true cultivator would rather cut off his head than break a precept. Shen Kuang drew his precept knife, and with one slice, cut off his arm and thus passed his test. His blood flowed onto the new fallen snow. He scooped up a bucket full of crimson snow, dumped it before Bodhidharma, and said, “Patriarch, do you see? The snow is red!”*

Bodhidharma said, “So it is, so it is.”

He had tested Shen Kuang’s **sincerity**, and now the Patriarch was **extremely happy**. *“My coming to China has not been in vain. I have met a person who **dares to use a true mind to cultivate the Way**, even forsaking his arm in search of the Dharma.”*

The Patriarch then spoke the Dharma door of “**using the mind to seal the mind.**” It **points straight to the mind to see the nature and realize Buddhahood.** (This was the **direct** teaching, **pointing towards the true mind.** You can **bypass the mundane mind, the thinking mind.** All these **thought based training** are actually **not required.** But human beings cannot understand. They will **foolishly think,** ‘without thoughts, how to live? Without **thoughts,** how can I **meditate?**’ That’s why they must have thoughts. That’s why **when I ask you to be silent,** you reply, “Cannot, Brother Teoh. If I am just silent – I cannot learn anything, I don’t know anything.” You want to learn something, you want to learn Dharma and you go and use your thoughts. But **the real Dharma is beyond thoughts.** So you are chasing after your own shadow and you will never find it).

*While hearing this dharma, Shen Kuang **didn’t think about the pain in his arm,** and before that he had thought only of making the snow turn red. But doing so, he **once again produced discursive thought,** “My arm really hurts!” he said. “My mind is in pain. Please, Patriarch, **quiet my mind.**”*

(Actually the real wordings should be, ‘**heal** my mind’).

*“Find your mind,” said Bodhidharma. “Show it to me and I will quiet it for you.” (Not ‘quiet it for you’ it should be ‘**heal** it for you’).*

*Dharma Master Shen Kuang searched for his mind. He looked in the **ten directions:** north, east, south, west, in the intermediate*

points, and up and down. He also looked in the same seven places that the Venerable Ananda looked when Shakyamuni Buddha asked him the same question in The **Shurangama Sutra**. That is,

1. He looked inside his body;
2. He looked outside his body;
3. He looked for it hidden somewhere in his sense organs.
4. He looked where there was light;
5. He looked at the place where conditions came together.
6. He looked in the middle, between the organs and their objects;
7. And, finally, he looked in the place of non-attachment, which is no-place.

At last Shen Kuang said to Bodhidharma, **“I can’t find my mind! Great Master, it is nowhere to be found.”** ‘This is how well I have **quieted** your mind’, said the Patriarch. (See, **he just answered** him this way.) At these words, Shen Kuang understood the **meaning of the Dharma transmission**, the wonderful, **ineffable** principle:

*Ten thousand dharmas return to one; where does the one return?*

*Shen Kuang did not understand, and ran after Bodhidharma;  
Before him at Bear’s Ear Mountain Knelt nine years  
Seeking Dharma to escape King Yama*

With the **transmission of the Dharma**, Shen Kuang received the name “Hui K’o” which means “Able Wisdom.”

*Master Hui K’o asked Bodhidharma, “In India, did you transmit the Dharma to your disciples? Did you also give the **robe and bowl as certification?**”*

*“I transmitted the Dharma in India,” replied Bodhidharma, “but I did not use the robe and bowl. Indian people are straightforward. When they attain the fruit, they know they must be certified. If no one certifies them, they do not say, ‘I have attained the way! I have given proof to Arhatship! I am a Bodhisattva!’ They do not speak like this. Chinese people, however, are different. Many Chinese have the **Great Vehicle** Root, Nature ..... “*

Do you know what Great Vehicle is? (A Kalyāṇamitta answered but answer could not be heard.) What is it? Louder, louder. Ya, but the meaning is deeper than that. You look at the note.

**(Note 11:** “Great Vehicle Root Nature” refers to the **strong karmic affinity** of those who in past lives have **cultivated the Great Vehicle** and who, by *their meritorious actions, have sent down “deep roots,” that is, have established a firm foundation in the Buddha Dharma, which enables them to successfully understand and practice it in the present.*)

These are people who have **great roots** which means they are cultivating the **Bodhisattva way**. They are not sainthood way cultivators. They really have the determination and understanding

to go the Bodhisattva way. That's the reason why it has to be transmitted.

*".....but there are also many people who lie. Having cultivated without success, such people claim to have the Way. Though they **have not certified** to the fruit, they **claim to be certified sages**. Therefore I transmit the robe and bowl to prove that you have received the transmission. **Guard them well and take care.**"*

(So that was how the **tradition came about** but after the 6th Patriarch, the 5th Patriarch said, 'stop the transmission of the **bowl and the robe**; do not transmit anymore.' So that's how the bowl and the robe tradition stopped at the 6th Patriarch).

*While the Patriarch Bodhidharma was in China, he was poisoned six times.*

(See not easy, right? Patriarch also can be poisoned and they have to endure all these).

*'...**Dharma Master Bodhiruci and Vinaya Master Kuang T'ung** were **jealous** of him. They prepared a vegetarian meal which contained **an invariably fatal drug**, and offered it to the Patriarch. Although he knew it was poisoned, he ate it. Then he vomited the food onto a tray, and it was transformed into a pile of writhing snakes. After this **unsuccessful attempt**, Bodhiruci tried again, using an even more potent poison. Again, Bodhidharma ate the food. Then he sat atop a huge boulder and spat out the poison. The boulder crumbled into a heap of dust. In*



*four more attempts, jealous people tried **without** success to poison the Patriarch.*

One day, the Great Master Bodhidharma said to Hui K'o, *"I came to China because I saw people here with the Great Vehicle Root Nature. Now I have transmitted the Dharma and am ready to **complete the stillness.**"* After his death, the Patriarch's body was buried. There was nothing unusual about his funeral.

In Northern Wei (386-532 A.D.), however, an official called Sung Yün, met Bodhidharma on the road to Chung Nan Mountain in Ts'ung Ling. When they met, Bodhidharma was carrying one shoe in his hand. He said to Sung Yün, "The king of your country died today. Return quickly! There is work to be done."

The official asked, 'Great Master, where are you going and to whom did you transmit your Dharma?' The Great Master replied, 'Back to India and in China, after forty years, to Hui K'o.'

Sung Yün returned to his country and reported the incident. *"Recently, in Ts'ung Ling, I met the Patriarch Bodhidharma who told me that the king of our country had died and instructed me to return to the capital. When I arrived I found it exactly as he had said. How did he know?"*

His countrymen scoffed, *"**Bodhidharma is already dead. How could you have met him on the road?**"* Then they rushed to the Patriarch's grave and found it empty, with nothing inside but one shoe.

Where did Bodhidharma go? No one knows. Perhaps he came to America. Wherever he wanders, no one can recognize him, because he can change and transform according to his convenience. When he came to China, he said **he was one hundred and fifty years old**, and when he left, he was **still one hundred and fifty years old**. No historical references can be found.

When Bodhidharma was about to enter Nirvana he said, *“I came to China and **transmitted my Dharma to three people. One received my marrow, one my bones, and one my flesh.**”* After the transmission, the Patriarch himself no longer had a body. Great Master Hui K’o received the **marrow** and Ch’an Master Tao Yü received the **bones**.

**Bhikshuni Tsung Ch’ih** could recite The Lotus Sutra from memory. After she died, a green lotus flower grew from her mouth. She received Bodhidharma’s **flesh**. In the end, the Patriarch had no body at all. So don’t look for him in America; you won’t find him.

This is Master Hsuan Hua’s way of having humour in his sharing.

The Second Patriarch, **Hui K’o** of the Northern Ch’i (550- 577 A.D.) whose family name was Chi, was formerly **Shen Kuang**. When he was born, his parents saw Wei T’ou Bodhisattva, the golden armored spiritual being, came to offer protection; thereupon they named their son “Shen Kuang” which means

*“spiritual light.”* Not only was the Patriarch intelligent, but he had an **excellent memory** as well, and **his skill and powers of discrimination** were so **remarkable** that he could read ten lines at one go, when it took an ordinary person to read one. In a gathering of one hundred people, all talking at once, he could clearly distinguish each conversation.

The Great Master, **however, had great anger**; he disagreed with everyone and was always ready to fight. When Shen Kuang explained Sutras, as I have told you, he used his iron beads to win his arguments. Later, after he knelt for nine years in quest of the Dharma, it was his **great anger** which **enabled him to cut off his arm and felt no pain**. It was also because of this anger that he later felt pain. Afflicted by anger, he would have felt no pain. Pain is just an affliction and affliction is the cause of pain.

The Second Patriarch **was forty years old** when he left Bodhidharma. Having obtained the Dharma, he went into **hiding** because Bodhiruci and Vinaya Master Kuang T’ung, who had made six attempts on the life of Bodhidharma, also wished to kill his disciples. So although Hui K’o had great anger, he nevertheless **obeyed** his teacher and went into hiding for **forty years**. When he was **eighty**, he began to propagate the Buddhadharma, teaching and transforming living beings.

Later, the disciples of Bodhiruci and Vinaya Master Kuang T’ung tried to kill Master Hui K’o, who **feigned insanity** to lessen the jealousy of his rivals. But he never ceased to save living beings who were ready to receive his teaching. Because so many

people continued to trust the Second Patriarch, Bodhiruci's disciples were still jealous. They reported **Hui K'o** to the government, accusing him of being **a weird inhuman creature**. They charged, "He confused the people who followed him, he is not even human." The Emperor then ordered the district magistrate to arrest him, and Hui K'o was locked up and questioned:

*"Are you human or are you a freak?"* asked the Magistrate. *"I'm a freak,"* replied Master Hui K'o. The magistrate knew that the Patriarch said this **to avoid causing jealousy**, so he ordered him to tell the truth. "Speak clearly," he demanded, *"what are you?"*

The Great Master replied, "I'm a freak." Governments can't allow strange freaks to roam the earth, and so Hui K'o was sentenced to die. Now, isn't this the way of the world?

The **Patriarch wept** when he told his disciples, ***"I must undergo this retribution."*** He was a **courageous man**, certainly not one to cry out of fear of death. He was sad because the Dharma **had not become widely understood** during his lifetime.

"The Buddha Dharma will ***not flourish*** until the time of the ***Fourth Patriarch,***" he announced, and then he faced the executioner.

*"Come and kill me!"* he said. The executioner raised his axe and swung it towards the Master's neck.

What do you think happened?

You are probably thinking, “He was a Patriarch with great spiritual power. Certainly the blade shattered and his head was not even scratched.” No. The axe cut off his head, and it didn’t grow back. However, **instead of blood, a milky white liquid flowed onto the chopping block.**

You think, “Now really, this is just too far out.” If you believe it, that is fine. If you do not believe it, that is fine too; just forget it. However, I will give you a simple explanation of why blood did not flow from the Patriarch’s neck: **When a sage enters the white yang realm, his blood becomes white because his body has transformed completely into yang, leaving no trace of yin.** “I don’t believe it,” you say. Of course you don’t. If you did, you would be just like the Second Patriarch.

Yang realm is Bái yáng shìjiè. (白陽世界)

When the executioner saw that the Master did not bleed, he exclaimed, “Hey! He really is a freak! I chopped off his head, but what came out was not blood, but **this milky white fluid.** And his face looks exactly as it did when he was alive!” The Emperor knew that **he had executed a saint,** because he remembered that the **Twenty-fourth Indian Patriarch, Aryasimha, had also been beheaded and had not bled, but a white milky liquid had poured forth,** because he had been **without outflows.** When

one has **no ignorance**, one may attain to a state without **outflows** and enter the **white yang realm**.

You think, “But you just said that Patriarch Hui K’o had great anger. How could he have been without ignorance?” You are certainly cleverer than I am, for I did not think of this question. But now that you have brought it up, I will answer it. His was **not petty anger** like yours and mine which *explodes like firecrackers*, “Pop! Pop! Pop.” His anger was wisdom and because of it his body became yang. Great patience, great knowledge, great courage, and great wisdom: that’s what his temper was made of. Realizing that Hui K’o was a **Bodhisattva** in the flesh, the *Emperor felt great shame*. “A Bodhisattva came to our country,” he said, “and **instead of offering him protection, we killed him.**” Then the Emperor had all the **great officials take refuge with this strange Bhikshu**. Thus, even though the Second Patriarch had already been executed, he still accepted these disciples.

The *Third Patriarch, Seng Ts’an* of the Sui Dynasty, was of *unknown family name and origin*. When he first came to visit the Second Patriarch, his body was covered with repulsive sores like those of a leper.

*“Where are you from?”* asked the Second Patriarch. *“What are you doing here?”*

*“I have come to take refuge with the High Master, and to study and cultivate the Buddha Dharma,”* answered Seng Ts’an.

“You have a **loathsome disease** and your body is **filthy**. How can you study the Buddha Dharma?”

Master Hui K’o was clever, but Dhyana Master Seng Ts’an was **even cleverer**. “I am a sick man and you are a high master,” he said, “but in **our true minds** where is the difference?”

This one is already somebody. He is not an ordinary guy. It’s just like Hui Neng when he went to the 5th Patriarch, remember? They called him a barbarian. He said that physically there is such a thing as a northerner and a southerner. But with regards to one’s **True nature**, there is no north and no south. That’s why after that, the 5th Patriarch said, he talked too much and sent him to the kitchen. Thereupon, the Second Patriarch transmitted the Dharma to Seng Ts’an saying,

*“This robe and bowl have been passed on from Bodhidharma. They certify that you have received the Dharma Seal. In order to protect it you must go into hiding, because Bodhiruci’s followers will try to harm you. Be very careful and let no one know that you have received the transmission.”*

The **Third Patriarch Seng Ts’an** also **feigned insanity** while he taught living beings. During the **persecution of Buddhism by the Emperor Wu** of the Northern **Chou dynasty** (reigned from 561-577 A.D.), the Patriarch fled into the mountains. While he hid there, the tigers, wolves, leopards, and other fierce animals all disappeared.

After transmitting the Dharma to the **Fourth Patriarch, Tao Hsin**, Master Seng Ts'an invited a thousand Bhikshus to a great vegetarian feast. After they had eaten, he said, "*You think that to sit in full lotus is the best way to die. Watch! I'll demonstrate my independence over birth and death!*" The Master left the dining hall, followed by the thousand Bhikshus. He halted by the trunk of a tree, and **after pausing for a moment, he leapt up and grabbed a big branch**. Then **while swinging from the tree by one hand, he entered Nirvana**. No one knew his name or his birthplace. See this is how they can also realize Parinibbāna.

Someone is afraid and thinks, "*The First Patriarch was poisoned, the Second Patriarch was beheaded, and the Third Patriarch died hanging from a tree. I certainly do not want to be a patriarch. It's much too dangerous.*" With this attitude, even if you wanted to be a patriarch you could not. As long as **you fear death**, as long as you **fear anything at all**, you cannot even be a **patriarch's disciple**. Patriarchs are **not afraid of suffering**. They are **not afraid of life** and they are **not afraid of death**. **Making no distinctions between life and death, they roam among people, teaching and transforming them**. Like Fo T'o and Yeh She, they know that **affliction is just Bodhi** and **that birth and death is Nirvana**. So, tell me now, who is **not afraid of birth and death**? If there is such a one, I will make him a patriarch.

The **Fourth Patriarch's** name was **Tao Hsin**. While very young, Master Tao Hsin left home under Master Seng Ts'an and for sixty years he sat in Dhyana concentration, without lying down to rest. **Although he seldom opened his eyes, he wasn't asleep. He was**



**working at cultivation. When he did open his eyes, everyone shook with terror. Why? No one knew. Such was the magnitude of his awesome virtue.**

Hearing of the Master's great virtue, in the seventeenth year of the **Chen Kuan Reign of the T'ang dynasty** (643 A.D.), the Emperor sent a messenger to invite him to the palace to receive offerings. Unlike us common people, who would attempt to wedge ourselves into the court without being asked, the Great Master, the Fourth Patriarch, ***refused the invitation*** saying, ***"I am too old and the journey would be tiring. Eating on the road would be too difficult. I cannot undergo such hardship."***

When the messenger delivered the Patriarch's reply, the Emperor said, *"Go back and tell him that the Emperor says that no matter how old he is or how difficult the journey, I have ordered him to come to the palace."*

The messenger returned to the Patriarch and said, *"Master, regardless of your health, you must come to the Emperor's court. We will carry you back, if necessary!"* At that time, since there were no airplanes or cars, travel was difficult.

*"No, I cannot go," replied the Patriarch. "I am too old and ill. Take my head if you must, but my heart will not go."*

The messenger thought, *"There is nothing to do but to go back without him. I cannot take his head to the Emperor. This Bhikshu is very strange; he is hardly human."*

The messenger then hurried back to the Emperor. *“Your Excellency, you may have the Master’s head, but his heart will not move!”*

*“Very well, go get his head,”* replied the Emperor. He put a knife in a box and gave it to the messenger saying, *“Slice off his head, but under no circumstances should you harm this Bhikshu.”*

The messenger understood. He returned to the Fourth Patriarch. *“Venerable Master, if you refuse to come, the Emperor has ordered me to cut off your head,”* he said.

Patriarch Tao Hsin said, ***“If in this life my head gets to see the Emperor that will be great glory. You may remove my head now.”*** ***The messenger took out the knife and prepared to cut off his head. The Great Master closed his eyes and waited calmly for about ten minutes.*** Maybe it was ten minutes, maybe it was nine or eleven. Don’t become attached. It is certainly not determined exactly how long he waited. But **nothing happened**, and **finally Master Tao Hsin got angry**, just like the Second Patriarch, and shouted, “Hey! Why don’t you slice off my head?”

*“The Emperor had no intention of harming you,”* the messenger quickly replied. *“He was just bluffing.”*

The Patriarch heard this and laughed aloud. Then he said, *“Now you know that there is still a person in the world who does not fear death.”*

The family name of the Fourth Patriarch was Ssu Ma and his personal name was Hsin. Ssu Ma was an honorable ancestral name. Both the Emperor Ssu Ma of the Chin dynasty and the historian and skilled writer **Ssu Ma Ch'ien** of the **Han dynasty** had this name. When the Fourth Patriarch became a Bhikshu he took the new name **Tao Hsin**. He lived **seventy-two years**, sixty of which were spent without lying down even once to sleep. The **Fourth Patriarch's realm of accomplishment was inconceivable.**

While Tao Hsin was cultivating, a nearby city was **besieged by bandits** for more than a hundred days, **depriving** its inhabitants of **water and supplies**. Seeing the lives of the people in danger, Master Tao Hsin left his mountain retreat **to rescue the city dwellers**. He taught them all to recite "**Mahaprajna- pāramitā.**" After they had recited for a time, the bandits fled and water reappeared in the wells. This is the **response based on the Way** which Master Tao Hsin **evoked as a result of his superior** cultivation.

When the Fourth Patriarch decided to build a temple, he looked with his Buddha eye and saw Broken Head Mountain surrounded by a purple cloud of energy. Observing this **auspicious sign**, the Master went there to dwell, changing its inauspicious name, "Broken Head," to "Double Peak" Mountain.

The Master used **expedient dharma** to teach living beings how **to discard** their bad habits. These **stubborn** living beings, **however**, often discarded what was good and continued doing evil. But the Master persisted and by using all kinds of **skillful means** caused these **stubborn living beings** to **realize their mistakes**. He

propagated the Dharma for more than forty years, transforming living beings greater in number than seedlings of rice, stalks of hemp, shoots of bamboo, or blades of grass.

One day the Fourth Patriarch said to **his disciple Dharma Master Yüan I**, “You should build me a **Stupa**. I am going to leave.”

In the second year of **Yung Hui**, of the T’ang dynasty (651 A.D.), on the twenty-fourth day of the ninth lunar month, **Patriarch Tao Hsin**, who had never been ill, **sat down** and **entered Nirvana**. His disciples locked his flesh body securely in the stone Stupa. **A year later** the iron locks fell away and the **Stupa opened by itself**. Looking in, everyone saw the **body of the Fourth Patriarch still sitting in full lotus**, appearing **the same as when he was alive**. The Master’s body **had not decayed**, but the **flesh had dried out**. The Fifth Patriarch, Hung Jen, wrapped the body with lacquered cloth and gilded it. This “true body” still exists today. The Fifth Patriarch, Hung Jen, also lived during the T’ang dynasty. His family name was Chou. He lived in **Huang Mei County** near Double Peak Mountain. When he was seven, he went to the temple on the mountain to attend upon the **Fourth Patriarch**. The **Great Master Hung Jen** cleaned the lamps and censer before the Buddha images; he swept the floor, carried water, split firewood, and worked in the kitchen. At age thirteen he took the **ten novice precepts** and **studied under the Fourth Patriarch for over thirty years**.

The Fifth Patriarch was eight feet tall and had an extraordinary appearance. **When others treated him badly, he remained silent and unmoved**. Because he **did not** give rise to **discrimination**, he

**never** spoke of “right” or “wrong”, and when fellow Bhikshus bullied him, he never fought back. His calm, quiet manner indicated that he had realized a state of peace.

Even after working hard all day, the Master didn’t rest. Instead of sleeping, he sat in meditation, uniting body and mind in powerful samādhi. Master Hung Jen lived in the woods of P’ing Mao Mountain slightly east of Double Peak Mountain, so his teaching is called the **East Mountain Dharma Door**. Once, like his master the Fourth Patriarch, he saw a horde of bandits besieging a nearby city. Their leader, a Mongol named K’e Ta Ha Na Lu, and his followers had so tightly cut off the communications that even the birds couldn’t fly in or out. The Fifth Patriarch went down P’ing Mao Mountain toward the city. *When the bandits saw him, they were terrified, for they saw not only the Patriarch, but also a **retinue of golden-armoured vajra king Bodhisattvas** armed with jewelled weapons, **manifesting awesome virtue and brightness**. The thieves **retreated**, their siege broken.*

How was the Great Master able to command these vajra king Bodhisattvas? The **Fifth Patriarch** had cultivated and he recited the **Shurangama Mantra**. The Shurangama Sutra says that if you are **constantly mindful** of the **Shurangama Mantra**, eighty-four thousand vajra store Bodhisattvas will protect you from all danger. In the fifth year of the Hsien Ch’ing reign of the T’ang dynasty (660 A.D.), the **Emperor invited Great Master Hung Jen** to the palace. The Master **declined** the invitation. The Emperor sent a second invitation which the Master also declined. Finally, the

Emperor sent a variety of gifts, including rare medicinal herbs, as an offering to the Great Master, the Fifth Patriarch.

In the fifth year of the Hsien Hsiang reign of the T'ang dynasty (674 A.D.), the Fifth Patriarch said to his disciple, **Master Hsüan Chi**, *"Build me a Stupa. I am going to leave."* In the second month on the fourteenth day he asked, *"Is the Stupa ready?"* Master Hsüan Chi replied that it was. The Patriarch said, *"For many years I have taught living beings. I have taken across those whom I must take across and **have transmitted my Dharma to Hui Neng, the Sixth Patriarch.** Now, in addition, **you ten** should become **Dharma Hosts**, and **establish Bodhimandas** to preserve and spread the teaching among living beings."*

The ten he addressed were: **Dharma Masters Shen Hsiu, Chih Hsien, I Fang, Chih Te, Hsüan Chi, Lao An, Fa Ju, Hui Tsang, Hsüan Yao, and also Upasaka Liu Chu Pu**, who had dealt with correspondence and accounting. The Fifth Patriarch sent each of these ten people to a different place to teach and transform living beings. Shortly thereafter, he sat very still and his energy dispersed as he entered Nirvana. So this was the history behind. During the **seventy-four years of his life, the Fifth Patriarch Hung Jen** had accepted many disciples, and had transmitted the Dharma to the Great **Master Hui Neng**.

So now we shall enter the **Platform Sutra proper**. The history of the first 5 Patriarchs is just for your information. They are not so important. The messages behind - you have to develop the understanding; all Bodhisattvas or Patriarchs when they come, not

everyone has a good life. Do you realize that? It **depends** on the **period** and how the **conditions** then unfold. But whatever it is, when you **start to understand** that *this 'form and mind' is not you*, then you **will be able to do things that are out of the ordinary**. And many things when you cannot understand, you tend to use the ***thought to try to understand*** them. The ***thought will make it worse***.

A lot of people used to tell me that these **Mahayana Patriarchs**, they were great beings (I used to hear this in the early days). They came and they suffered so much and the way they died doesn't sound right. ***Bodhidharma was poisoned so many times***. Then ***2nd Patriarch was executed***. The ***3rd Patriarch hanged himself*** and the **4th Patriarch had a stupa built for him**. They actually had **very tough conditions** at that time. So a lot of them could not understand and they commented, 'Hey, you are a Patriarch, why must you die like that?' The reason being they **already understood** that this *'form and mind'* was **not** what it was. If conditions were such, it had to be such.

They would have the understanding especially the **2nd Patriarch**. He was full of anger, remember? He was **very arrogant** but because of the **King of Death, Yama** he was taught a lesson, then he actually **changed**. Then when he received the Dharma, which he understood, he didn't want to react like before and do all those foolish things anymore because - no point. That's why he listened to Bodhidharma and **went into hiding** for 40 years. Then when he came out, again he taught. By then he was already 80 years old and in order **not to offend** those people and create **unnecessary**

**purging**, he would rather admit that he was a freak because when he admitted he was a freak, they would only execute him. The disciples would be ok. Otherwise they **would keep on purging** all those link to him and then they would **make sure** all were **rooted out** because the Chinese had a **very bad culture**.

When the king or Emperor wanted to finish you off, they must root out all the roots of the grass, 残草除根 (Cán cǎo chú gēn) - meaning all the roots, all the followers, everything they would remove. So you have to understand it's because of that culture. And they are with that type of mentality. Later many emperors actually wanted the **Patriarchs** to visit them but the Patriarchs knew, no point because not all the emperors had the **Dharma understanding** and what they wanted was something else. That's why thus far, none of these Patriarchs went to them, except Bodhidharma who went for a while. Then when the Emperor couldn't understand his teaching he left.

With this we will stop here and we will continue the rest at our next class. The next topic is 'A General Introduction edited by Bhikhu Fa Hai of the Tang Dynasty.' This topic is to introduce the **6th Patriarch, Master Hui Neng**. Go back and read it up. Do you have any questions? **No question. End of Dharma session.**