

4th Lesson of the Sixth Patriarch's Platform Sutra



(Based on a **direct transcript** from the **recording** of the
4th Lesson of the Sixth Patriarch's Platform Sutra class
[dated 19th September 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

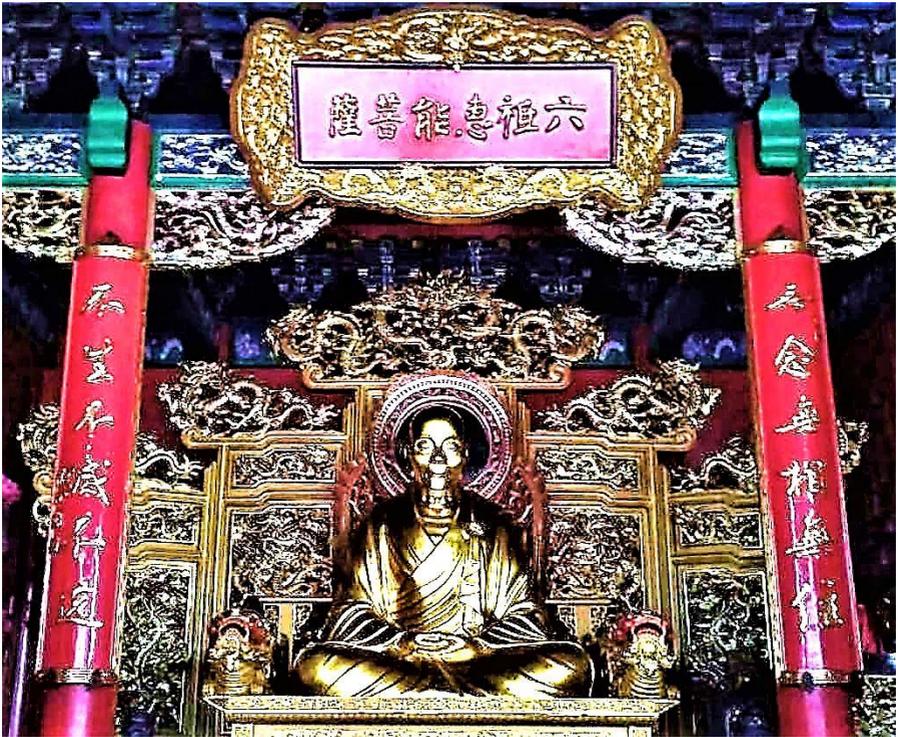
Donated by:

Kalyāṇamitta funds of Bro. Teoh Kian Koon

teohkiankoon@hotmail.com

Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia.

Dated: 30.1.2018



Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng Bodhisattva

六祖惠能菩薩

Contents

1.	Preface.....	1
2.	Acknowledgement.....	2
3.	4 th Lesson of the 6 th Patriarch Platform Sutra dated 19 ^h July 2015..	3
3.1.	Pūjā.....	3
3.2.	Dharma and Sutra By Bro. Teoh	3

(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 centres, Buddhist societies* and places that invite him.

For *more details* 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 4th **lesson** of the **Sixth Patriarch's Platform Sutra** class (dated 19.7.2015); 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 accordingly **adjust** themselves 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 notes.

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 below MP3 audio link:

<http://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/4th-6-Patriarch-19-July-2015.mp3>

2. Acknowledgement

It is the donors' **sincere intentions** that these *dharma transcript notes* 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 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: 30th January 2018)

3. 4th Lesson of the 6th Patriarch Platform Sutra dated 19^h July 2015

3.1. Pūjā

The **usual pre-puja** chanting of the **Mahayana tradition's** salutation followed by the **Theravada tradition's** salutation, taking of the 3 refuges and the renewal of the 5 precepts was done (for details please do listen to the recording or refer to our lesson 2 or 3's transcript books).

3.2. Dharma and Sutra By Bro. Teoh

Just relax yourself. Maintain some form of attention; then we can start. We will continue from where we stop. We shall turn to page 31. But before that we will recite the **opening verse** for starting the sutra. Please turn to the first page, - Verse for Opening the Sutra. It's immediately after the introduction to the first 6 Patriarchs.

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.*

So this verse is to serve as a reminder. It is very important that you understand the **rareness** of coming across such a sutra. Okay, we will turn to page 31.

A General Introduction (Edited by Bhikshu Fa Hai of the T'ang Dynasty)

What follows is not the Sutra text, but an introduction to the Sutra which was written by The Sixth Patriarch's disciple, Fa Hai.

This was written by the 6th Patriarch's disciple called Fa Hai.

*.....When the Sixth Patriarch taught Dharma, Master Fa Hai followed him, recording all of the things the Patriarch said. Later, he compiled and edited his notes, calling them The Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra. (Bro Teoh: Had he not done this, we would have no way to study the Sixth Patriarch's Dharma. Therefore, we should certainly be **grateful** for such compassion as his).*

Now you understand why we also on *many occasions* **expressed our gratitude** towards **Sister Yoon Chun**. If Yoon Chun **had not**, during the **year 2004**, **invited me to come out to share the Dharma**, all these **will not happen** and we will not have what we are having now. If you look back, for those who **don't have** that understanding, you **will not understand** how all these can be possible. Just a *simple request*, that very **insignificant** but rather **sincere** request, can bring about *such changes* because at that time, *nobody knew me*; only **my nature** knew *what is happening*.

Then because it happened, my nature *finally consented*. Actually for the *first three times* I sort of **rejected her request** via telling her,

‘never mind’ because every time people invite me to share, at that time the condition was **not yet ready** and *not ripe* as yet. I then said, ‘*It is ok, just let things be*’. When **conditions are ready, things will manifest**. That’s why I said ‘*never mind*’; means in *a very subtle way* I said, ‘not now’. Then after the third time, very strange, my nature inside knew something. Then it prompted me via saying, ‘Eh, it’s about time you come out to share. The conditions are already ready.’ So because of that, I reflected, then I knew the reason **why I refused** to come out and share the Dharma was **because of my concern** for the **living beings**. In a way it is like the case of Sākyamuni Buddha. After Sākyamuni became fully enlightened underneath the Bodhi tree, he **immediately reflected** and he **knew** what he had **realized** was **too profound** for living beings to understand, hence the reason why he didn’t even have the intention to share and teach them.

For the first 7 weeks after his enlightenment, he did nothing. He just went through the whole 7 weeks of conditions which were meant to be. Then after the 7 weeks, when he reflected on it, one of the Brahma up there, **Sahampati** who can read the Buddha’s concern, came down and *respectfully paid respect* to Sākyamuni Buddha and **requested Sākyamuni Buddha to share the Dharma via** saying, ‘There are some who *have little dust in their eyes* who can *understand you*.’ Then Sākyamuni reflected and said, ‘Ya’. There are some like his 2 teachers who taught him; if they were still around; they would have understood. So he surveyed the world. Then he realized both of them had just passed away. One of them passed away one week ago. The other one passed away one day ago.

It was meant to be because of their views and opinions of enlightenment. To them, they thought the 7th *jhāna* and the 8th *jhāna* is the highest. They already made determination and very **strong aspirations** to be reborn there thinking that was the *ultimate goal*. And because of that, it obstructed them from receiving the *actual teaching or truth*. That's the reason why they must die before Sākyamuni became fully enlightened. Otherwise their vows and aspirations **cannot** be fulfilled. That's why when you make vows; you have to be very careful. *You don't make vow to obstruct yourself*. So that was the reason why.

When you have **gratitude** and are **grateful** to people who understand, it will bring forth the *causes and conditions for beautiful things to arise*. So this disciple of the 6th Patriarch, his name is **Fa Hai**; he knew the **master's teaching** was *very profound* and at that time he didn't have the luxury of having a recorder to record the talk like us. So he has to **write down** the notes and do you know how difficult it was.

That day, we heard from Sister Alicia's sharing, telling us how she **appreciate those** people *who sacrificed their time and energy* to do the **transcript** for us. It was not easy but when she knew that the transcript can be so beautiful and so meaningful, she also volunteer to do it. The first half an hour was really not easy. Then she came to realize how difficult it was to do it by those who have done it. Actually those who volunteer doing it, do so because of their strong **faith**. And they, *after listening*, **realized** the **beauty** of the **dharma** that was shared and **their heart receive so much joy** then

they want to do up the transcript so that other people can also **benefit** from it. And when they started doing it, it's not easy, I can tell you. You can ask them all. Every sentence, every line when you listen, you have to pause and write it down. Otherwise you cannot follow. Then after you write it down, you read and read and reread or listen and listen and re-listen until it stabilizes. There is **so much joy**, then only you **start to understand** what has been shared was so **beautiful**. So we should thank them all. Sadhu! x3.

When you do it, it will **benefit** yourself and others too. So whatever thing you do, if it is based on **goodness** and **wholesomeness** of heart, it will bring about **great benefits** to all. Like yesterday I told my son the same thing. We went for breakfast at around SS2 area, within our housing area. All the parking lots were taken up but opposite the parking lot on the other side, you can do a parallel parking. There was just one space at the end, just enough for one car to go in. Then I told my son, "I think we park there." He said, "Okay, okay." But because I tried to park as near as I can and he actually had this kind thought. He said, "Daddy, I think I should reverse a bit." I say, "Ya. Otherwise the other car cannot come out." Then do you know what happened?

He reverse and parked. Then we went in for breakfast. After breakfast, I came out, then I shared with him, "There you see! That **kind thought** of yours had enabled the car in front to come out. It turned out to be a blessing in disguise. It helped us because there was another car that was parked behind us. No more space, because he parked very close to our car. If we had parked very tightly in front, we also cannot come out but because we allowed

space in front, we could still come out.

So when you think you are helping others, you are actually helping yourself. These are the **dharma** that you can learn - as long as you have **goodness, kindness**, you are **considerate** and you **feel for people**, then whatever you do, those **wholesomeness** will protect you. It is **your inheritance**. So **don't be selfish, don't be deluded and don't be so calculative**. **You may say**, 'Ai! That fellow cannot come out, it is that fellow's problem!' If you think this way, in future you yourself may get stuck inside. You must never do that because later on, other people will do that to you when there is condition. Then you realize, during that time, you may said, "these people, they are *so inconsiderate*, how can they do this to me?" But who *created the condition* in the first place? It's you because *nature or the law of karma is very fair*.

Nature has *its own nature's laws that governs life and existence*. So if you accord and flow and you **understand** nature's law, you will *know how to live*. That's why this expression of **compassion** and **gratitude** towards Fa Hai is very good. You must always have this in *your heart*, so that *your heart will open up*, so that you will have more and more *goodness and kindness*. Please do listen to this, I seldom mention this (maybe I have mentioned it before but not often). Ultimately, the **real dharma** (after you **have cultivated** it), will ends up in only one way. If you want to know whether *you really have the dharma or not*, you will **have to check whether you have more and more virtue or not**. You will come to realize that finally it is the **virtue** in **you** that **reflect** the **real awakening**. If you **cannot develop virtue** on its **own naturally**, then **you don't** have the dharma. People who have the dharma will **automatically have**

great virtue. Their mind, their nature, their heart are very kind, very *considerate*, very *sincere*, full of *gratitude*, *contentment*, *respect*, *understanding*, *goodness* and *wholesomeness*.

So when you **cannot cultivate** until you **have all these virtues**, it means you are still far from **understanding** the **true dharma**. When you think you are *very good*, **your ego** may still be very strong, behind all your *thought processes* because the **true dharma** has not being understood. You have not really developed the *clear understanding*. When you have, you will become very different. Your nature becomes different. It becomes very **virtuous**. It becomes *very kind* and *very considerate*. It can understand many things. Then it *becomes* very **sensitive**. And it **loses its selfishness**. It loses this, what they call, the **egoic entity**; *the mark, the Centre* from which it *acts and moves*. It **slowly dissolves** that Centre and becomes like **you are nothing**; you are **insignificant**; you **are nobody** and then **humility** is automatically *manifested*. Then there is **no mark** of a **self** within who still **wants to pursue** this, **pursue** that and **weigh things**, **want** and **desire things**. Even the *subtle views and opinions* of what **should be** or **should not be** is also **no more**; that one is still an ego and this egoic mind is *very subtle*. When it **can still stir** and **move** in the **slightest manner**, it is still an **egoic mind**. You **will penetrate** all these as you **cultivate**, you will *understand it very clearly*. The **slightest movement** within is due to the **stirring** of the mind. That's why that movement, if it is *really nothing*, *everything will becomes still*, **silence** and there is **no movement** at all. That's why the Mandarin saying - 起心动念 (qǐ xīn dòng niàn) is **a very good expression** of the **mind's movement**. Its meaning is, 'when mind arise, thinking (or

thought) activities arise'. Then the first two dependent origination links, 无明言行 (wú míng yán xíng) or **avijjā paccaya saṅkhāra** (which is *dependent on ignorance, thought activities arise*) becomes meaningful, very clear and easy to understand. The **moment you stir the mind**, you **arise** the **mundane mind**, the **thinking mind**. Then you create saṅkhāra. That's the reason why the Buddha said, 'avijjā paccaya saṅkhāra'. So 没有无明, 心就不会起 (méiyǒu wú míng, xīn jiù bù huì qǐ) - meaning without ignorant there is no mental activities or arising of the mundane mind. Reason why, 起心 is because of 无明 hence 无明言行. So, 起心, 动念, 念头 (niàntou) - activities of mind arises because you arise the mind; that egoic mind that **wants to know, wants to do things, wants to experience**.

That will **allow you** to *understand* clearly that **mind is the forerunner** of all things. Mind is **chief**. *When mind arises, everything arises, everything comes to be* and for mind to arise there must be these **5 aggregates of form and mind**, a *karmically conditioned vehicle and tool* for you to come to this **existential world**. Otherwise, **without contact** upon the **sense bases**, there is *no arising of consciousness*. And when consciousness comes to be (just like what we shared at Brother Tune and Sister Padmasuri's house dana, *upon contact consciousness comes to be*) then the **content of consciousness** (basing on your views, opinions and conditionings) went in to arise the thought. That's how you know the world. That's how you interact with the world. That's how creation comes about. That's why mind is the forerunner of all things, mind is chief. When **mind arises, everything comes to be**.

You will come **to understand** how you **function** as a human being, how **you perceive** the world, how you **know** the world and how you **interact** with the world. Without the senses, you **cannot function**. So the *consciousness* that *arise via contact* with the *senses* are the **conditioned mind**, the **mundane thinking** mind. That's why it's the forerunner of all things. *Without this, you cannot know the world. Without this, you cannot interact with the world. Without this, you are nothing, you are nobody.* But when this arises, everything arises. The egoic mind arises, the evil roots arise, the mental hindrances arise, the dharma arise, and everything else via content of consciousness arises.

So the Mahayana teaching is also very profound. Somehow, the English words **do not** have the ability to carry those meaning through – not as clearly as Mandarin words. The Mandarin words about the mind, 一切一切为心照 (yīqiè yīqiè wéi xīnzhào) is very good and very powerful whereas if you use the English words to express the same meaning you will have to use 2 sentences instead of one because the expression, 'everything arises from the mind' doesn't carry the same meaning as the mandarin, isn't it? 'Everything arises from the mind', you don't have much idea, but in mandarin 一切一切为心照 *means the mind create them all*.

Everything arises from the mind because this mind is a **conditioned arising mind** that creates, 心照成的 (xīnzhào chéng de). Then the meaning **becomes clear** when you *understand* but the Buddha had to explain it. That's why he said, '*mind is the forerunner of all things*'. He has to come up with those words first. Mind is the forerunner of all things, mind is chief. When the mind arises,

everything else arises. That's why in the English language, it can't give you the *similar clear meaning*, until I explained, 'who are you? What are you? And how you function as a human being and through your senses, how do you know the world?' Then 'what is mind, the **5 aggregates of form and mind** etc.' Not until these are explained, Dhammapada verses 1 and 2 do not reflect these clear meaning but for Mahayana it is *so different* because the meaning **really stands out clearly**.

They **cultivate direct** via the **true mind**. They don't want to go through the **form Dharma**. They **go direct** to the mind. They go direct to the **true mind**. In order *to understand the true mind*, you must **understand** the **mundane mind**, the **thinking mind**. Then only you can *understand* the **true mind**. **Without** the *mundane mind to create, there is nothing in this universe*. Hey no you, hey no me; everything cease to be. But when **mundane mind** comes to be or arise, everything comes to be. That's why mind is the forerunner of all things. Mind is chief hence we *need to take care of this mind*. We **need to train this mind**. We need to be **heedful** via this mind. Only then can you develop the *understanding* of 'who you are and what you are?' From that understanding you can develop the **wisdom to liberate your mind**, to **free** your mind *from all these delusions* so that you are not **entangled** by what it creates for you. Once **delusion** is **understood**, then **wisdom can liberate** the mind. Then it can bring about **cessation**, then only it can bring about the ability for you to **connect** to the **true nature**. From there you **can see things as they are to insight into phenomena**, to **break free** from *final ignorance*.

Delusion which is **self-delusion** is *only a very small part of ignorance*. Ignorance is *very immense* whereas *self-delusion* is only a *small integral part* of ignorant but it is **very powerful** because from this *small integral part*, it can develop the **very clear and important initial wisdom** to *enable the mind to cease*, and for the mind to actually **connect back** to its *original true* nature. Then from there only, the **great understanding**, the **great awakening** can come about so that ignorance, 无明 can be **completely rooted out**.

Ignorance is very much deeper than self-delusion. Self-delusion is only about the egoic mind. Ignorance covers a lot more than the egoic mind. Ignorance covers the **lack of understanding of all the nature's law that governs life and existence**, not only the **5 aggregates of form and mind** which is only a very small **aspect of truth**. But ignorance of the truth, the law that governs life and existence, that one is very powerful. That's why you must have wisdom to understand the law of karma (karma niyāma), the law of mind (citta niyāma), then law of dharma (dhamma niyāma). Then you must also penetrate the other nature's laws; even the scientific law so that you can understand how the **elements come** about; **how consciousness** comes about; how all the various electromagnetic forces come about, including gravity. Then there are a lot more that are related to consciousness: **beyond mind, beyond thought**, there is this *consciousness*. Consciousness is a very powerful dimension that **can never be penetrated** by the **thought** because *it's beyond thought, beyond mind*. The *pure consciousness*, the *pure awareness*, the *pure mind*, the *true mind* and the *nature*: all these require a lot of understanding. Okay, now we shall move on. After explaining that part, we shall move on to the second

paragraph.

Dharma Master Fa Hai's lay name was Chang, ...

In Mandarin, its 张, which is the same as my surname. Some call it Chong, some call it Zhang. Here is Chang. In Hokkien, they call it Teoh. So when they asked you what your surname is, you said Teoh. Teoh means Zhang in Mandarin. In Hakka, it's Zhong. So depending on which dialect, it's pronounced differently.

.....and his common name was Wen Yün.

Wah, Wen Yün! I got a university classmate his daughter is also Wen Yün but her surname is Low. That one is Low Wen Yün, not Zhang Wen Yün.

.....He was a native of Ch'ü Chiang, which is about ten miles from Nan Hua monastery. He was a "room-entering disciple,"

What is 'room-entering disciple' in Mandarin? 入室弟子 (rùshìdìzǐ). 入室 means what? 'Enter room' means very close disciple. Oh, okay. That's why the translation, I can tell you is not easy to understand (you catch no ball), - 'room-entering disciple' sounds like our Malaysian English. The taxi driver says, 'my break no eat'. Wah! That one, the Englishman also cannot understand and they might wonder, 'What? Break also need to eat?' Because we translate direct from our hokkien dialect, break, 'boh jiaik'.

.....that is, a disciple to whom the Master had transmitted the Dharma.

So that is the meaning.

Though his introduction is not part of the Sutra proper, I will explain it to you, because it narrates some important events in the life of the Great Master.

Text:

The Great Master was named Hui Neng. His father was of the Lu family and had the personal name Hsing T'ao. His mother was of the Li family. The Master was born on the eighth day of the second month of the year Wu Hsü, in the twelfth year of the Chen Kuan Reign of the T'ang Dynasty (A.D. 638).

*At that time, a beam of light ascended into space and a strange fragrance filled the room. At dawn, two stranger Bhikshus came to visit. They addressed the Master's father saying, "Last night a son was born to you and we have come to **name** him. It can be Hui above and below, Neng."*

The Father said, "Why shall he be called Hui Neng?"

The Monk said, "'Hui' means he will bestow the Dharma upon living beings. 'Neng' means he will be able to do the Buddha's work." Having said this, they left. No one knows where they went. The Master did not drink milk. At night, spirits appeared and poured sweet dew over him.

See, he has such *pāramī*, no need to drink milk but devas came.

Great beings came and pour sweet dew over him.

Commentary:

*The Great Master refers to the Sixth Patriarch, Hui Neng. The Master's merit and virtue was great, he had **great wisdom** and **compassion** and so was a master of gods and humans.*

This means that he is also **very well cultivated** and his cultivation is almost finishing, so he can become a Samma Sambuddha too.

When one is alive, one has a personal name. After one dies, that name is avoided. Hence it is called a personal name, a name which is not spoken.

When the Great Master's mother gave birth to him, a fine beam of light arose, like that which the Buddha emits from his forehead. A strange, fragrant incense which had never been smelled before filled the room.

At dawn, the heavens are half dark and half light. Chü Hsi in "The Song of Household Affairs" wrote:

*At dawn, get up; Sprinkle and sweep the hall.
The inside, the outside, you must clean it all.*

In China at that time there was no linoleum. In the morning, people sprinkled water on the mud floors, waited a bit, and then swept their houses clean inside and out.

The two stranger Bhikshus were quite different from ordinary people. They were like the Fourth Patriarch who, by merely opening his eyes, caused everyone to tremble in fright. These two unusual Bhikshus came to name the Sixth Patriarch. Isn't this strange? Who has two Bhikshus come to name him?

To say "above" and "below" when referring to a person's name, is a most respectful form of address.

What the newly born Patriarch ate was sweet dew.

This one. What do you think? "Above" and "below" mean what? All the beings up there and down there also agree that he is the one – means above and below, 天地. Even like Sākyamuni Buddha. I think when the Mara challenged him, he raised the hand sign, remember? He pointed to the sky with one hand and the other hand to the ground. He said, 'Heaven and earth, bear witness.' because he has perfected the cultivation.

Text:

He grew up, and at the age of twenty-four he heard the
¹⁴
Sutra and awoke to the Way. He went to Huang Mei to seek the seal of approval.

Note 14: *The Vajra Prajna Pāramitā Sutra, also called The Diamond Sutra. This Sutra, with the Venerable Master Hua's commentary is available in translation from IITBT of SABA.*

At the age of 24, he is illiterate, a wood cutter with no formal education. He just heard one verse, from the Diamond Sutra, ***the***

mind must have no dwelling' and he awakened straight away. It is like so easy! So now I repeat, '*mind must have no dwelling*'. You all may awaken too, huh?

Commentary:

Some say that the Sixth Patriarch was twenty-four, others say that he was twenty-two. As the Chinese count he was twenty-four and as Westerners count, he was twenty-two. Whether he was twenty-two or twenty-four is not really important.

Do you know how the 2 years difference comes about? The Chinese has a peculiar way of counting, the Chinese counts from the day you are conceive. Then 10 months later, you deliver. So actually, the moment you are born, you are almost 1 year old already. Then end of that year, you are another year older. So you may be one month or 2 months old only but actually 2 years old already according to the Chinese tradition. Like my case I was born in the October month, the moment I am born, I am one year old. By end December or Chinese New Year time in January, I am 2 years old already. I was only 3 months old or thereabouts, but I am already 2 years old. That's why you have to add 2. During funerals sometimes they add 2, it's not wrong, not to say that they want to lengthen the deceased's life. It's because you are conceived in the womb. It can be between 7 to 10 months, sometimes 11 months.

Then there are some who are born into the world prematurely. They have to go through certain type of **Caesarean** birth to prevent harming the mother. Sometimes the foetus gets

too big, very difficult to deliver. Then sometimes it's because of miscarriage or whatever, they have to do a Caesarean straight away **to induce** the birth.

When the Sixth Patriarch heard the layman recite The Diamond Sutra and reach the line, "One should produce that thought which is nowhere supported," He was immediately enlightened.

This is another way of putting it, means a mind with no dwelling. Do you remember? And can you all understand? I think by now you can. You can also awaken if you have the pāramī. We have gone through this. Anybody wants to try? Come, you try? What is the meaning of 'the mind must have no dwelling'? Maybe we put it the other way round. **What is the mind that dwell?** We have gone through - in the Tuesday class. Thursday class, I am not sure. Sunday class, I think we have also gone through this.

What is the meaning of a mind that dwells? Is your mind dwelling at any one time? **Ya! Dwell everywhere isn't it?** Like this table, how you know it's this table? How? You perceive it through your **seeing consciousness** then **memory**. So that mundane mind which is **conditioned arising dwells on this table**. That's why you dwell everywhere. Hear something you also dwell, see something you also dwell. **How to have a mind that doesn't dwell?** The mind must have no dwelling, means what? It **must not hold on to anything**. It must **not perceive** anything. How to have that type of mind? Ah! **Awareness or Sati!** What is Sati? Sati is the **awareness**

before the knowing. So before you know, you don't perceive hence you don't dwell. That's why the *direct seeing*, the *pure perception* that *awareness* of it, *seeing things as they are*, - you are **not dwelling**. It's just conscious, just aware. Then we go on to the 3rd part.

What does the Shurangama Sutra says? Shurangama Sutra got a famous saying, 'perception of form' is what? All these are interconnected. It is consciousness! Why is it consciousness? How do you know, this is a table? You perceive it through your mundane mind, thinking mind, which is consciousness and its contents. What is the content inside there? The content inside there is what? Your perception isn't it? You **perceive it through your memory**, isn't it? Perception of form can be anything: can be the table, the fan, the Buddha image, the Quan Yin image or this hall, Wu Ping Chin Seah, or even all the *kalyāṇamitta* (Dharma friends) or you perceive my voice, my vibrations etc. These are all forms, visual forms, verbal forms and vibration forms. So all these forms, if you perceive them, they come from consciousness. You will become conscious of what you **hear and what you see etc. The moment you are conscious of what you see and what you hear, you dwell there**, understand? So this is dwelling. You are dwelling everywhere.

You dwell somewhere, whereas its **non-perception is wisdom** - non-perception means what? When you don't perceive what does that means? **Awareness before the knowing means you don't dwell.** That's why it's wisdom. That's why the mind must have no dwelling. Straight away Hui Neng awakened. He straightaway knew

because his mind was like that. He was **born without the mundane mind**. His mind never dwelled anywhere. He was aware. He was fully aware but he learnt all these from culture, from society, from the conditioning that the people taught him. That's why he was **already born with a pure mind, a true mind**. He **didn't have a mundane mind**. And because of that, when people spoke the truth, he immediately was awakened.

That's why you don't need to have any knowledge. You don't need to study anything. The moment you hear the truth, if your mind-state is already transformed, you will understand truth. That's why **Dharma is to be realized**. You **cannot think about it**. You have to **awaken** to it. Awaken means you cultivate until your **silent mind insight into phenomena** and awaken. If that mind is the true mind, then it will understand. That's why I said *when you meditate, don't try to know*. If you try to know it's the thought, it's the thinking mind and that mind cannot know; that mind is always **knowledge based**, do you understand? In order to understand, you have to be **silent without thought**. That's why Hui Neng knew, this is what it is. The mind must have no dwelling. It must not dwell anywhere. The moment you perceive something you dwell there.

What is the phenomena? Anything that is **perceivable by the mind is a phenomena**. Anything that is perceivable by the mind is a dwelling by the mind. That's why your 6 sense doors are very powerful. You dwell everywhere. You give meaning everywhere. **That's how you stir** your mind. That's how you **create duality**. That's how **delusion sets in** because you **cannot understand**. You cannot '*see things as they are*'. You use a lot of

words, a lot of concepts. You are subject to a lot of **conditioning**, giving rise to all the *views and opinions*. Then you have **fear**; you have **insecurity**; you have **anxiety**; you have *your likes and dislikes*, **pleasant** and **unpleasant sense experiences**. You create so much mental states and movements, all because of delusions, self-delusions, *sakkāya-diṭṭhi*. When you believe this is you, then the **content of consciousness** is capable of bringing about **delusions to delude** you into **possessiveness, greediness, selfishness, and emotional negativities**. That's why you will have all these fear, worry and anxieties, sorrow and lamentation, followed by insecurity and the lack of peace. All these come about through your own ignorance and delusion.

Now is it clearer? Clearer, huh! Slowly, as this one **stabilizes**, one day you will understand or 'gao dim' (in Cantonese meaning, 'done') already. Actually it's true. It's not difficult. Many of you very likely before the end of this year will come to understand what I mean. And these are possible, not difficult. As you **slowly develop** the **understanding via reflection and contemplation**, and **listening** (to straighten your views) **and then cultivate** the **daily mindfulness** (which is very important) **sincerely**, you will transform. You do the training of the mind until *the mindfulness arises and stabilize then you will understand*. When you are **ever mindful**, you will definitely understand. The *form and mind* will understand. Then the awakening will come; the understanding will come. Then during that time, the *form and mind* will come to realize very clearly the following: no wonder living beings **cannot** understand and no wonder living beings **cannot break free** because they *hold onto the thought* and the *self-delusion*.

That's the reason why all thought-based meditation, cannot lead to awakening and it is really pitiful. All those who do thought-based meditation, they are stuck and they cannot penetrate the Dharma and they can be stuck for many lives, even eons. As long as you **don't understand**, you **cannot** develop the **ability to be silent, to be aware**. I ask you one very simple question. If you use thought-based meditation, you **will dwell everywhere**, you will not have a mind that has no dwelling. Then how can you awaken? You better ask yourself that question. Everything you also want to know. Now you understand why I said when you meditate, don't try to know. Not knowing is non-dwelling, understand or not? Non-dwelling is silent.

*The moment you are without thought, you are already aware, silent, peaceful, tranquil so **no need to do anything**. That's why you *have to relax, aware and allow the mind to settle down*. Then when **mind does not stir**, does **not react**; it means there is **wisdom, there is understanding**. Otherwise, the mind which is deluded and very 'kay-poh' (busy body and everything also wants to know and everything also wants to get involved) will *create thoughts* or *saṅkhāra activities*. Then it is also very good at 'reasoning' via asking, 'if I don't arise the mind, how am I going to meditate; how am I going to understand?' If you keep on going along those lines of argument which are all thought-based, it will give rise to a lot of **verbalization** and **chattering**.*

That's why the truth is always the **opposite** of the *apparent reality*, of the **mundane mind of worldly people** for **Truth is beyond**

thought, beyond mind. That's why you have to **constantly contemplate, reflect and inquire clearly** to realize that Dharma. Inquiries like why did the Buddha kept on advising you all to take refuge in the triple gem, chant the salutation, - *Iti pi so bhagavā* Etc. Chant with understanding, especially when it comes to chanting the salutation to the Dhamma, - *Svākkhāto Bhagavatā Dhammo*, that explained what are the characteristics of this Dhamma? *It is, 'Sandiṭṭhiko Akāliko Ehipassiko Opanayiko Paccattaṃ veditabbo viññūhi ti':* if you cannot understand these words, then you **cannot develop the correct meditation, the correct awakening** because you cannot put to test, you **cannot investigate**, you cannot check if that realization **matches with that salutation** to the **Dharma as proclaimed** by the Buddha. Then who are the **ariyan Sangha** (the enlightened disciples of the Buddha)? What qualities do they have? Their special qualities are: - *Supaṭipanno Bhagavato sāvaka saṅgho.....*etc. They have all these qualities within. That's why you have to reflect and contemplate on them and when you chant, you have to **chant with understanding**. That's why when we do the **invocation to the devas**, we always chant *'Iti pi so Bhagavā.....; Svākkhāto Bhagavatā Dhammo.....; Supaṭipanno....* - salutation to the Triple Gem so as to remind them constantly of what these triple gems are so that they understand what they are. Then from there, we will share the Dharma to help them penetrate the teaching. Then when they develop it accordingly and when they penetrate, they can check against the salutation of the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, then they will realize that this is the correct cultivation and enlightenment. Otherwise you will be trapped in thought. You will **become gullible** and you will believe what people tell you.

Nowadays, especially during the Dharma-ending age, there are many gullible stories that can really make people gullible and be attracted towards what they propagate. Even Subhadda the wanderer, asked the Buddha in the Mahā-parinibbāna sutta:

“Venerable sir, these brahmins & contemplatives, each with his group, each with his community, each the teacher of his group, an honoured leader, well-regarded by people at large - i.e., Purana Kassapa, Makkhali Gosala, Ajita Kesakambalin, Pakudha Kaccayana, Sañjaya Belatthaputta, & the Nigantha Nataputta: Do they all have **direct knowledge** as they **themselves claim**, or do they all not have direct knowledge, or do some of them have direct knowledge and some of them not?”

“Enough, Subhadda. Put this question aside. I will teach you the Dharma. Listen, and pay close attention. I will speak.”

“Yes, lord,” Subhadda answered, and the Blessed One said, “In any doctrine & discipline where the **noble eightfold path is not found**, *no contemplative of the first... second... third... fourth order [stream-winner, once-returner, non-returner, or arahant] is found*. But in **any doctrine & discipline where the noble eightfold path is found, contemplatives of the first... second... third... fourth order are found**. The **noble eightfold path** is found in this doctrine & discipline, and right here there are contemplatives of the first... second... third... fourth order. Other teachings are **empty of knowledgeable contemplatives**. And if the monks dwell rightly, this world will not be empty of arahants.”

At age twenty-nine I went forth, seeking what might be skilful, and since my going forth more than fifty years have passed. **Outside of the realm of methodical Dharma**, there is no **contemplative**. “And no contemplative of the second... third... fourth order. Other teachings are empty of knowledgeable contemplatives. And if the monks dwell rightly, **this world will not be empty of arahants.**”

Then Subhadda the Wanderer said, “Magnificent, lord! Magnificent! ..Siyā kho panānanda tumhākaṃ evamassa, atītasatthukaṃ pāvacaṇaṃ, natthi no satthāti. Na kho panetaṃ ānanda evaṃ daṭṭhabbaṃ. Yo kho ānanda mayā dhammo ca vinayo ca desito paññatto so vo mamaccayena satthā ti. ..”

Then the Blessed One said to Ven. Ananda, “Now, if it occurs to any of you — ‘The teaching has lost its authority; we are without a Teacher’ — do not view it in that way. Whatever Dharma & Vinaya I have pointed out & formulated for you, that will be your Teacher when I am gone.

Atha kho bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi: “handa’dāni bhikkhave āmantayāmi vo, vayadhammā saṅkhārā appamādena sampādeṭhā”ti.

*Then the Blessed One addressed the monks, “Now, then, monks, I exhort you: **All fabrications are subject to decay. Bring about completion by being heedful.**”*

Ayaṃ tathāgatassa pacchimā vācā. (Those were the Tathāgata’s last words.)

In the **Ani sutta**, the Buddha also mentioned about the **Dharma-ending age**. The true teaching which is **very profound** in its meaning, deep, deep in its meaning related to **emptiness** will **no longer** be **understood** and will be neglected. During that time, the **Dharma-ending age will arise**. So all these are actually **predicted** by the Buddha during his time.

So with this, hopefully by now you can understand better. This is the 3rd or 4th time I had explained this teaching on 'the mind must have no dwelling'. Do you have any questions? You better make full use of this condition to ask. Can you all follow? If you can follow, it's very good. Anybody wants to ask any question? It will be very useful. The mic is here. Anybody? Don't have? Then we go on.

Ah yes! There is a question by Sister Padmasuri.

Padmasuri: When the mind has no dwelling does it means we must have *Yoniso Manasikāra* (wise attention)?

Brother Teoh: Definitely. Otherwise your mind will dwell. You must have *yoniso manasikāra* because without the wisdom, the mind will dwell.

Initially as you cultivate, you will have *glimpses of those moments* of the *mind that has got no dwelling* but because it's **not stable** yet, that's why you **can never penetrate the true**. Then later on, you will come to understand why when the mind dwells, there is no understanding. Do you know what dwelling is? Dwelling means you are holding on to something. It's just like the heedless

people. Heedless means you think a lot. Think a lot means you are lost in thoughts; preoccupied with the thinking; and mind's reaction, stirring and emotion. That's how you become heedless. You are always lost in thoughts. You can never be aware of what is happening in the moment. And when you **cannot be aware** of what is happening in the moment, you **cannot see things as they are**. You cannot **understand truth; wisdom cannot arise**. So now do you understand?

This mind that is **constantly dwelling**, constantly **perceiving, grasping, clinging, holding cannot understand truth**. It is all knowledge (consciousness and its contents) and **not wisdom**. That's why the Buddha wants you to reverse all these cultivation. You look at the *Satipaṭṭhāna sutta*, (the 4 Foundations of mindfulness sutta), what do they say? **Standing - aware**. Aware means what? Don't think and just Silent. Be with the moment in silent awareness. Feel it. Just Aware. Understand? When feeling has become **pleasant** and **unpleasant** it means it has stirred and moved already. Then Aware again, understand? Bring it back to awareness. Bring it back to the 'true mind' that has no dwelling.

But you all were taught the opposite. What did you do? Yes! Note. Note what? Note Pleasant, unpleasant feeling, or neutral feeling. Then note *pain, pain, pain*, fear, fear, fear, *thinking, thinking, and thinking*. **What are you doing?** You are **not silencing** the mind. You are not developing **awareness**. You are **creating more thoughts**, do you understand? So when you do that, your mind **dwells everywhere**. Then sometimes, you like to console yourself via saying, 'I must maintain awareness'. Who

maintains? The thought isn't it? The thought **tries** to be aware. That **is not** awareness. The *real awareness is just aware, no dwelling – awareness before the knowing*. It's just silence. To *live life*, you **cannot be in that state all the time**. Otherwise, you **cannot** live life. ***But in the formal meditation you can.***

Then in the daily mindfulness, as you **move around with awareness**, you **can be continuously aware**. Then when you **need to perceive**, you perceive. When you need to know, you know **because you have to live life**. When you drive, you **have to be aware of traffic** but you don't **go and think**. The moment you are aware, you perceive, you understand, then you move. Your awareness move. Then you **have a lot of clarity**. Then you **don't dwell** into it by **continuing** to think *about it or react over it* or what they called **proliferate** meaning you don't allow it to continue to stir you leading to thoughts proliferation. The thought continues to multiply or proliferate. It's just like you are **continuously heedless** and **think and think and think** until you are **completely lost in thoughts**, meaning you are **not aware** at all. You **think a lot** and even when you **are driving**, you are **also thinking**. Then all of a sudden something happens then you panic. Or sometimes while at the traffic lights junction waiting for the light to turn green you may **also be thinking** especially so when you have problem that bother and worry you.

When we were in Macau, Alicia's friend, Ah Yee's husband: he has problem that worries him. He worries too much and he has too much thought disturbing him too. That's why one day he wanted to take us to one of those good restaurants that he knows - but very

funny the restaurant which was on this side of the building, but instead he took us into another building, which was the hotel. Then we went up to that restaurant which he never made any booking and it so happened the restaurant was also under renovation and was closed. Then only he realized that it was not that restaurant. Then we went to the car park again, he took us and drive us out again, to go to the opposite building, parked there and then only go to the correct restaurant.

How did it happen? He **himself, told us** in Cantonese ('tai dor yeh lum') – meaning **he had too much thought bothering** him. **Too much thinking** going on; **that's why he cannot remember**. When you **think a lot**, you become **heedless** and **not aware** anymore. Then as you drive and do your things, that thought will condition you **to move to that place** which you are **so conditioned** to go. And even if it is the **wrong place**, you **also cannot remember** because you have been carrying this thought for so long, the **conditioning is so strong** and there is **no clarity**. So that's why he himself knew that it is because he **thinks a lot**, that's how **he makes the mistake**. And **he also admits** that sometimes he makes mistakes and gets into trouble because 'lum yeh' (he was thinking) while he was driving; he was also thinking while he was doing other things. Therefore he was **never mindful, never heedful, never with the moment**. That's how he knows he has problems.

That's why **without heedfulness** the Buddha said, '*The heedless as if dead*'. *Spiritually dead*, no way of becoming awaken because your *mind dwells everywhere*. **Dwells on what?** Dwells on your so **called problems, fear, worry, anxiety, unfinished business, your so-called**

work, career, relationship, and your other problems. You **dwelt on all those things** because your mind is so *entangled, so heedless*, full of **those accumulated memories** that *wants to do this and that, those unfinished businesses.*

Just now, Sister Padmasuri asked a very good question. In order to have this ability of mind not to dwell anywhere, you must have ***yoniso manasikāra*** (which is **wisdom**), which is true. *And Yoniso manasikāra cannot be learnt.* You *have means you have.* You *don't have means you don't have.* You can only cultivate it via ***keep on straightening your views*** until *they stabilize.* The moment they stabilize it means you **have understood**, then there is **wisdom**. Then *at the moment of sense experience*, the next time you ***see something, hear something***, you ***will not be deluded*** like before anymore. You will **not react** and **stir** and ***dwell like before***, like what Alicia had gone through. Straight away **that awareness** will be aware and the ***yoniso manasikāra*** will **come out** and tell her, ***'hey! This reaction or stirring leads to suffering'***, not enough ah? - ***16 years of depression*** which lead to all these and you still want to hold on? Then it's like the **fish analogy** that she came to understand ***after witnessing it at the Cameron Highland retreat***; out of the pond, onto the land (like out of the suffering world) already, you still want to jump back and continue with those affliction? You ***will never do that because*** it is like ***a red hot iron ball, burning and tormenting*** you, you had experienced it before so do you still want to hold on to it via thinking about it, dwelling and clinging on to it? That's why ***things that are unfit for attention***, you ***will never pay attention*** anymore. You will go back to the Dharma, the 4 Noble Truths. You **will keep on listening** to the ***Dharma to straighten your***

view, and there is **so much joy** because it **can reverse** all of her **previous negative tendencies** and **pains** (which was so strong) caused by the **depression** and the **delusion**. That's how **she recovered from it and became so beautiful**.

All these are possible for every one of you **if you are serious** about your life. As long as you *straighten your view* and develop the *understanding to change for the better you can come out of it*. Then you **reflect and contemplate** on the dharma until it's very clear then inquire, '*why must I always react like that, always stir my mind like that? Why must I always observe people that way, perceive people that way and perceive the world that way? Why must I always blame myself, blame others and create the egoic mind to dwell in so many things?*' **Life can be so different, so peaceful, so happy and so meaningful if only I can maintain heedfulness to be with the moment in silent awareness without having to dwell on anything**. Then I will be **able to experience all of the great pristine, beauty and wonders of life, every moment without words, so beautifully**. I can just **experience that anytime**, because **without thought**, I have **no fear, no worry, no anxiety, no sorrow, no lamentation, and no negativity of mind-state**. It's just **peacefulness, stillness, tranquillity and silence**. That's **why heedful living is so different from heedless living** - no agitation, no stirring, no tension, nothing, *everything is so beautiful*.

That's how words create duality, create stirring and create all the mind-states. That's how the **mind grasps, clings, holds and dwells**. **Without words, you see things as they are** - silent, no duality, no this, no that and you **are so peaceful**. And **all these**

require a lot of understanding. That's why **only wisdom frees, nothing else**. You have to reflect, contemplate until it is very, very clear like what my teacher used to tell me. Then **when you see them, straight away you understand** - *saṅkhāra anicca* (all of *saṅkhāra* **are impermanence**; they come and they go, then why do you still hold on to them? Why do you still want to think? It's only a thought. The moment you grasp, think and hold, **suffering** comes to be. This is a **universal characteristic**, do you understand?) and *sankhara dukkha*.

Dwell means you are *holding, grasping* and *clinging* like our last week Sunday's sharing - this is **affliction, samsara**. When you **close your fist** what does it mean? It means the **5 aggregates of form and mind, which are non-grasping, you grasp, hold and cling**. That's why '**this is affliction**', said Hui Neng. And this is how the **2nd Patriarch** became **enlightened**; when he cut off his hand, he was in that **state of agony and pain** because of what he did; but when Bodhidharma agreed to transmit him the Dharma seal, he **was full of joy**. At that moment, he **forgot about the pain**. Then the moment after that is over, he is **conscious** of that great pain again. Then he shouted out and told Bodhidharma that *there was tremendous pain*. He said, 'my heart is very painful'. Then Bodhidharma asked him a very simple question, '*show me your heart and I will heal it for you*'. Then he checked everywhere, he cannot find his heart, he cannot find his **true mind**. Then Bodhidharma told him, '**it has been healed**' because when he said, 'he cannot find,' it means it's not within all those **consciousness of the mundane mind**. It also means the 2nd Patriarch to be had finally **realized** that this *mundane mind* is **not** the **true mind**. That's the

reason why Bodhidharma said, 'you have been healed'. Then he straightaway awakened, just like Hui Neng.

*The mind must have **no dwelling** and that is the reason why, it cannot be found because all those are consciousness. They are **not** the **true mind**. They come and they go; they come and they go hence the moment you hold and give meaning, **suffering will arise**. That's how the **2nd Patriarch** awakened. Then he realized that the *body is just a body*. You have to **endure** you have to **endure** because when you cut it off and the consciousness is trapped inside, you will feel it. But if you **don't grasp** and **cling** and **hold deludedly**, then there is **no suffering** because there is **nobody inside there**. It's just **consciousness**, so what? It's just the *tactile consciousness that will keep on arising* then you have 2 choices; react to it and become miserable via thinking that it's **your consciousness**, thinking that **you are the one in pain**. Then not only the body suffers, the mind also suffers. That's why Buddha said, 'When your body is sick, do not allow your mind also to be sick.' So that's the meaning. **When you have that understanding, you can awaken**. That's why the moment you grasp and cling, this is affliction. Then Bodhidharma said, 'when you **don't grasp** and **don't cling**', this is **freedom** because the 5 aggregates of *form and mind* are **non-grasping**. Non-grasping means **pure aggregates**. *Don't dwell anywhere* because you understand that these are all **not you**. That's why these aggregates of *rūpa, vedanā, saññā, saṅkhāra and, viññāṇa*, they are all **not you**. They are **impermanence**, they come and they go, conditional arising, causal phenomena. The **moment** you grasp and cling, **suffering will arise** and when you see clearly that *impermanent nature*, you will see clearly their **non-self-nature** because you*

cannot hold onto to it, grasp on to it and said, 'This is I, this is me. Therefore all these can be mine.' There is **no such thing** because this *form and mind* - the 5 aggregates they are condition arising hence **not a permanent unchanging entity** that you can *hold onto, grasp onto* and *cling onto*. Can you follow? So these are **very important pointers** that can develop the **clear understanding** of the Dharma. Very good. We should thank Sister Padmasuri for the good question. Now Sister Eng Bee also wants to ask.

Eng Bee: Bro. Teoh, so the **mind** that *has got no dwelling*, means it is **able to live life heedfully** in sati?

Bro Teoh: Heedful means you are aware.

Eng Bee: Just aware?

Bro Teoh: The moment you are aware, the general **spaciousness awareness** without a centre is just **silent** because everything that arises is just that moment, that moment, that moment, do you understand? It just comes and goes, comes and goes, **no reality**. It's only a thought. What is thought? Consciousness and its contents. If you input grasping and clinging, then it arises **affliction** but when you input *with understanding without grasping*, it becomes **pure aggregate**. It becomes something like a vehicle and a tool for you to use, to live life. Then use it, to live. Don't go and worry about it. Don't go and **entangle** yourself with it. Don't be **deluded** by it. Then everything is **no longer** like before already. Ah, then the moment you look at Bro. Chim, it's different already. You can love him with all your **sincerity**, love because of your affinity

with him. You can be a very good mother, wife and spouse. You can *do your duty* but you **will not be affected** when something happens to them. Whatever happens, it's just a *form and mind*, **no reality** and all these *will be very clear to you* because your mind **no longer dwells** and **grasps** and **give meaning**. Also because you understand **both conditions**; one is the **arising (or apparent) reality** within the **conditioned world**, which is govern by nature's laws. That's why there is the *Law of Karma*, where *you have to do your duty appropriately*. If you have to love them, you have to care for them, you have to, but you **don't attach, cling** and **hold** because *these are all conditioned arising entity, no reality – non-self and empty*. The moment you grasp and cling, suffering will arise. This is the **Noble Truth**. Then the second aspect is via the **understanding** of the **ultimate truth**, - the *mind that doesn't dwell* has got **no words, nothing**. 'Hey no you, hey no me' so where got loved ones, where got all these? *All these are creations, mind made*. That's why the **phenomenal world is a world of consciousness** and what is consciousness? **Images that come and go, come and go; only thoughts, consciousness and its contents. How real can it be?** And as real as it can be (as explained by me via the Heart Sutra short notes book and the Emptiness book), **split second it's dead and gone, split second it's dead and gone** and that is the **only reality in life**.

Moment to moment, life passes by, split second it's dead and gone. Everything is just consciousness and memory: Wǎngshì zhǐ néng huíwèi (往事只能回味) - *past is only a memory, no reality*. Then *why do you still grasp, cling and hold*. It's **only a thought**. *How can it have such power over you?* **Unless the living beings are**

deluded and heedless, thought has no power over them. That's why when you have **that clarity**, you **can never** suffer anymore. Life becomes very different. By now I think you will penetrate the dharma. Sadhu to you!

Eng Bee: I just want to say. Is it something like (in Cantonese 'hang yet boh, keen yet boh' (走一步,看一步) at the present moment?

Bro Teoh: Yes and No, because everything is like you have understood it, not so real. Everything is just within the moment. When you say 'hang yet boh, keen yet boh', - when you **understand** it is **beautiful** because there is no reality. Every moment will just slip by. So whether you recall through memory or don't recall through memory it has no difference, understand? But for those who are deluded they will **recall through memory then what happens?** They will *clinging, grasping and holding* because memory will tell you, 'I am Eng Bee', 'I am the spouse', 'I have children', 'I have Dharma friends', 'I work where', 'I am so and so'. All these are memories but the **reality is!** - Moment to moment, life passes by. What are you doing?

Via your true nature - when you **understand** that the *form and mind is not you*, then you will know **how to use it to live**, for they **serve** you. Then life becomes *beautiful and meaningful*. Then there is such a thing as 真空妙有 (zhēnkōngmiào yǒu) - within true emptiness is wonderful existence. Then life will become *wonderful and meaningful*. That's why **use it to live**. Don't go and **worry about it**. Don't panic and don't deludedly hold, grasp, cling and grieve over emptiness.

That famous saying from a mandarin movie of the 60s, is very good, it says, - 来也空，去也空 (Lái yě kōng, qù yě kōng) 那么施主，何必苦苦为空虚流泪 (Nàmo Shi zhǔ Hébi kǔ kǔ Wèi kōng liúlèi). The meaning is, *'you come to this world empty handed (because you were born into this world **empty**)*. When you leave this world, you will also leave without anything. Then in between, why do you grieve over emptiness. Why do you have so many *unresolved businesses*, sorrow and lamentation, suffering and misery? Isn't that delusion? And who suffers? The *form and mind* suffers. And who grasp and who clings? The *form and mind* grasps and clings. That's why when there is **no clarity** of mind, **no heedfulness**, **no awareness**; you **cannot see** all these. You get yourself **entangled** and **trapped** within the **5 aggregates of grasping** then suffering and misery will be the result, without you knowing it. But the moment you are awoken, the moment you have developed the ability (or clarity) to see clearly, you are **no longer deluded** by it. Then you will understand that **'this is not me'**. This is only a karmic ally conditioned **'vehicle and tool'** for you to come to this world for you to use to develop the understanding and for you to live and move. Then life becomes **completely different**. When you **don't attach, cling and hold** to these **5 aggregates** of *form and mind*, then they are for you **to use** and they **will serve** you well. Then they become *beautiful and meaningful*. There is such a thing as life; moment to moment (even though not so real), there is such a thing as **existence** which includes **peace, happiness, joy, love, family members, kalyāṇamittas, etc.** as long as there is understanding and wisdom to live it. Then **everything is just the way it is** and it can bring about **great conditions** for a lot of wholesomeness and goodness to arise. That's why there is such a thing as **living life to**

the fullest. There are such a things as having **great meaning** to life. So do not be deluded by what people tell you, 'Aiyah! *Everything also empty and impermanent* hence no more meaning to live life?'

Just like that day at Sumeru, Klang, Sister Kuan's son came and talked to me. He said, "Brother Teoh, what you said was very true. Now *I can see suffering* everywhere." He can see everybody is suffering. But *he doesn't understand the second turning*. In the first noble truth's second turning, the Buddha said, '**suffering is to be understood**'. But he had not understood suffering. He only saw suffering; suffering is everywhere. Then do you know what he told me? He said, "Life really has no meaning because suffering is everywhere." I said, "Who teach you that type of dharma?" He said, "Brother Teoh, everywhere there is suffering. Life really has no more meaning."

I said, "The Buddha never taught that way. The Buddha said there is a *3rd Noble Truth*. Then only he **started to laugh** and said, "Yah! 3rd Noble Truth is Suffering need not be...., huh?" Then I reminded him, "Yes! When there is **wisdom**, *suffering* need not be then then why did you still say, 'suffering is everywhere, no more meaning? Live life also no more meaning?' That is delusion, do you understand? **Suffering only applies to people who are deluded.**"

People who are **not deluded**, they *don't have to suffer*. Suffering is everywhere, yes! - The **prevalence** of suffering but **only apply to those who are deluded**, who *don't have the wisdom* but those who *have the wisdom*, *suffering need not be*. That's why *life can be wonderful*. When the *form and mind* is **connected** via the *direct*

seeing, with the **wisdom** and **understanding**, that *form and mind* is **no longer deluded**, hence *incapable of suffering*. That 'form and mind' you can say is **enlightened** but that one is **not you**. That one is *condition arising, impermanent*. The moment you **grasp and hold**, it leads to **suffering** and because it's impermanent, **it's not a permanent unchanging entity**, it will go the **way of nature**. That's why it's **non-self, it's empty**. Ultimately, *it will cease to be*. When you understand all these, you will come to *realize that life can be very beautiful and meaningful*.

Suffering need not be, so he **only need** to develop the **wisdom to free** but if he **only cultivates** the *1st and 2nd Noble truths* and never *cultivates the 3rd and 4th Noble Truths* he will end up half baked. But that's already very good for him (to have the ability to see suffering so clearly). He sees the **prevalence** of *suffering* everywhere; living beings may suffer but it doesn't mean life has no more meaning. When you see all these, you **better wake up** to the **urgency of cultivation**. If you don't cultivate, you will end up like them. You will become **miserable** like them. So this is for you to **understand** that the *1st Noble Truth* is very, **very real**. It will **torment** you and make you **miserable** if you grasp, grip and hold on to it but the *moment you understand that there is a cause behind all these sufferings*, then you must **determine to cultivate to realize the solution** towards *liberating your mind* from all these causes. That's why the **second turning** of the *3rd Noble Truth* and the *4th Noble Truth* are very important. Even the second turning of the *2nd Noble Truth*, the cause of suffering which is *sakkāyadiṭṭhi*, **self-delusion** that conditions your **craving** said, this craving is to be **abandoned**. That's why you have to *cultivate until you have the*

wisdom to abandon this self-delusion. Otherwise suffering will continue. So when you understand what suffering is and you understand the cause behind, you must realize the wisdom to abandon it, to liberate your mind so that it is no longer deluded by it so that it **can free the mind**, so that **the mind can liberate and go beyond**. So this is the real teaching. That's why **a lot of understanding needs** to be developed.

Every time you cultivate, if you are **not sure**, you **will get stuck**, then you have **to reflect, contemplate and inquire**. After that, if you can, you **should ask questions** so that those who have the understanding can explain to you and you can cut short your cultivation journey. Just like Sister Kuan's son, if he **had not met me** at the Sumeru retreat, he would **have stagnated at that stage** for very long and yet thinking that he had understood the cultivation via saying, 'suffering is everywhere, no point living'. Understanding it that way doesn't spur him to move because that teaching is **very difficult to understand** and **very few people can reach those stages to guide him**. So because of that, if you cultivate **without proper guidance and understanding**, you can actually get trapped and you will lose a lot of precious time via stagnating at those levels. That's why constant *reflection, contemplation, and inquiry* into the **second turnings of the Four Noble Truths** are very important.

My teacher Ajahn Yantra, he advised me (no less than 6 times) when I was with him alone during the early years. He kept on **repeating** and **reminded** me, 'we choose, contemplate and reflect on the **dharma** until it's very, very clear.' Then I came to realize, *that was what I had been doing all these while* because for me, if I don't

understand I don't want to start the cultivate, I don't want to move. That's why I have this very unique **past inheritance**. I *must see the **big picture** first*. I must **understand first**, then *I can move fast*. Then when I understand, *when I move, I **don't make mistakes anymore** because I am **very clear** of the direction where this nature is **heading** and the real Dharma that this nature is **searching***. That understanding will unfold by itself. So all these are very **useful pointers** and understanding. Okay. *Sadhu!* Thank you so much. Let us now rejoice with Padmasuri's and Eng Bee's good questions. *Sadhu, Sadhu, Sadhu!* These are very important.

As you *reflect, contemplate* and *cultivate* all these understanding will **stabilize** and become more and more clear to you. Then one day, ***all of a sudden** you will understand* and it is like the whole thing has been understood and became like so clear. Then ***your life becomes very different***. Then when you live life, *even in the midst of life, every moment you see something, hear something or smell something*; even while at home, you **cannot react** like before; your mind *cannot stir* like before; you **had become very different**. The '*inside of you*' will know - 'how come now it is like that already'. Last time, when anything happened to your loved ones, you **panic** like anything, you worry like anything but now it looks like nothing happened. Then you will know **what needs to be done will be done**. You **will not lament anymore**. You **don't panic anymore**. You will just say, 'it's ok, never mind. **Let us resolve it.**' No more like last time - **panic, fearful and confused** already.

Eng Bee: Brother Teoh, last Thursday, when I was driving home from my office; While still driving, don't know whether it's an

understanding or what, just crop up: **'Brother Teoh always said this body and mind is karmic ally conditioned out for us to use, so use it wisely.'**

Bro. Teoh: Yes! Sadhu!

Eng Bee: I was driving, so okay and let's say this car is my body and this driver who is driving it is the mind (controlling the car). So I won't be **so foolish as to drive recklessly** to cause harm or accident to anyone or to myself. So in the same way, I should **use this body and mind heedfully, ever mindfully, carefully so as to not harm myself and not to harm others**. So by this analogy while I live life, this *body and mind* should not harm others and myself. I even shared this with Sister Lily during Yoon Chun's house dana. She was also very happy and commented, 'Ya! Definitely we won't use the car to knock others.'

Bro. Teoh: *This is what can happen when you know how to reflect and contemplate appropriately. It becomes very clear. Do you know how I was able to share with you all about the car and driver analogy? I reflected and contemplated on it during one of the retreats about 30+ years ago. After the retreat, all of a sudden I become so still, so quiet and so silent. Then I was just sitting around there reflecting while they were reporting their meditation. For me, it was not important whether I report or I don't report the meditation. So I just reflected and I understood so beautifully, the car and the driver analogy. That's how I developed that understanding. How come living beings cannot see? If it is a car and a driver, you can see very clearly, isn't it? Ability to control*

doesn't mean you own the car or **you are the car**. The car you also can control. If you want to drive fast, you can. If you want to brake, to turn, and to manoeuvre in whatever manner you can but it's only within the limits of its design, understand? Whatever the car is designed for, you can have certain amount of control and ability to manoeuvre it but beyond that you cannot. You can't ask the car to levitate and fly, the technology is not there yet. It cannot. *Like this body, you want to levitate and fly* but the *Technology is not there yet*, unless you develop psychic ability, then it's different. So in a similar way you **must know the limitation** of the *form and mind too*. Then you will come to understand exactly like what Eng Bee had gone through.

If the **driver** is the **mind** that **drives or instructs** this body to move, and if I **deludedly worry** about this car, - every time it gets damaged due to accident or whatever, then I fear and worry that I might die thinking that the car is me then I suffer. But because the consciousness is trapped inside, it's slightly different. You will feel the damages or whatever injury that the body suffers. The consciousness is conscious of it so actually you can feel it. And that is really feeling it **but in the case of a car**, because *you are attached to it, you think you own that car*, so you very 'sum tong' (meaning *heartache in Cantonese*) and you are afflicted. In a similar way because you think you own that car, then you think you have to come out with the money to pay for the maintenance and the repair etc., so you 'sum tong' in that sense, - materialistically. But in the case of the car you are *not conscious of the damages that inflicted the car*; whereas for the case of the actual *form and mind*, the mind is trapped inside, so like when you get a cut or an injury or

you harm your own physical body or you have an accident, you actually feel it. The **tactile consciousness** is really there, **you can feel it** but if you **understand that it's not you**, then **you can endure it** and if you need to seek medical attention, you seek hence no more problem. You just go about doing what you have to do. But **people who don't understand**, they have **fear**, they **panic**, they **cry**, they **react** because they think this **body belongs to them**. So in the driver and the car analogy it's the same. Ability to control and manoeuvre doesn't mean it belongs to you. So when you can see this very clearly, then why can't you see it in your own body and mind?

The consciousness that **is able to instruct** this body *to move around* and has *the ability to control it* doesn't mean the consciousness owns it. The body is the body; the mind is the mind. Just like the car and the driver, **when you see these 2 as separates entities then you understand**. If **you don't take care of the car, if the driver is reckless** (like what Eng Bee said), - red light also go then it will get the summons etc., then who suffers? Of course, the car does not suffer. The driver suffers because it has to pay the summons and if he is not careful and there is an accident, the car also suffers, not only the driver. So both also suffer. Then when you do that, you can also cause damages and sufferings to others. So when you understand this, you will be determine to train this mind **to be heedful** so as **not to become heedless to recklessly drive and use this car** just like how you train your body and mind. You **will take care of it** but you **will not attach**, you will **not cling**, you **will not abuse this body**.

Just like how I reflected base on what my teacher taught me. He said, if this body can talk and speaks to you, you will be **very shy** because the body will tell you this, '*Oh Master. Harm me not....*' (Means he knows, he is the servant who is supposed to serve you). That's why he called you, '*Oh Master, harm me not for I am **only tissues and cells**. Have me work for you while I am still capable, young and energetic **before** this body of mine is too weak, too fragile and too sick **to serve** you for the benefit of all and others.'* When you listen to the body telling you this, you will develop the **shame**. The body also **has love and compassion** to remind you that **this is for you to use**. He is willing to serve you but instead every time you **are unhappy and miserable**, you go and drink, you go and make yourself *miserable*. You go and torment yourself developing habitual tendencies that actually harm and hurt yourself, and you think and think and think the wrong thoughts until you become so **miserable**. Then you drink and make **yourself drunk**. Then the next day when you wake up, you got **morning sickness** and **hangover** etc. *So why do you do that to your own body Instead of **making full use of it through wisdom to serve you for the benefit of all?***

The car is also the same. It can help you, provide service to take you around and to take others around. If you are **careful, heedful** and **mindful** and you **don't violate** the traffic rules, then it's just like you *keep your precepts*, you don't bring about *karmic negativities or downfall*. You don't hurt others, you don't hurt yourself, or harm yourself. Then it brings about **great benefits** to everybody. That's what *mindfulness and heedfulness* are all about. The Buddha has an analogy under the sutra, he said one must develop the balancing act. He gave the analogy; you can go and read about it. It's in the

sutra. It is about developing the **balancing act** so that you **protect yourself** and **protect others** with **mindfulness**. Otherwise, you are being heedless. So all these, the Buddha actually explained it very clearly. Then when you start to understand, you will develop your own **contemplative wisdom**. Then you **will see very clearly that this form and mind is actually more or less (but not exact)**, like a car and a driver analogy; whereas the true owner is neither the car nor the driver. Sometimes you can hire a driver to drive you around. Then the owner, the **unseen one sits at the back because this owner is not a physical human being**. That's why you have to connect to this unseen one, which is your **true nature**, your **true mind**. When your driver understands clearly through that **wisdom** borne of that **direct seeing**, then **this driver** (which is your **mundane mind**) is **no longer deluded**. When this driver is no longer deluded, it will **not attach** and **cling** to *anything*. Then it **will know how to live**. *It will know how to serve you well*. That's why **the trained mind listens** to you. *You want it to be silent it's silent. You want it to be aware it's aware*. It's **no longer heedless**. *It no longer does all those funny things*. It **no longer reacts, stirs and becomes deluded like before**. It becomes so beautiful. That's how **you to use** the *form and mind*.

That *form and mind* will *become beautiful* and it can *serve you well*. Then life takes a turn and becomes **meaningful**. That's how the whole Dharma should be understood. That's why, start by **cultivating** to develop the **initial understanding** of *who you are and what you are?* Then after that determine to cultivate to develop the wisdom. Then when wisdom arise, you (your nature) will connect to this *form and mind*, then you will come to know very

clearly that this *form and mind* is **not you** and you need to have this wisdom **in order not to be deluded** by the **phenomenal world** so that you will have the wisdom to understand life and to live life. Then you can realize the **third phase** of dharma which is **Paṭivedha**, thereby enabling you to live the life of an enlightened being. That is how you should cultivate so that you can develop the **ability to awaken** this *form and mind*. Then the *third phase of dharma*, which is the **most beautiful part of your life**, can become a **living reality** even though *it's not so real; arise only from moment to moment* but that phase can be **really beautiful**. If you **can connect early**, like Sākyamuni, at the age of 35, he still has 45 years of **beautiful life after that**. So all these are possible. Okay. Very good. Sadhu. You should rejoice with what Sister Eng Bee gone through. **Sadhu! Sadhu! Sadhu!**

And all these **can happen because** it has happened to me earlier on. All of a sudden, the **understanding** just arise. I **reflected** on the *dharma that arise* then later on, I developed my own understanding and was able to come out with my own version of understanding of the truth. Then I *can share it differently*. It's just like *this particular segment of my nature's life* - meaning this so called Bro. Teoh (or this *segmented life's 'form and mind'*) *that my nature takes to come* has developed a lot of *understanding on its own*. That's how I *can use it to teach and share* with you all. *Later on after you had understood my sharing, you can also use it to share and teach others in your own way just like Hui Neng and 'me'*. Hui Neng penetrated this truth and that's the reason why the 2 poems mentioned become like **very revolutionary**. It marked the rise of Mahayana - like it is the spark for the next era of Buddhism. That's

why **Mahayana flourished after of advent of Hui Neng** because *his teaching was very penetrative*. Likewise, after I had shared with you all my understanding which were **all recorded** and **Tran scripted**, you will come to understand them **later on**. Of course *some of these understanding*, I had developed them **after listening attentively** to my *earlier teachers' sharing*. They also have their own understanding. Then because of my **unique nature**, I can understand whatever they shared. I can even go deeper into it and refine it further, then perfected it. After that I was able to come out with **all these new understanding**: like the dharma regarding the **3 periods of time, the silent mind, what is sati? Who are you and what are you, etc.?** Those **understanding are mainly** from this life, **not** from the past. All these understanding, you all will start to have **the condition to receive them** because all these dharma sharing they are **not only recorded but also Tran scripted** into books. It's all in the sharing and all these sharing are very **profound** because as you **deepen your understanding of this Dharma and sharing**, they are **very penetrative** and all these understanding, in years to come and in future, will benefit a lot of living beings.

Similarly, there are a lot of **other great beings** who can also contribute and help evolve further all these understanding. That's why you start to see how J. Krishnamurti came in his own unique way and also Eckhart Tolle, he also came in his own unique way to share all these special understanding with the world. Then our 6th Patriarch, Hui Neng also came in his own rather unique way. Then there are many others who will surface in years to come. This era is going to be **very unique** and **very beautiful**. What's the time now? Oh! 4:45pm already. Okay. Just nice. Please pass the mic to

Sister Chooi.

Sister Chooi: Brother Teoh, you talked about people like **Eckhart** and so on. I am just wondering in the Buddhist world, if a man of this nature comes out and he doesn't speak English, is he recognized as someone of that standing? I mean, you said that but I don't know whether the Buddhist's world recognizes people like them.

Bro Teoh: Okay, so the question is: people like Eckhart Tolle and J. Krishnamurti, they speak in different languages. They don't use normal Dharma terms or words. Does the Buddhist world recognize such people? To me, it's **not important** because *Truth is just truth*. Whatever that is the truth, will points **towards the reality** and **whatever truth that can help humanity** is more important than having division. Why do you want to segregate our self via arguing whether it's Buddhist or non-Buddhist? That is a very important understanding. Otherwise division will continue. Then our criteria is **not to investigate into truth**. Our criteria is, 'Is this Buddhist?' If it is not, we don't want to recognize it. We don't want to have anything to do with non-Buddhist. That is not what the Buddha told the Kalamas. The Buddha told the Kalamas that *they don't even have to believe him. You just have to investigate into everything that is spoken even by him*. Don't believe first. **Investigate first**. If it is the truth, it **must stand up to investigation**. So when it comes to Buddhist or non-Buddhist, **it's just a label**. How do we define a Buddhist? If you say, it doesn't tally with the Buddha's teaching, then non-Buddhist. Is this a fair way of expressing it? Is it fair? Chooi, is it fair?

Sister Chooi: My point is all these things about religion, Buddhism, rites and rituals, blah, blah, blah are *meaningless if you actually look at the greater picture of things because there are beings all over the place who have such wonderful realization and are walking the path*. So to me, I am sorry, you guys are all Buddhists here. You know, Buddhism actually is nothing to me. It's just a way of life. It's not the religion. It's nothing. Bowing and all that is a way of showing respect but that's about all.

Bro Teoh: So what is your question? Just now you asked me: is it right for the Buddhist to accept them?

Sister Chooi: How does the Buddhist, in a way, looks at these type of people because if you follow the Buddhist tradition, which many people do: they want to do dana; they want to do this, do that but in actual fact these people don't do it in that way. Yet, they are great beings.

Bro Teoh: Okay, now I get you.

Sister Chooi: So to me ... (interrupted by Brother Teoh)

Bro Teoh: Earlier on, I thought you tried to segregate them from the so called Buddhist.

Sister Chooi: No, no, no! I am not looking for trouble. I am just trying to say that Buddhism is just a label.

Bro Teoh: Now I understand what you are trying to find out which

is very good. So when you have the understanding like what sister Chooi has just explained, it will be **very beautiful** because you must have **open mind**, do you understand? What do you mean by Buddhist? Like just now I tried to explain it via saying, 'whatever that tallies with the teaching of the Buddha, you can call it Buddhist, right? Because it's taught by the Buddha. But **how many of you really understand** the *Buddhist teaching*? There is another question? The Buddha's teaching about truth, about Dharma is very deep and very penetrative. That's why I said when it comes to truth like just now, sister Chooi realized that **there are so many great beings** who **also have the truth** and **understanding**. Truth doesn't need words. That's why J. Krishnamurti's **teaching** was **so powerful** and they are **so identical** with those of the Buddha's teaching but people **cannot understand because they look at the words**. And **when they cling on to the words**, their teachings **appear like very contradictory** because they **cannot understand** what was share.

What they tried to share with us are **beyond words** and **beyond thoughts**. That's why he always mentioned in his sharing: **J. Krishnamurti said**, '*never take the word for what it is because the word is not that thing*'. Then when he used *a lot of those important terminologies* that he came out with, if you don't understand them, then it appeared like they are contradictory. That's why when he said, '*wherever there is a meditator, there is no meditation*' - surely, you **cannot agree** with him anymore. Then when he said, '*wherever there is effort, there is no meditation*', then you will quote the Noble 8 fold path as taught by the Buddha as having **right effort**, hence J Krishnamurti is talking 'rubbish' because

he is contradicting the Buddha. When you understand, there is **no contradiction** at all. The Noble 8-fold Path's right effort are applicable only when dealing with thoughts. That's why there is a path factor called **right thought**. Then right effort with regards to action, speech and thought but when it comes to **purifying the mind** it's all about **mindfulness**. There is **no more** effort. It's about cultivating with the **silent mind**. It's about **awareness only no more thought**. That's the reason why J. Krishnamurti used the word '**awareness**'. That's also the reason why nowadays people also start to use this word, 'awareness' more and more. Words like *choice less awareness*, etc.

Then Eckhart used the words, '**Power of the now**' - what does it mean? This moment before the words and the concept arise, there is **only an awareness** via *the true mind*, just the **clear or pure awareness**. That's why he said there is a portal for you to go in to *connect* to the **true mind**. And **Eckhart** is actually **not bad**. *His portal is feeling*, from **pure feeling** (before the *stirring of mind*) you go in, you **silent your mind to develop awareness**. You feel and you go in and these are the **portals** that *can take you in*.

Then there are many other **great beings** who came and explained the truth in their own words, even **Byron Katie's** Inquiry into the Thought via her *4 lines of questioning*: 1. *whenever the thought tells you something, she said, inquire: 'Is this the truth? 2. Are you sure this is the truth?'* (The first 2 questions, you will definitely say 'yes' because this is what my thought actually tells me.) Then the 3rd and 4th questions, she will corner you; 3. *'What happens if you think that thought?'* (You are miserable and afflicted right?) 4. *What*

*happens if you don't think that thought? (You are **peaceful, right?**)* Then you realise that it's **not** the truth. Because when you say, 'My husband cheated on me. I hate him. I want to do something to take revenge upon him. When you set your line of inquiry, 1. Is it the truth? (What the thought tells you). You will definitely say it's true because you saw him cheat on you and you have proof that he cheated on me; and because of that, you say, 'I hate him'. So to you, you are very convinced that it is the truth. Then she asked the 2nd question, 'Are you sure that this is the **absolute truth?**' (Yes, 100% it's the truth.) Then the 3rd question is, 3. 'What happens if you think that thought? You develop all the anger, the jealousy and the hatred isn't it? Then the 4th question is, 'What happens if you don't think that thought before you develop all the anger, the jealousy and the hatred? When you were courting, you were very peaceful. So without this thought, you don't have anger, no hatred, no anger and sadness. Then how come when you think that thought, all these problems come about. Then you start **to understand** that **thought** is the one that **created all these delusions and divisions - you and him**. Why can't you accept him for what he is? If I don't think that thought, I am peaceful. If I don't divide him as cheating on me, what on me and all those things, then I become peaceful.

And her solution to all these is very simple. **The truth is that you cannot fight the reality.** Condition like that, things will be like that. So if you have the wisdom to see things as they are, to accept him for what he is, then **you are at peace with him**. Then you will **not react, stir and get angry** with him. **Deluded people do deluded things; selfish people do selfish things; lustful people do lustful**

things. He is just the way he is. If I can accept him for what he is, this 'form and mind' will be at **peace.** Then you will know how to **act and move.** Then you will **not harm yourself** through getting **angry, emotional** or **allowing** the **evil roots** of greed, hatred, jealousy and delusion to arise. **Stirring** your mind and becoming miserable over what happened. All these are very simple solution to human **suffering** and although she **didn't use the words** like the 4 Noble Truths but her teaching indeed finally points towards the 4 Noble Truths. It points towards **delusion** as the cause of suffering. **When you don't think that wrong thought,** you realise **there is no such problem** meaning what the thought is telling you is a **delusion** and it's **not** the truth but *just mundane 'truth'* according to *people who are deluded (with self-delusion, Sakkāyadiṭṭhi).*

So all these when you really penetrate and understand, you will come to realise that what they have realised has **a lot similarities** with what *Sākyamuni Buddha is trying to teach you.* It's the 4 Nobles Truths **put in another way, through inquiry.** That's how you **break the wrong thought** and your **self-delusion, sakkāyadiṭṭhi.** You will come to understand how you create through thought; how you **divide** and how you create **duality** and **all these negativities.** And to her, *end of the day, the reality* is the **most important.** Truth is! She says, you **cannot go against the truth.** The moment you go against truth, you suffer. Then when she has that understanding, she develops the **acceptance** of **what is** and **when she accepts what is, she becomes peaceful.** When she becomes peaceful, she *knows how to act, how to live,* then she will know *how to arise the right thought, right speech, right action* and she will know *how to live life* which is the right livelihood and because she can accept and be at

peace, that's why she can develop the *silence*, the *stillness* and she can develop *the meditative understanding*. Then finally she will come to know clearly who she is, what she is. That's how she will come to know the mind, the *condition arising mind* and the *true mind*; the two are different. *When she is silent, via having the wisdom to accept 'what is', she is at peace*. When she is *not silent*, the *mind stirs, thoughts arise*, create all these things. Then she realises delusions has set in, *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi* has sets in. *Attachment has comes to be*.

All these finally, if you trace back, they actually point towards the *same truth*. So when you start to have *that understanding*, your mind will have the *ability to open up* meaning has *an open mind*. You will not become like very attached to the *religious label* just like how sister Chooi understands that religious label is actually just a label; *it doesn't define* who you actually are. Religious label is just something that living beings use to create division and identity. 'I am a Buddhist' means he is a follower of Sākyamuni Buddha's teachings and because of that he thinks he is *religious* by *implication* or by *direct association*. You cannot do that, because when you *don't truly understand* the Buddha's teachings and *you cannot put it into practice*, you are far from being a *true Buddhist*. Even that label, you also *don't qualify* to use via calling yourself *a true Buddhist* because a true Buddhist is somebody who *follows the advice* of the *Buddha* so as to be *worthy* of him. And to have the *quality* of a *Buddhist* you *must follow* his teaching, *'to avoid all evil and to do good and purify the mind'*. If you have these *qualities* only then it's *meaningful* - meaning all those who follow the *advice* of *great beings*, they *have the truth*, they *have the*

*dharm*a, then they are **no longer** using the **religious label** only. They are different from *those who only use the religious label* and **don't cultivate**, which means they do not have the **embodiment** of the great beings' teachings yet they claim to be Buddhists, then it's **a totally different thing**. That **label doesn't** qualify *them to be a Buddhist*. So I always used this word, '*religious label is just a label*'. Whether you are spiritual or not spiritual **depends on your heart; your goodness, your kindness and your sincerity**. If you **don't have goodness, kindness, sincerity and love or compassion in your heart**, you can hold on to any religious label **but you are not spiritual at all**.

You are **only spiritual** when you **have a good heart, a good mind**. When you have love, compassion and understanding, **incapable of negativity**, that **really defines the religious person or a spiritual person**. So **spirituality** is about **understanding, not about the religious label**. Okay? With that you will be able to move on and progress with an open mind. Then you **will not get trapped** in all these *religious labels* issues and argument because most of these followers they just want to argue base on their religious label, and they try **to glorify** their own religion through argument, through what they call, *promoting their religious belief* and through **trying to monopolise truth** because *every religion claims to profess the truth and they want to monopolize the truth; 'Only my religion has the truth. All other religions are not the truth.'* If you do that, it shows that you **don't understand truth** because '**truth is**' and the meaning is very deep. Truth **cannot be monopolize** by anybody - meaning not your truth, not my truth or anybody else's truth for **Truth is nature's laws. Anything that can explain the way things are,**

according to what happens, that is the truth. And that truth cannot be monopolized because that is **nature's law**, nothing else. That's why the scientists came to know that there is such thing as **Nature's law**, *nature's physical law* and *biological order* and they realise that there is a lot of consensus when you understand those laws. So likewise, when it comes to the **spiritual understanding**, you also have the **spiritual law** that **governs life** and **existence**. If you penetrate them, you will also progress very fast and like the scientist, you **will come to understand a lot things within the spiritual field**. That's how Sākyamuni Buddha became **so wise, the fully enlightened one** because he has this **all knowing great wisdom** borne of his *cultivation* and *perfection* over **the aeons and aeons of cultivation**. He had developed the **very penetrative understanding** of **these 3 great laws of nature: the spiritual law of karma, law of mind and law of dharma or truth** and **these 3 spiritual laws** when you develop the *understanding of them the mind will awaken* and **you will understand what that Buddha nature is**, what that **true nature is**, what that **oneness nature is**, what that **original nature is**, and **all of religions who hold the truth will point towards that same nature, nothing else** and **that nature has no words**. It's the **unconditioned**. That's why the Buddha explained it very clearly and very well via stating that '**Nirvana is the unconditioned**'.

Likewise it is similar to the **Tao's** definition, 'whatever that can be *spoken, described or talked* about is **not the true Tao** but **nothing is apart from the Tao**. Then what can Tao be? That's why it's like the **unconditioned**. Nothing is apart from the Oneness, the *unconditioned* because the conditioned is also **part of the**

unconditioned but *the conditioned* and *the unconditioned* are *duality* that people create. That's why now the scientists also come to know it's from the *Source* or the *Singularity* or the *Original nature that all things arise*.

Remember, the Singularity is the starting point, the Source. Buddhism called it *original nature*, your *true nature*. **Original nature** before thing arises. That's why from that singularity, everything comes to be, then the *division starts* - the *unconditioned* and the *conditioned*. Then the *true nature* and the *conditioned world*. That's how the *mundane mind* arise and from there, the *first thought* of *ignorance conditioned subsequent thoughts*. The Surangama Sutra, *explained very clearly how living things come about, how the universe, stars and the planets come about*. That's why Buddhism which is a *very unique* teaching is *very ultimate* in the sense *that it goes back to the source*. It can *connect and link everything back to the source of all things and it's not only very scientific, it's very profound because it's beyond science*. Science is *limited to thoughts*, the 5 mental aggregates of *form and mind, the consciousness*. But the *spiritual understanding* that the *Buddha has realised* is actually *beyond thought, beyond time*. That's why it is the *pure nature, the oneness nature, the original nature, the source of all things, the Singularity*. That's why from there, everything comes to be. That's the reason why whatever that can be known, the Samma Sambuddha can understand and know because they *have realised that enlightenment which is complete and perfect that enable their nature to return to the original starting point* which is the *source of all things*. From there, the *oneness nature will arise and it will understand all things*. So this is

the *uniqueness* of the *Buddhist teaching* and that one is *very difficult* to *comprehend*, not until you have *cultivated* to that stage, it is *not easy* to comprehend. But it is very beautiful. Okay? Sadhu, sadhu, sadhu! We should thank Sister Chooi for that rather good question.

Sister Chooi: Brother Teoh, just as a joke, 开玩笑 (kāiwánxiào), your next talk at SJBA would be, 'Are you sure you are a Buddhist?' That will be very useful.

Bro Teoh: We can. Yes! I think the next Klang talk is at the end of the month, I don't know what the title is. I think I can use the title you *suggested* for my Klang talk. I need to check it out. I remember I have a talk, but what the title is I forgot. Ah, okay, please check. July this month. It's a Friday. (*Searching for the title of the Klang talk*) Oh, I can use Chooi's topic because this Satipaṭṭhāna Sutra 1 and 2, I had finished already. Ya, 'Are you sure you are a true Buddhist?' can be a good title. I will tell Brother Gan, to use this topic. That title should be useful because many Buddhists, they tend to argue with people. They say, 'No, no, no, no' because they always want to be *protective* of Buddhism. Actually the more you try to protect it, the *more conflict* you will end up with. If it is the *truth, it will stand up to investigation*. Why do you want to argue with people? People have the *right to come to their own conclusion and belief*. *They are just the way they are*.

It's just like in the early years which I remembered. They tried to create a hoo-hah in the Buddhist community. Do you remember, the Buddha Bar incident? The Buddha Bar was a restaurant chain. If I am not wrong, they do sell liquor, they drink, they entertain but I don't know if they are involved in *prostitution* or not? They put the

Buddha image in their bar then they called it the **Buddha Bar**. You go to a bar, and you drink in front of the Buddha; the Buddhists were not happy so they created a very big hoo-hah and I think there was ***an uprising***. A lot of people put in their comments. At that time (about eight to nine years ago) - I saw what was happening then, and if this is allowed to go on, it may not stop because I saw ***a lot of Buddhists started writing to condemn what happened***. Then I wrote one email to explained the situation and after that, all toned down because I said, 'the Buddha rūpaṃ placed at the bar is **not the Buddha**. According to the Buddha, this Buddha rūpaṃ or image is only ***one of the four holy objects of veneration***. You can venerate it - meaning you can pay respect to it via recalling to mind the ***9 great virtue, wisdom, loving kindness and great compassion of Lord Buddha***. It means you can ***recall to mind the true qualities of Lord Buddha*** and those are the ***embodiments of Lord Buddha's great virtue and wisdom***. The ***statue was never the Buddha***. So ***why do you get yourself entangled*** with all these things by believing that they are trying to do or say ***something bad about your Buddha***. I said ***whatever they do to the image will not affect us*** because if my ***so called Buddha is so easily contaminated or made defiled*** by just what people do, then that Buddha has no meaning. The Buddha that ***I have taken refuge and have faith*** in is ***not the statue***. It's the ***embodiment of his great wisdom, perfections, virtue and understanding, including love and compassion***. Those things, no one can take away from us despite what they have done to the image. ***If you understand this, you should not*** create all these ***unnecessary arguments*** and all these ***so called infighting*** via using words and whatever.

The way I wrote it, I cannot recall but it was **very beautiful**. It's in the email, stored up somewhere and I said it in *a very subtle but very meaningful* way. The **great embodiment** of Sākyamuni Buddha or all Samma Sambuddha is their **wisdom** and **perfection** that they had developed (which are virtues, love and compassion). These nobody can take it away from the Buddha because it **is part of their nature** and when you have **faith** in that (which is the Buddha that we **take refuge in**) then we are **not affected**. And this is **refuge-safe**, because that Buddha is **not the image**, the rūpaṃ; the image is just a symbol for us to recall to mind his great qualities, *hence nothing can defile that Buddha*. That's why **do not associate** with all those who **do not understand** the meaning of **what is true refuge**. When you understand your **true refuge**, you **are not shaken** by what people do. They *can go* and *disfigured* the Buddha image, like what happened in Afghanistan where the Bayan people bombed, deface and disfigure the images of the Buddha statues. Still there is no problem because that one is **not the Buddha**, do you understand? Only **foolish people** think that *that is the Buddha*. If that is the Buddha, then the refuge which I take has no meaning; one bomb can just destroy that image. So that is not the refuge you took.

That's why the *triple gem, the Buddha, Dharma and the Sangha*, they can never be taken away because these are the **embodiment of great wisdom** and **great virtue**. And the *great wisdom* and *great virtue* that make that being the *fully enlightened one* is not something that you can take away, because that is the **embodiment** of his **perfection over eons and eons of cultivation** and it has become a nature of its own. And that nature has its special power and ability. That's why when you **take refuge with faith** in the

Buddha and his Dharma you will have **affinity** with the Buddha and his wisdom and perfections that he has perfected. That's how he will have the understanding of the Dharma. Then when the Dharma is there, when he teach, there will be the Sangha which are the enlightened disciples of the Buddha. That's why all these three: the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha; these are refuge-safe, they will never be shaken by anything that people do or the world do because these are the **embodiment of perfections** that has been **realized** and this is part of nature's law and it **cannot be taken away by anybody through whatever act or means**.

When you have that **understanding** and **faith**, your *religious label* **doesn't** matter anymore. Then you are **not hurt by what people say about Buddhism** because *Buddhism is just a label*. Before the advent of the Buddha, there was no Buddhism but because he was the Buddha, they added the 'ism' at the back, the –ism makes his teaching became Buddhism. But what is Buddhism? Buddhism is actually not what people think. It's **not a religious label** that everybody who is **an author** of a book can define. Buddhism was never around when Buddha was around. When the Buddha was around, he said he *only help to re proclaimed the truth or the dharma which was already there before him*.

The *dharma was there before him* and after he had **realized** it, he **proclaimed** it. And when he did that, he **declared** it to the world that this is the **teaching that points towards the truth** because all his teaching points towards the truth. That's why his **main teaching** or the **essence of his teaching** is the **4 Noble Truths (ariyasacca)**. All the teaching of the Buddha is called the Dharma or truth. The

essence of his teaching is the 4 Noble Truths, **not only truths** but **noble truths**. That's why his teaching is very unique. When you understand **these noble truths**, you become **noble ones** or **enlightened ones**. So he not only teaches us the truths, he teaches us the **noble truths** that can make *living beings* **enlightened**. That's why he is **very unique** and to be **worthy** of him - to be called a true Buddhist, you must **at least heed his advice, follow his advice to avoid all evil, do good and purify your mind to cultivate the 4 noble truths**. **Not until** you have the **4 noble truths understanding** to enable you **to live it**, you are **still not** worthy of him and you cannot label yourself as a true devotee of the Buddha or call yourself a **true Buddhist** because that **religious label** is just a name that people hold onto. For me it's not important.

When people ask me, 'Are you a Buddhist?' I always answered this way, do you know what my answer was? I will just say that **I started as a Buddhist** because that was the **first religious teaching that touches my heart** and started my search for **spiritual truth**. I was looking for answers when I was in Form 4 or Form 5. I knew it was beyond me because at that time I was gazing at the stars on the night sky, then I asked myself, 'Who am I?' and 'What am I?' I was only one of the **insignificant** 5 to 6 billion people (at that time the world population was **not** 6 billion yet, maybe about 5+ billion) on this Earth? How come I was only one of the miserable human beings on this Earth and Earth is only one of the many planets that orbit around the sun and this sun is only one of the many, many stars that existed in the universe. I knew all these because I was a Science student.

So I knew human being is **very insignificant**. But I also knew at that time at the age of 17, while in Form 5 in the year 1971 that I must **meditate** to understand all these. But I didn't even know what meditation was then. I **only knew I must meditate** to understand. So very strange, the moment I was given this book, *'What Buddhists Believe'* authored by **our late Chief Reverend K Sri Dhammananda** when I was in Lower 6; I remembered then, straightaway I didn't have to search **anymore** because when I was in Form 5, I went to all the other religious organizations to search except Buddhism. I didn't want to go into the Chinese or Buddhist temple then was because at that time when I saw my mother doing all those things such as: 'offering and negotiating with deities via saying, *'you help me then I will offer you more; like you help my children pass exams, recover from their sickness then I will offer you more.* Then I said, 'Wah! This type of Buddhism, I will KIV'. Then I went in search for truth. They took me to the churches. We talked to the pastor until the pastor also gave up. Then the pastor said, 'You wait. My more senior or higher one will come.' We talked but he also gave up on us. Then we went to many other religions, including Bahai which was also not able to convince us. Finally the conclusion was that we were **too scientific** because when they tell us 'God' create, we can never accept. My question to them is, then who created 'God'? Then they will reply via saying, *'God is almighty. You cannot ask these types of questions.'* Then I cannot just believe, because for me it's very simple, if you said God creates, then everything must have a creator so who created God? There must also be a time in history when 'God' creates, then my question is what was 'God' doing before He creates?

Ah! That was the question by Stephen Hawking too. He was very wise. He wants to know: before God creates (because you said there **was a beginning in time** when **everything started with God's creation**. So assume there was a moment in history where all creations started and that moment you can define): - So before God creates, what was God doing? To the scientists, they know, nothing can be created nor destroyed. How can you have something before anything? So again the question was unanswered. So Stephens Hawking was very wise. Actually you don't need a 'God' to create, hence he said 'when the big bang starts, you don't need a God.' That's how the Big Bang theory comes about.

Big Bang is the *beginning of time*. They called it the **Singularity** or the **Source** - from one, that moment it all started. It's a black hole which became *so intense, so saturated* that it starts all over again. Then the expanding universe starts again, that was what scientists came to realize. That's why from that Singularity everything starts again. So with that understanding, I just let things be and then the book came when I was in form 6. My classmate's sister gave me that late **Chief Reverend K Sri Dhammananda's** book, '**What Buddhists Believe**'. That was the first book I received. It was the 1st Edition, a red book, very thin. It was written there that **what my mother had been doing** are **rites and rituals**, all pertaining to the Chinese culture, the Taoist practices, etc. and they have **nothing** to do with Buddhism. Wah! *Suddenly my heart rejoiced* for I knew why I had not in the first place check on what Buddhism was. Then *the moment I saw the 4 Noble Truths, straightaway* the 'inside' knew, **no need to search anymore, that's it. I said, 'Nobody 2600 years ago can summarize all of his enlightenment and**

understanding into just 4 Noble Truths, so beautifully. At that time, I straight away understood the 4 Noble Truths the moment I read it. I then said, 'nobody can **summarize all of life**, both the **mundane** and the **supramundane** into just **4 noble truths**.' Even at that time, I told myself that if I were to awaken like the Samma Sambuddha, Sākyamuni, **I also couldn't summarize all my understanding into just the 4 noble truths, no way.** That's the reason why after that no need to search and **my nature straightaway** told me that this was the truth. And from then on, I never turned back. I was **really determined** to understand this teaching and cultivate all the way and I was very lucky because of my **past cultivation** that had helped me so much. The moment I got that book, I made the **determination** to cultivate sincerely and accordingly.

I **did very well** in my form Six and I was able to get myself admitted to University of Malaya (MU) where I did my Civil Engineering course. On the first day at that university, because of affinity I met our late Chief Reverend K Sri Dhammananda, then the rest was history. So that was how my **investigative dharma** came about. That's how **all the understanding came** about. Then later on, after I read through those Dharma books, **I met many teachers and guide.** Later on, I had the opportunities to come into contact with various types of other teachings. The books just came, the teachers, the guides, etc. they just came (*everyone was very different*) and I didn't know them. Then within those 3 years (1986 till 1989), everything just came and the transformation just happened.

That '*nature*' that understands will have an open mind and it can accept everything. Wherever there is truth it understands. Then it

can relate to Truth clearly. That's how when Eckhart Tolle's book the 'Power of Now' came out after I had come out to share (at the request of Dharma friends) I can understand his book and his book at that time was already very famous. They showed me the book. Most of the time, after I go through these books I will tell them, 'never mind, this one, you all can go and read yourself' because the book is not harmful. Then when I read that book, I realized that this book is **very different from the rest**. I told them this was **a very good book, a very great book** because the way Eckhart explained what happened to him in the book's introduction on how he went into those **stillness states**, and how he **came out** of it then **how he suddenly understood the Dharma**, I can understand what happened and I knew he had his past, otherwise he cannot become like that.

Earlier on, he went through **severe depression**. Then if you read the book (the Introduction section) you will come to know how he actually went in and how after he came out from those states then after that how *he completely understood the truth*. Just before it happens, he was fighting with the thought because he was in **great depression**, then suddenly that thought came out and said, 'If I cannot accept all these, it means there is another thought which cannot accept all these wrong doings'. He was thinking deep into life, then **he realized almost everybody including the pastors lied**. Do you know the church pastors, sometimes they also lie, cheat and deceive. He realized his father also lied, his parents also lied, his friends also lied and he himself also lied. Then the inner nature said, 'this is wrong and I cannot accept all these'.

Then in the midst of deep depression, suddenly that **thought awakened**. He said, 'if there is another thought that said he **could not accept all these**, it means there are 2 of these in me. Then all of a sudden, *his mind went blank* - Pop! **no more thought**, went into **cessation** because that **spark triggered off** and **he went inside, the whole of consciousness went into cessation deep inside** for a few hours. Then all of the sudden when he come out of it again, he became **totally different**. Then when he looked at his room again, it was like he had never seen it before, wow! All of a sudden *everything was so pristine and so beautiful*; starting with the light coming in through the window. Then he said everything was so pristine because at that time, the **mundane mind must have collapsed** and the **true mind came out**. *That's how he can understand all teachings that point towards Truth after that.*

Before he understood the teaching, he was still a nobody. After he came out, he described in his own book, everything was like totally new, so pristine and he could feel the great stillness, the silence, the tranquillity, the beauty and the joy deep inside him but he didn't know what all these were. Then he didn't work. He just sat in the park for about 2 years but *he was full of joy, full of happiness, so serene, so peaceful* that people found him very amusing and went there to talk to him. Then after a while, people asked him about religious things. He said, 'I don't understand.' They showed him the book. They quote the phrases. The moment he heard these Truth, he understood. Then people **got interested** in him. That's how he **become famous** and decides to come out to share his understanding. Then he started to write books. All these can come about was because he had gone through that **cessation**. He had

realized that awakening. Then later on, he also knew about the **segmented body** and **mind** but not as clear as the way I had described it to you all. He also mentioned, 'If you choose to come, you have to go through that period of suffering before you connect (he used the word 'before you connect' also) to your true nature via that segmented life. He has to suffer because he came that way; he suffered experiencing severe depression. That's why after that wherever there is truth, when he reads them, he will understand.

Then J. Krishnamurti's book was even more difficult to understand but I was **very fortunate** because after I had realized those earlier understanding in 1989, I actually don't need any more teachers to teach me. But there was *one last guide* that came to me. How I met my last guide was also very strange. The condition kept on arising and my 'nature' knew this is someone that I must meet up. There was no such thing as everything happened through chance or by coincidences. If the condition to meet can **continuously arise** for 6 times, it means **this person I must meet**. I didn't know who he was but **my nature** kept telling me this person I must meet even though it knows I doesn't need to see anybody anymore because the condition to meet happened 6 times. Normally after 2 times, I would have gone to meet up.

After I met him, I understood why I had to see him because he explained and show to me the **'gateway' to my nature**. Immediately after that I don't need him anymore. I understood what that 'gateway' was. Then he also told me that I **should pay attention to this person's teaching, J. Krishnamurti**. I *didn't even know who J. Krishnamurti was at that time*. Then it was

indeed very strange because after that J. Krishnamurti's books keep coming to me. That Singapore friend who introduced my last guide to me also liked J. Krishnamurti's teaching because he was heading the *Theosophical society* while in Singapore; they also have a lot of J. Krishnamurti's quotes. So he was the one that sent me **those books and quotes of J. Krishnamurti**.

Then as usual, the moment I saw the quotes, I understood what he said. The words he used were **so different, so revolutionary**. That's the reason why most people **cannot understand** his teaching. Most people find it *very difficult to understand him, like he is a very tough nut to crack because the way he speaks and shares, he uses modern terminologies and words and he was against all forms of organized religion*. He was **very critical** of almost **every organized religion's practices**. He used these words, '*wherever there is authority, there is no religious freedom*' which means **religion must not have authority to conditioned and put fear into the individual**. Then he also talked about: 'whenever there is a meditator there is no meditation' and '*freedom from the known*' etc. Then he said, if you were to do all those things that **organized religions advised you to do**, you are wasting your time and he was like very contradictory – against the norm. That's why when you Google his teaching to read some of his **famous quotes and phrases**, you will be **shocked** by what he said. But later on, people started to give him recognition. People started to realize that he was very wise but not all religion can accept him because he **only praise** (if I am not wrong), Sākyamuni's teaching. He said at least that *one was not so bad compared to other religion* that asked you to **believe**. He said this one asked you to investigate so this one is not so bad. Investigates into truth. He

never asks you to believe. Those that ask you to believe all of them **have authority upon you** and there are many of such teachings.

Later on as you develop the understanding, you will know whether it is the truth or not. Like Hui Neng, if it is the truth, he will understand and it will also stand up to investigation. That's why you don't have to worry whether it is Mahayana or Theravada tradition. If it is the truth, those who have awakened they will understand. **Like Eckhart Tolle**, after he had gone through all those transformation, you can show him any religious book that has the truth, he will know how to interpret them. And in his book, he said this very sad truth; he said **most religions** actually **have the truth**, the **only problem** with those religions was that the original teachings of the founder were already lost. That's why they were not **so potent** as before. They **cannot have that potency** to actually give rise to the condition **to awaken living beings**. He made that statement. He said that **the truths are still within the teachings** but people **cannot** understand them now. That's why he said, 'it **has lost the potency to awaken living being**'. It is written in his book, The Power of Now. It was beautifully described there and I was full of joy when I read that part because that was what I realized too. Even our Buddhist teachings; over the years, have really lost its potency, its **true original meaning** is no more there.

That's why, if what has been taught over the years is still the **authentic dharma** of **Sākyamuni**, you should agree with me that **there should be a lot more enlightened beings, right?** Just like science and technology, when you develop the understanding, science and technology progress very fast. If the teachings were still

what they were during the time of the Buddha, there would have been a lot of enlightened beings isn't it?

Even during the Buddha's time, do you realize or not, everywhere he goes, all of a sudden **thousands of monks all awakened**. Then almost everywhere you would see, first stage of sainthood, 2nd stage of sainthood, 3rd stage of sainthood and Arahants, everywhere. How come over the years, they start to tell people (this is written in certain books, we don't want to quote name) nowadays even to find one stream-entry, a sotāpanna is already very difficult? They have reached such a conclusion, do you know why? Because they themselves **also have no more faith**. To them they believe it has **deteriorated until such a state**. *So if it has become so bad, then why do we still continue to follow such teaching? We should inquire deep into it. What has gone wrong, what has changed over the years? Then from there, go back to the original teaching.* Then find out who are the ones who still have the ability to explain all those teachings to you. And who can help brings about the understanding and the awakening. **Then only you cultivate it otherwise no point.**

Just like that Klang talk, the transcript book on 'Emptiness' is coming out soon. Printed already? Can show me the book? Let me have a look. It is the printer's master for checking, right? Very good. After that how long would they take to get it printed? After Hari Raya? Oh! Very good, very good. Okay, I will check through, then I will confirm with you by tonight or latest tomorrow. Then we can have this book printed.

I used to say you must have open mind, do you remember? Why you must have an open mind? If you have come to understand that after so many years of cultivation, it has still not brought about any real transformation in you then what must you do. Why don't you give yourself a chance to listen to something that is new and give it a try because you have got nothing to lose. What happens if this is the truth and you have been holding on to your **old view tenaciously** thinking that what you have been taught is the truth and you **refuse** to have **an open mind** to even give it a try? Then it is you who have everything to lose. If you give it a try what does it mean? The worst case scenario is you lose some time learning it. Besides if it is **not** the truth, it will **not** stand up to investigation.

But if what you have been doing over the years is **not leading you anywhere** and you still continue with that way, then I ask you one very simple question. What do you think will be the result and the outcome? You will continue to be what you are, right? And you will never change. That's why you **must investigate** into a teaching that **can enable** you **to understand very clearly** and **change** for the better. Then you can **straighten your view** and put it to test. Then you can know for your own self whether **this is the truth or not?** Not until you can **inquire** into the truth and have this **open mind** to **receive the truth**, your **own views and opinions** will **block** you. That's why *a lot of cultivators* have **been blocked** by their **closed view** because **the conditioning is so strong** and their thought keeps on telling them these, 'You mean so many people doing this type of meditation, they are also wrong? You mean they also don't understand?' Then sometimes they even add in these words, '*you mean monks also don't understand?*' They have been teaching **this**

type of meditation all these while.' It's *not a question of monks understand* or *don't understand*. It's *about investigating into truth*. Why do you want to pose all these questions, *which come from the thoughts* to block and trap you?

Forget about the *thoughts*. **Forget about what the thoughts tell you** because the *thoughts* is always *trying to keep you away from new things*. What is thought? Memory, right? Memory means **accumulation of your past**. Do you know why they want to hold onto the past? So that they feel **secure and complacent**. Just like your job, *every day you complain* that your bossed don't really take care of you, don't really pay you adequately, take advantage of you, etc. You complain so much but you dare not leave that job. You still cling onto that job. So the **thought is the same** because **within the known**, you **feel comfortable**. You feel you **are safe**. So that **wrong thought** is the one that actually holds you back. Then you **refused to venture into new things** because you feel very **insecure** when you go out into something new that you haven't heard before for you always follow the **crowd instinct**. What is crowd instinct? If nobody does it before, I also don't want to try it out. If you are like that, you cannot learn truth.

My nature is the other way round. If nobody does it, I will go and do it. Also later on, *after my nature had realized the truth*, it also comes to know that **Truth is always the opposite what human being thinks**. Just like the stock market, if you cling on to the **herd instinct** you will surely die but if *you dare to go against* the herd instinct, you will make good money. When everybody panic, you better go and buy. When everybody at that time is very gung-ho and very

confident, you better sell because *how can everybody makes money*, where got such things? *When everybody makes money, you must panic* because there is no such thing as a free lunch. When too many people make money it means the market is ***already very euphoric*** because - like a very good party with good food, good music, beautiful ladies, handsome guys and very nice atmosphere; end of the day somebody must foot the bill. Those who enjoy the party until drunk and don't know how to go back will end up footing the bill but for those who stay near the door, after they had enough they can go, these people escape. So don't become gullible. That's why *there is no such thing as a free lunch except the Buddha dharma*.

The Buddha dharma is ***really free*** and it ***doesn't ask for anything in return*** from you. So when you really have an ***open mind***, you will be able to have the ***condition to reflect, contemplate, inquire and investigate*** into the ***truth shared***. Then you have ***got nothing to lose***. You must every time ***remind*** yourself, if I ***don't learn new things***, I can ***never*** progress'. That's why J Krishnamurti warned ***cultivators*** and ***living beings*** via asking them the question, 'who is the *most dangerous person in this world*'? The most dangerous person in this world is the one who said, ***'I Know'***. When you think you already know, you ***cannot learn anymore***. Your ***cup is full***. The Zen analogy also tells you that. ***When your cup is full, nobody can teach you***. J. Krishnamurti says that is the ***most dangerous*** person in this world because if you are like that, nobody can teach you. The Buddha also said the same thing in a slightly different way. He said, 'he who ***holds on to his view tenaciously*** (as stated by the Buddha in the Sallekha Sutta) even the Samma Sambuddha also ***cannot save***

him because he is **not open minded**. You **hold** on to your **views tenaciously** means you already think you know. Nobody can teach you already because before you even listen, you **already said you know, so how to share with you?** How **to help you understand** because you are **so rigid** in your views and opinion due to your **conditioning**.

That's why **the art of listening** (which is *to listen with an open mind*) is very important. When you *listen with your conditioning with your views and opinions*, thinking that you already know, then you **not listening**. You are **resisting understanding** because that **knowledge prevents** you from *opening up, prevents you from listening*. That's why when you listen, **just listen silently**; don't **comment** and don't **interfere or intervene**. If it is the truth, you will understand. If it is not the truth, you will also understand. Then you **will know what to do because** when you listen **without conditioning** it means when you can understand (because your mind has clarity), you can understand and when you **cannot** understand, you will **not understand**. Similarly if it is the **truth** or **not the truth**, it is the same. When you are **not ready**, you *cannot understand*, so it is better for you to have an open mind.

When *you are ready* and when *you can understand* you **will know whether it is the truth or not?** If it is the truth, it will **stand up to investigation**. Then *you will understand*. This is what will happen, it is from the **understanding**, for your **nature has already transformed**. The *moment you listen, if it is the truth, you will understand*. No matter what words they use, what language they use, what terminology they use, **you will know, that person has**

realized but if it is *not the truth*, it will also understand *because truth cannot be that way*. It is just like that day at Yoon Chun's house dana, when they asked the two questions regarding karma. You will understand straightaway.

Then the other thing about *open mind* is that, you must *not restrict* yourself to *one religious label* or *one aspect of truth* or *understanding* because *truth is unending*. Truth is *ever evolving*. It's all about *Reality* and *Reality* keeps on evolving: - different times, different civilization; different conditions, *different understanding will arise* and it's *not rigid*. That's why *Truth is!* You cannot commit to memory for *truth is not rigid*. Truth is an *ever-moving reality* and whatever that is *continuously in a state of flux* within the moment *needs a lot of wisdom* to develop the *understanding* because there are a lot of *conditions behind* which *need to be understood* for you to *understand those movements*. Besides *these movements* are very, very great movements that involved the *entire universe's movements* (even though it can have *some localized conditioning* which are *very strong* but it involves a universal movement. That's why you have to be a Samma Sambuddha *to really understand* the *intricacy* of this *law of karma* which is one of the *major spiritual law of nature* that governs life and existence. All these understanding can come about is because there are conditions for their arising, that's why today we manage to share them.

We may have to stop now. What's the time now? Another 8 minutes to go, so it is just nice. Why not I finish off this part then we end? Just now we were at page 34.

*A great many people had heard The Diamond Sutra, **but none of them** had become enlightened.*

Ah! Hsuan Hua also said that.

Now in the West, perhaps someone will hear, “One should produce that thought which is nowhere supported” (or the mind that has no dwelling) and, understanding the principle, become enlightened. That is what I hope. Whether or not it will actually happen is another matter. After becoming enlightened, he did not say, “Hah! I am enlightened.”

See, they won't say it because they know that the 'form and mind' is never them.

He was not like some people today who do not understand even a hair's breadth of the Buddha Dharma, yet claim to be enlightened.

So this is Hsuan Hua's way of putting it.

*The ancients, even when they had become enlightened, did not recklessly say, “I am enlightened!” Even less would people who **had not** become enlightened claim to have done so. It is necessary **to seek** certification from a good knowing advisor, a person who has already awakened. That is why the Sixth Patriarch went to Huang Mei to seek the Fifth Patriarch's seal of certification.*

But this is Hsuan Hua's understanding or his way of putting it because as far as my nature's understanding is concern, Hui Neng did not go to the 5th Patriarch **to seek certification** because the dharma is **paccattam** (can be **realized** by *the wise each for himself*). So you **don't need** people *to certify you*. The more likely reason why Hui Neng wants to see the 5th Patriarch was because he knew if the 5th Patriarch can teach such beautiful teaching such as the **Diamond Sutra**, it means he *must have wisdom* which is **much higher** than Hui Neng at that time. That's why he wanted to meet up with him and he knew the condition has arisen. There are many things that he needs to develop **the clear understanding** because since he was born 20 over years, nothing really happened. Then all of a sudden, the condition arises. That's why he will know. He will know that the *time has come for him to move*. At first he was *reluctant to go because his mother was still around* and he needed to care for her; it is his duty to take care of this mother. But the owner of that place and the merchant that recited the sutra *knew that he was gifted* and he had to go. So they decided to help him out. They promised him to look after his mother, take care of the mother; then gave him the needed sustenance to go there. That's how the 6th Patriarch, Hui Neng went to Huang Mei mountain to meet up with the 5th Patriarch. I think we shall stop here at page 34. Always remember. **If you need people to certify you or confirm you, chances are**, you have not **realized** the **true awakening** because the true awakening is 'Paccattam' (can be realized by the wise each for themselves) so **no need certification**, straightaway you will understand. Okay, we have at least finished 3 pages (pages 31 to 34). So this part is **very interesting** because a lot of the **important teachings of the 6th Patriarch** are in the introduction.

How he met the 5th Patriarch and how the 5th Patriarch handed over the patriarch ship to him. There were a lot of *beautiful dharma exchanges* at that time and from the way Hui Neng received them via just talking to the 5th Patriarch he had this **great awakening**. And again it's due to the Diamond Sutra's teaching which we had covered in our earlier Heart Sutra sessions. Maybe the next lesson, you bring the Heart Sutra book. We shall go through that same 5th Patriarch's sharing with Hui Neng because that version was more precise. I changed what Miss Lee sent to me at that time because the version she sent to me was not the correct version. It was another version, which when I read I knew was the wrong version. That day was very strange. I decided to check it up via Google search and somehow straightaway this **authentic version** came out. When I read it I was full of joy because that was the right version. That one, the **translation** was **very accurate**. I only needed to modify a few English words. That's why the one in the Heart Sutra which we will go through next week is **very beautiful**. That version when you go through it again, many of you will develop **a much deeper understanding** of the **Buddha dharma** by now because over the last 2 to 3 years of sharing of the Heart Sutra's teaching, the foundation has been set. So this time around when we go through it again, *it will be* **very different**. Even at the RECENT March Meditation retreat, *when I read and shared it*, I remembered *Sister Eng Bee and Sister Padmasuri* they all **benefitted** a lot from those **sharing**. This time around if I repeat it *for the 3rd time*, it will be very different and **very penetrative** especially for those new kalyāṇamittas who were **not there** at that time. They really **benefitted**, even Sister Alicia (who was very new) also benefitted at that time when I repeated this Heart Sutra sharing

at that Cameron Highlands retreat.

When is our next class? Oh, next Sunday which means we can only have 2 hours of sharing because at 5 pm, the Korean nun will be coming. So our class will be from 3pm to 5 pm and we will try because 2 hours should be enough. You try to come a bit earlier so that we can start at 3 pm sharp. I will do the puja earlier; maybe at 5 minutes before 3pm we will start the puja. Then exactly at 3 o'clock, we can start and it will be **very interesting** because this **particular version** which I managed to get from the internet, I *only need to modify a few of the English words* which were **not so accurate**. Then I realized that was what could actually happened because **this nature** of mine can feel how it was possible for Hui Neng and the 5th Patriarch to really developed the understanding that way at that time and it was **so clear, so beautiful**. The reason being even with my nature, if I was there, I **could also understand and receive such truth**. It was so powerful. That's why Hui Neng straight away **came to great awakening**. The moment the 5th Patriarch explained that part (**this mundane mind, you must know how to use it and yet not be deceived by it**) - wah! Fantastic awakening! After that Hui Neng said, 'How **amazing** that all Dharmas are inseparable from the self-nature. How amazing that **the self-nature is originally pure**. How amazing that the **self-nature is unborn and undying**. How amazing the **true or self-nature is inherently complete** on its own, perfect and so beautiful. How amazing that **the self-nature neither moves nor stay!** Who will ever know these Truth?' That's why his teaching is **directly pointing** to the true or self-nature. That's why his teaching is called the **sudden teaching leading to sudden awakening**. That's how Hui Neng

realized it so profoundly. Actually my nature also teaches that way but since most of you are not ready I cannot direct you all to that ***nature straight away*** and that's the reason why I always said, 'all your **methods and techniques**' you can forget about them. You don't need to train your mind that way because that is the ***mundane mind*** but you all ***have no choice*** because ***the 5 mental hindrances*** are so powerful and you all ***don't know how to get rid of it*** and ***peace is so difficult*** to come by. If you follow the ***direct teaching*** you don't need to go through all these **thought based training**. The ***moment you understand, the moment you are silent, you are already that thing***. That's why you can go into it and you can ***connect to that self-nature very fast***. In ***one instant you can be awakened if you understand***. It can be done and it's ***not difficult***. But because the ***traditional way is so crude that's why*** it is as if everything must always start from A, B, C; then you learn how to form words after that, how to make sentences, then must also learn grammar. If you ask Sister Chooi, she will tell you to master the proper English first. Wah! If you take all those steps, you tend to waste a lot of time, right? But if can just listen like a child; you can learn very fast. But you must listen to or learn from the qualified English speaking person. **Learning** via the ***direct listening*** is the fastest way to learn. That's why the kids, don't need to learn via A, B, C. Just ask them to listen attentively and sing songs. They will learn very fast but if you go and instruct them to write and memorize the words, it will take a long time.

We shall end here because it is already 6 pm. Sadhu! Sadhu!
Sadhu!

