

54th Lesson of the Sixth Patriarch's Platform Sutra



(Based on a **direct transcript** from the **recording** of the
54th Lesson of the Sixth Patriarch's Platform Sutra class
[dated 13th August 2017]

Conducted by Bro. Teoh at Wu Pin Chin Seah,
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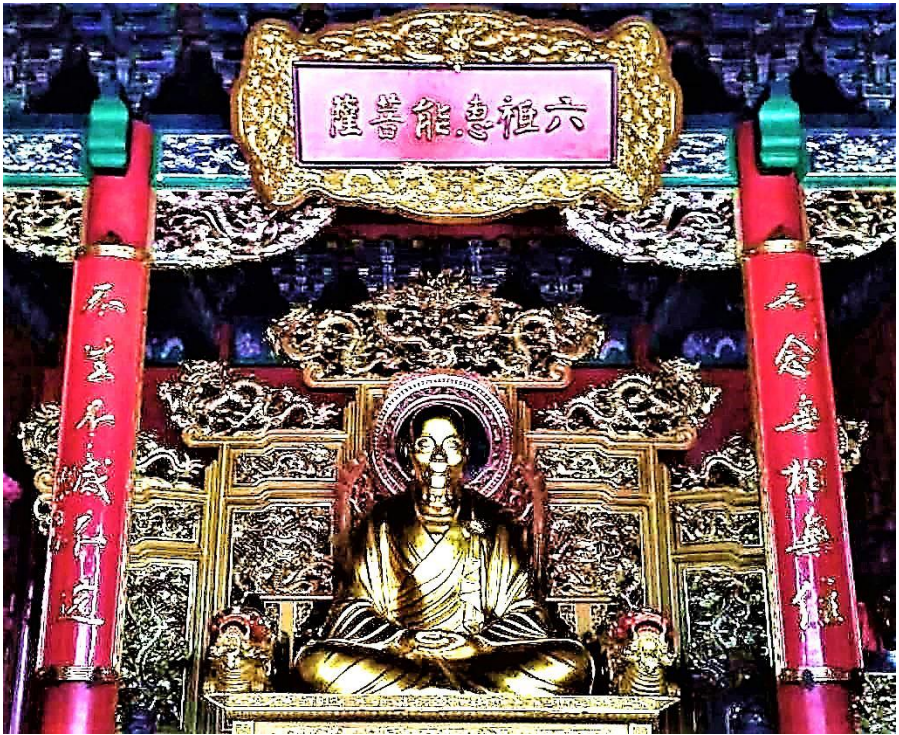
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Dated: 30.11.2017



Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng Bodhisattva

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(Biodata of Bro. Teoh Kian Koon)

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

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

1. Preface

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

As these notes were mostly **compiled** based on a **direct transcript** from the recording of the **54th lesson** of the **Sixth Patriarch's Platform Sutra** class (dated 13.8.2017); the text is aligned as closely as possible to the **colloquial speech** in the talk. However some **editorial amendments** have been **made** to the **text without detracting** from the **essence** of the talk. With this, it is hoped that readers can **adjust** themselves accordingly to **better understand** its **true meaning** and **intent**. A **good** way to do this is **to listen** to the recordings **first before** reading the transcript book.

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

<http://broteoh.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/54-6th-Patriarch-13-August-2017.mp3>

2. Acknowledgement

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

Special thanks should be accorded to **Sister Chee Guit Yeng (Puan Chee)** 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 other to realize their **good** and **noble wishes/aspirations** soonest possible.

With Metta always,
Brother Teoh Kian Koon
(Dated: 30th November 2017)

3. 54th Lesson of the 6th Patriarch Platform Sutra dated 13th August 2017

Today is our 54th lesson of the Sixth Patriarch Platform Sutra dated 13th August 2017 held at WPCS Mahayana vihāra. Let us now compose our minds, develop the **Saddhā** (faith) and the **Vīriya** (spiritual zeal), then **mindfully**, we shall commence the Puja chanting.

3.1. Pūjā

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

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

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

Námó fó púsà (3x) (南無佛菩薩) (3x)

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

Vandanā - Salutation to Lord Buddha:-

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammāsambuddhassa (3X)

Tisaraṇa - Taking of the Three Refuges:-

Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi,
Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

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

Tatīyaṃpi Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Tatīyaṃpi Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Tatīyaṃpi Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Pañca Sīla - Renewing of the Five Precepts:-

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

Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu! (Rejoicing)

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

Buddhaṃ pujemi; Dhammaṃ pujemi; Saṅghaṃ pujemi.

3.2. Dharma Sharing By Bro. Teoh

You all can be seated. Miss Lee, have you on the recorder? Ok. Just relax body and mind, maintain some form of attention. Then we can start our lesson 54 of the 6th Patriarch Platform Sutra. Let us turn to page 1, verse for opening a Sutra.

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*

3.2.1. Understanding Mahayana and Theravada Traditions

Now turn to page 272. Before we go into the **Sutra proper**, there is **something important** that I would like to share with you all so that you all can develop the understanding. You see, nowadays, there are **a lot of controversies** between *Theravada* and *Mahayana practitioners* because of **some lack of understanding** among their cultivators and practitioners. This **misunderstanding** is mainly due **to the division** created by those who have **not** developed the true **understanding of the teaching**. As I have explained before, the **Buddha Dharma** are **truths** taught by the Buddha. His teaching is **essentially** the **Dharma**. That's the reason why we **take refuge** in the **Buddha**, in His the **Dharma** which is his teaching, and the **Sangha which are the enlightened disciples** of the Buddha. When you take refuge in the teaching it means you take refuge in the **Dharma** which is **truth itself**. And this **truth points towards enlightenment** as per our earlier discussion. The *scripture*, the *Dharma* is **not** the **enlightenment** but these are truths that **point** towards enlightenment. If you understand its meaning, then you can **just cultivate according** to the **teaching to realize** the **enlightenment**. After you **have realized** the **enlightenment**, there is **no more division** because basically, what the Buddha taught is just the **Dharma or Truth and Truth is!**

The **essence** of the **Buddhist teaching** is just the **Four Noble Truths** which are **common to all traditions**, whether *Theravada*, *Mahayana*

or *Vajrayana*. But some vehicles expanded on their teachings. Then **when people don't understand** (or with their **limited understanding**), they like **to comment** from their own **limited point of view**; that's how it can lead to complications. But sometimes when the followers of other vehicles, expanded and share those teachings, **don't have the** deep enough understanding, what they share may sometimes **deviate** from the truth. But basically they come from the **same teaching** which is the **Dharma**. How they expand from the teaching is, to me, not the issue. The **main issue** is, **do you understand the main/core teaching?** When you understand the main teaching, whatever the vehicle, you can understand how they come about and whether the **commentaries** of those that have been shared are the truth or not.

Without your own cultivation and your own **ability to investigate** into all these **through an understanding**, there is *no way you can understand* them. So **focus on the cultivation** to realize the **Dharma first**. That **is more important** - rather than **holding onto your views and opinions** to create the **division, unnecessary arguments, misunderstanding, trying to be right and to protect** that particular vehicle that you are associated with. This is how the mind can **create division** and **misunderstanding** leading to **unnecessary** conflicts, arguments and the egoistic mind. The **egoistic mind** that does this is the mind that has delusion (self-delusion). This **understanding** can only come about **through realization** of the **Dharma**. In order to avoid such **unnecessary misunderstanding**, I have made it a point that wherever I go, depending on the way place we are in, I will approach it **initially** from the **Theravada tradition** because **most English educated** students or practitioners

find it **very difficult** to learn *Mahayana teaching*. **Mahayana teaching** is **normally taught in Mandarin** and without an understanding of Mandarin, it's usually very difficult **to comprehend Mahayana teaching**. Sometimes it can be comprehended but it's very difficult. That is the reason why the English educated are mostly with the Theravada tradition. But it doesn't mean all English educated are with the Theravada tradition. There are quite a number of **Mandarin educated** ones, who are quite strongly associated with Theravada Buddhism because they feel that its teaching is more authentic. You will also come to an understanding that **throughout my years of sharing**, I prefer **to blend and integrate** both the **Theravada and Mahayana teaching** together into **one common tradition** of the **Buddha** because both traditions have **their pros and cons** and if you understand, they **complement** each other **beautifully**.

Theravada Buddhism is the *teaching of the elders* because Thera are called the elders (monks who have more than 20 years of monkhood). So they are called Vehicle of the Elders. But originally, when it started, they called it **Hinayana**, the **smaller vehicle** of the **orthodox tradition**. Orthodox means they limit their teaching to what was **recorded** and what **they believed** to be the **original teaching**. Whatever outside of it, they just refused to take it in and they just **chopped it off**. Like what I have explained before, there are **pros and cons** in what they do. Theravada teaching has **its very beautiful advantage** in the sense that **it preserves the original teaching** and this original teaching that was preserved **is very authentic** especially the **Pāḷi chanting**. These are the words that

came from the Buddha direct - like our Puja chanting, salutation to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha etc. It has never changed.

The *taking of refuge, renewing of the precepts and the importance of precepts*. All these have never changed. Then the Pāḷi chanting of the **Dhammacakkappavattana Sutra**, the various **other Sutras** like the **Fire Sermon** have never changed because they were **passed down over the years via chanting**. Chanting is a very **good way of preserving** the **authenticity** of the teaching. But the problem with the Theravada tradition is, as the years go by, after the enlightenment of the Buddha, all these **explanations of the teaching** or the **Sutra get defiled** or are **no longer the true interpretation** of the **actual teaching** as taught by the Buddha. That's why they lose their **potency to awaken living beings** unless you have **your cultivation developed from the past**. Or you have **been diligent** with **your cultivation and practice** then you may develop the understanding. Otherwise, most of the cultivators, find it **very difficult to understand** the teaching because most of this teachings are based on the translation which were only committed to writing many hundred years later (after the Buddha's passing away or Parinibbāna). Then after they were committed to writing, these writings again were **subjected to interpretation** or **explanation** by the translators before they called them commentaries. After all these commentaries came out the main problem is there are many versions of the commentaries. Then different teachers, different monks started to teach it differently. That's how it had ended up this way; it's no longer the **authentic teaching**. Finally it ends up with all the **various methods** and

techniques of meditation of **different teachers** with their various **views and opinions** of the teaching.

Then when it comes to Mahayana, it's the same. There are pros and cons too. For Mahayana, the advantage is, later on they were able to **expand on the teaching** because they have **Great Beings, like Hui Neng, the Sixth Patriarch, and the various other Patriarchs including Bodhidharma, the Fifth Patriarch and many others.** They were all **very good.** They **have the understanding.** That's why their teachings are very different. They **expanded on it** and **many cultivators benefited** from it. And those who *have cultivated this way before,* they *will understand* it. And this particular vehicle was able to expand on all these is because **within their vehicle,** there are many of these **Great Beings** (the Buddha and Bodhisattvas), most of them are **very special Beings** with **great perfection** and **understanding.**

That's how the teaching gets expanded. But the shortcoming or disadvantage of Mahayana is, too much emphasis on the higher teaching. They like to talk about the various, very profound Mahayana teachings. They even have the Shurangama Sutra, the Heart Sutra then the Diamond Sutra and the various types of Lotus Sutra and all these teachings are **very abstract** and **very difficult** for **normal practitioners to understand.** And because of that, the Theravada vehicle's followers find it very difficult to accept the Mahayana teaching because a lot of their teachings appear very controversial, like it's completely opposite of what the normal mind can understand especially the Heart Sutra's teaching.

It talks about *form being empty*, '*form itself is emptiness and emptiness itself is form*' and '*form does not differ from emptiness; emptiness does not differ from form.*' All these, **they find it very difficult to understand and comprehend**. Then they started to comment via saying that **these were never taught** in the **Theravada tradition**. These were things that came later. It may not be the **authentic teaching** etc. but then if you check the Theravada teaching, they have such a word as **Suññatā**. **Suññatā is emptiness** but it was **never elaborated** because this term is seldom used by the Theravadas to teach or to share. But **that word exists** in their **teaching**. What they are more familiar is **anattā**. In actual fact, if you **penetrate anattā**, you will **also penetrate suññatā**; there is no difference. In fact, **understanding anattā is a very beautiful awakening**, a term that **the Buddha used so beautifully**.

It's from the understanding of anattā that allow one to realize suññatā. Without realizing anattā, one cannot understand suññatā. **Suññatā means emptiness** but this **emptiness is very profound**, the meaning is **very deep**. It **doesn't mean nothingness**, doesn't mean **empty of everything**. No, its deep meaning is '*empty nature of existence*', **ultimately it's not so real, not what you think**. It's **empty of essence**, empty of a **permanent unchanging entity** that you tend **to cling onto, grasp onto and hold onto and say, this is me, this is I, therefore all these can be mine**. When it comes to this type of understanding, **you need to awaken to it**. **Otherwise, you cannot understand**.

My nature is not interested in - whether it's Theravada or Mahayana because these are **divisions created by living beings and cultivators**

who **don't have** the *clear understanding*. What is more important is, we need to do away with this **division** and **come together** as **followers of the Buddha, traditional devotees** of the Buddha to **cultivate His teaching** via **not creating** such **unnecessary division**. But society is such, and that's the reason why when you see me coming to WPCS (which is a Mahayana vihāra started by Miss Lee's teacher, Bo Yuan Zhang Lau) to teach or share the dharma, my **opening Puja will start off** with the **Mahayana tradition's salutation** *first* then **followed by the Theravada tradition's puja** chanting. We pay respects to our original teacher, Sākyamuni Buddha via chanting `Nā Mó Bě'n Shī Shì Jiā Móu Ní Fó' followed by Quan Yin's because **Quan Yin's nature is very beautiful, unique, full of love, compassion and wisdom** and she is also **very well-respected** in the **Mahayana tradition** and even in this temple, WPCS. You look at the statue behind, which is more prominent? Quan Yin or Sākyamuni? Quan Yin is more prominent, isn't it? You have a full Quan Yin statue whereas *Sākyamuni's is only one poster* at the back. That's why we recite `Nā Mó Bě'n Shī Shì Jiā Móu Ní Fó' followed by `Namo Quan Shi Yin Pusa' because a lot of our Kalyāṇamittas have **great affinity with Quan Yin Bodhisattva**. And Quan Yin is a very beautiful and unique Being, full of love, full of compassion and wisdom.

Bo Yuan Zhang Lau was a **direct** descendent of **Master Hsu Yun ...** (Master Hsu Yun was very famous. Even Master Hsuan Hua, Yun Chen Fa Tze and many of these Mahayana great masters, they were all **his first line disciples** and they came from that **tradition of Master Hsu Yun**). We need to understand all these in order to avoid controversies, arguments and misunderstanding.

After I have chanted the salutation (which include the final salutation to all Buddha and Bodhisattvas), I then combine it with those of the Theravada tradition and chant the **salutation to all Buddha** in the Pāḷi version: - *‘Arahant Samma Sambuddho Bhagavā, Buddhaṃ Bhagavantaṃ Abivademi.’* This is salutation to all the Buddha. Then the second one is **salutation to the teaching, the Dharma** which we chant, *‘Svākkhāto Bhagavatā Dhammo... etc.’* The third one is **salutation to the Sangha**, *‘Supatipanno Bhagavato Sāvaka Saṅgho ... etc.’* This is to remind us of the **original authentic Pāḷi chanting** of the Theravada tradition.

Then, we continue with our **taking of refuge, the renewal of precepts and paying of respects to the Triple Gem**. This way we can **do away with tradition**; meaning **from one tradition, we move on to connect to the next**. Then after that, we study whatever Sutras that have the **authentic teaching**. In fact, *whatever Mahayana Sutra that cannot be explained through the Theravada understanding is not the authentic Sutra*. And that itself, is a very important point to note and to understand. If you cannot explain it through the Theravada understanding, then that Sutra is **not** the authentic Mahayana Sutra. When I mention this, I **don’t mean the limited understanding of a traditional Theravada practitioner** and I hope you understand.

What I mean is, *a real practitioner*; you can call yourself Theravada or whatever but after that so called being (the form and mind) has the **realization**, he will be able **to comprehend the Mahayana teaching**. There is **no difference**, because basically it’s from the **same Dharma** that those teachings come about. That’s why if you

look at the Diamond Sutra, it's very clearly explained. The Diamond Sutra is a very unique Sutra. There are – (I don't know how many chapters, I think thirty something, maybe thirty-two chapters). If you go through the teaching you will **realize one rather unique thing**. There is **no real teaching** in that sutra. The **Diamond Sutra only explains to you how you should develop the cultivation**.

Your cultivation must reach that level of realization because this is a Sutra that explains the **cultivation of Great Beings, the Bodhisattvas cultivation**. That's why it points towards **the cultivation of no mark; no mark of a self- cultivating, no mark of living beings to save, no mark of life, no mark of Dharma**. And this is also what **Heart Sutra teaches**, - 'in true emptiness, there is none of all these.' So, **essentially and basically, the teachings are the same** except that it explains to you **many things that are associated with this type of cultivation**. And that Sutra is so beautiful even though there is no real teaching. But for those who understand, they *can expound to you the teaching hidden behind*, how all these cultivation can bring about the understanding leading to those realization.

For those who have attended the classes before, they will know that the **Diamond Sutra we have covered is so unique and wonderful**. When you cultivate according to that sutra, the **field of merits is completely different, way beyond your capacity to comprehend**. When you **cultivate the normal Sainthood way and the Diamond Sutra way, it's a world of a difference, completely different**. That's the reason why the **ten perfections or Pāramitās** to realize Samma Sambuddhahood must be **perfected**. In order to fulfil the

perfections, you **have to cultivate** following the Diamond Sutra's teaching. Without that, there is ***no way you can realize or fulfil it.***

But *the moment you can have that understanding and cultivate according to the Diamond Sutra, your nature becomes very different.* It can **leapfrog and develop the perfections very fast.** Then you will start to understand why you **have to commit yourself to the four basic vows of the Bodhisattva, to walk the Bodhisattva way.** Then, why you **need to keep the three sets of pure precepts** which arise from the ***advice of the Buddha.*** And all these will become very clear to the cultivator and the practitioner.

Okay? I hope the above sharing can help clear up any *misunderstanding* so that you **don't have to worry** about **whether the teaching is Theravada or Mahayana.** Don't try to create **unnecessary division or arguments** leading to further misunderstanding. With that you can (as per my earlier advice) **make full use of whatever tradition's good teaching to help you develop the understanding.**

Whatever you cannot understand, **have an open mind.** Don't use your **limited knowledge to comment or argue** and do things which may lead to *karmic negativity* without you knowing it. So, hopefully with this, when people ask about these two teachings again, you can just say ***never mind, there is no difference if you truly understand.*** Both came from the *same teaching* so let us not discuss all these anymore. **What is more important is whether the teaching from both traditions can benefit you or not?** If they can benefit you, use it. Why do you want to argue about it? Why do you want to doubt it?

Please don't. In fact **the best way is, to take the best from both sides.** What is weak on the Mahayana side (which I haven't explained to you all) is, - they teach you mainly the **higher teaching**, the **abstract Sutra** and **other abstract Zen sayings and analogies**, - like the **Sixth Patriarch Platform Sutra's famous poems**, then the **analogy of the flag and the wind** and many other Zen stories. But **what they lack** is the **foundation teaching**, the *essence of the Buddha's teaching* which is the **Four Noble Truths** and its spin-off **teaching**, the Buddha's *essential Dharma*.

That one, not to say Mahayana doesn't have, they have, but **not stressed upon, not dwelt into and not properly taught**. If you don't believe me, you can go to any Mahayana temple and find out for yourself, see what you learn. The first thing they ask you to do is, **sweep floor, clean toilet, do all those worldly things, then help out everywhere**. If you don't have the **patience and the understanding**, you may **find it boring** because you **cannot understand** what is going on; **then every day, chanting, chanting, and chanting**. Then once in a while they have Sutra classes. But these Sutra classes are very difficult to understand. That's why I have a lot of Dharma friends who later on, came and talked to me on these. They were Mandarin educated hence the reason why they join the Mahayana tradition. But when they were there, they **couldn't understand** the **true teaching, not even the basic teaching**. But **after attending my class, or talking to me, through having meals with me (which can be lunch or dinner or even breakfast); just through talking, or sometimes listening to the Dharma sharing, they learn so much more**. They said, 'these are the **relevant teachings** that can allow them **to relate to life** and yet they can't learn it when they are with

the **Mahayana tradition** because all these **essential Dharma were not really taught and much less stressed upon.** Teaching like the *law of Karma*, the 3 evil roots, the *Four Foundations of Mindfulness*, the *Seven Factors of Enlightenment*, the *5 Spiritual Faculties* and *5 mental hindrances*, etc. they do have them because **they were mentioned**, but **never taught** to them. It's unlike the Theravada tradition, where they start with all those **basic teachings**; how from the Four Noble Truths, the rest of the teaching (those essential dharma) spin off from there. The Theravada sutras have a lot of **essential Dharma teachings**. That **foundation** of essential dharma's teaching is **very important**.

When you want to build any building, you need a very strong foundation. It is from there that the whole construction can come about and become very stable. This **foundation, the authentic teaching is still with the Theravada tradition**. But the **interpretation** of it, the **understanding of these essential dharma teaching is lacking**. So, to really understand them, you need those **who have awakened to the higher realization, with the higher cultivation, to explain it to you**. Otherwise, it is very difficult.

By now you should understand **that both, Theravada and Mahayana have their pros and cons**. So, if you know how to take in both, **the good aspects of each tradition**, then you **will stand to benefit the most and you will progress beautifully**. That's why, it is **very important to have an open mind, have sincerity and faith** to go this way. Then **just cultivate, persevere and don't try to know, don't even want to argue; no point because right and wrong is for the egoic mind. It's not the mind of a true cultivator**. The mind of a

cultivator has to transcend *duality*. It has to go beyond *right and wrong, me and others* because *sakkāyadiṭṭhi* or self-delusion is very powerful.

You have to go beyond *duality, beyond form, beyond mind* to realize that *nature* within. Otherwise, you cannot *understand* all these teachings. The *teaching is not abstract*; it **appears abstract** because **you don't have the *ability to understand*, to insight into it, to liberate the mind.** Because **you fail to understand what your true mind, or true nature is, you don't know *how to silent* your mundane mind to realize the true mind.** And without that true mind, you cannot cultivate because ***without silence, there is no Sati.***

That's why **Sati is awareness *before* the *knowing*, before the arising of thought.** When ***thought is active*, there is no silent mind** hence **no clarity to see things as they are.** When **there is no Sati, there is no meditative mind.** Then you **cannot realize the true mind, the true nature.** Then, **how can you see things as they are?** This is because the delusion of your mundane mind, thinking mind and your condition-arising mind is so powerful. It *continuously* arise and cause delusion in you, developing all the ***self-delusion, to condition you to grasp, cling and give meaning to the phenomenal world, to the five aggregates of mind*** which is *consciousness and its contents*. That's why **the phenomenal world is a world of consciousness**, not what you think. Then you fail to see their **universal characteristics**, their **impermanence, suffering state, non-self or empty nature characteristics; it is not a permanent unchanging entity.** All these cannot happen because **you fail to penetrate the dharma.** That's why **you are limited to thought.** And through *thought*, you create

*views, opinions, knowledge, and ideas etc. which are all **thought-based**. It cannot lead to awakening. It cannot lead you to an understanding of that **which is beyond thought, beyond mind** which is the true Buddha Dharma. So, all these, you have to develop the understanding. Then when you *understand, you will know what to do*. Your **focus then is very different**. It's *not about right or wrong anymore*, it's not about **debating or criticizing**. Why do you want to **associate yourself** with a particular tradition? To be a **true follower** of the **Buddha** or to be **worthy of the Buddha**, to be called a **true Dharma practitioner** or a true **devotee** of the **Buddha**, you must **at least** understand **His basic teaching** and **heed His advice**, to **avoid** all evil, **do good** and **purify** the mind. And that is *what the teaching and the cultivation are all about*.*

If you do that, you are *cultivating* the mind, *training the mind to be mindful, to be constantly aware, to cultivate **Noble Eight Fold Path*** which is the **same as avoiding all evil, do good and purify your mind**. And these are the **key understanding** that **you need to have**. Then **all the other things are not important, not relevant**. Then you will come to realize, you are beautiful, you are at peace, you no longer have this *division* in your mind, to cling onto any tradition. **Whatever tradition comes, you can just understand**. Then you can have **joy, love, tranquility and stillness of mind, clarity of mind to understand all these** and explain it to those who have the **condition to listen**. Then you can be a **true blessing** to **all of humanity**. It will make you a **true kalyāṇamitta, cultivating with understanding**. So, hopefully **from now onwards, you all will no longer** be affected by all these so-called Theravada or Mahayana or

Vajrayana type of argument. They are not important. Let us rejoice. Sadhu (3x)!

3.2.2. The 6th Patriarch Sutra Proper

Okay? So with this, I will start the actual sharing of the 6th Patriarch Platform sutra.

Now turn to page 272. We are at the Sutra part:

*Hearing the verse, Fa Ta was remorseful and he said, "From now on I will respect everyone. **Your disciple recites the Dharma Flower Sutra but has not yet understood its meaning.** His mind often has doubts. High Master, your wisdom is **vast and great.** Will you please explain the general meaning of the Sutra for me?"*

See, when you have become **humble**, your **ego is no longer as strong as it used to be**. So, hearing the verse, Fa Ta was *remorseful*. Remorseful means regret. And then he said, 'From now on, I *will respect everyone.*' Why did he say, 'From now on, I will respect everyone.'? Anybody, wants to try to answer that? Can you remember the previous Sunday's sharing? When he bowed, what did he do? His **head did not touch the floor**, isn't it? Then, what happened? The *Sixth Patriarch immediately knew* and **reprimanded** him. Then, after he was *reprimanded*, he came to realize that he was **very egoistic**; with thoughts which make him think he was better than the Sixth Patriarch. Remember? He thought he had recited the *Lotus Sutra*, (the other name is the *Dharma Flower Adornment Sutra*) **3000 times** so *he thought his merits* were far more than the Sixth Patriarch's. But when the Sixth Patriarch

reprimanded him and explained to him, then only he realize where he went wrong.

That's why do not arise this **egoistic mind**, thinking that you know better. In fact, if you **have truly penetrated the Dharma** you will have the understanding, or **finally come to a realization that 'you are nothing and you are nobody'**. Do you understand? I will write on the white board (*when you can realize this, you become beautiful*) - *'You are nothing and you are nobody.'* So, if you can realize this, you are beautiful – it means you have the Dharma. A lot of people will find this statement **very strange**, isn't it? If I am nothing and nobody, then **who is cultivating? Who is enlightened?** Do you understand? Do you want to try to answer these questions? If you are nothing and you are nobody, then **who is cultivating and who are you? Also who gets enlightened?** Then what for, go and learn the Buddha Dharma, to finally come to the understanding that you are nothing and you are nobody? But the **beauty of the teaching lies there. When 'you are nobody and you are nothing, you are at the same time, everything' because it's not you anymore.** It's the *oneness* understanding, the sudden understanding that the **'form and mind' was never you.** That's why you are **nobody, nothing, because the form and mind was never you.** You are the **oneness**, you are the **essence**, and you are the **true nature, the source** of all things. That's why 'you' become beautiful. Good, Sadhu!

After Fa Ta had this understanding he said, *'Your disciples recite the Dharma Flower Sutra, (Miao Fa Lian Hua Ching), but has not understood its meaning'* (means although he had recited it 3000 times, he still hadn't got the understanding of what the Sutra is).

That's why he *humbled* himself down, lowered his *ego*, then through *humility*, he asked, *His mind often had doubts*. Actually he himself knew that he **hadn't really** understood. That's why he had doubts and **doubt is a mental hindrance**. And then, he requested nicely from Master Hui Neng, *'Hi Master! Your wisdom is vast and great. Will you please explain the general meaning of the Sutra for me?'* (So he dared not request for the full meaning of the Sutra but only a general one will do).

He was just contented with the general meaning which means he realized he didn't have any understanding at all, what the Lotus Sutra was all about. **What he understood were just words like parroting, chanting.** *Then the Master said, (huh, this is the part you have to understand), 'Dharma penetration, the dharma is extremely penetrative or penetrating, but your mind does not penetrate it.'* (So, this part is very beautiful because this Fa Ta is using which mind? Huh, the *mundane mind*. That's why the Dharma is very beautiful according to Hui Neng. He said, *'Dharma penetration, the dharma is extremely penetrating but your mind does not penetrate it. That's why you cannot understand. There is basically nothing doubtful in the Sutra.'* (See, the Sutra is complete by itself).

'The doubts are in your own mind.' (This is the *mundane mind* that is still deluded, doesn't have the clarity and the awakening). *'You recite this Sutra but what do you think this teaching is?'* (So, that is the question, he post to Fa Ta). Then Fa Ta said, *'this student's faculties are dull and dim.'* (Now, he admits. Like *'very cha'*, dull and dim). *'Since I have recited it by rote'*, (what is the meaning of this

word `rote'? Is it memory? Check, or Google this word. Nobody understands this word. 'Memorize, Memory' - thanks Mimi.)

'Since I have recited it by memory or rote, how can I understand his teaching?'

Fa Ta is now different. He doesn't want to argue anymore. He just humbly wants to understand the teaching.

The Master said, 'I cannot read but if you take the Sutra and read it once, I will explain it to you.'

Isn't it Strange? Because Hui Neng was an **illiterate**. But, he said if you read it to me, I can explain it to you. Just like the bhikkhunī who asked him the meaning of the word. He said, 'I'm an illiterate. I don't know how to read.' She then said, '**You are illiterate and yet you tell me you can explain to me the teaching? How extraordinary!**' Then Hui Neng replied, *Understanding the teaching is not understanding the word alone.* It's understanding the **true meaning** of that teaching because the **words are concepts**. Words that point towards the truth is not the truth. But if you are *already awakened* then **from that word, you will understand**. It's exactly the same as what I used to share with you all, remember? After that person has realized, he can describe his understanding in whatever manner, it *may not even follow* the *textbook* or the *teaching*. But for those who have awakened, they will understand what he says. 'Yes, this person has realized.' He doesn't have to use the *same essential Dharma words*, the scriptural description. No need. He can *use his own words* because that understanding is very different. It's just like

the analogy I used to give to you all. Let's say you *haven't been to KLCC*, the famous 88-storey Twin Tower of Kuala Lumpur. If you were to describe to me what that Twin Tower is like, and if you haven't been there before, what can your answer be? What is written in the book only, isn't it? Correct? '88-storey with a link bridge in Kuala Lumpur, highest in the world at one time when it was built.' That's what you can say. Then if I ask you, 'have you been there?' If you happen to be there before, you can answer. Otherwise, you cannot. You cannot explain beyond that. But if you have realized it, it is like you have been there, then it will be easy for you to express it.

Whether you have been there via LRT or you take a taxi there or you go there by bus or whatever; at least if you have been there before, you would have seen certain aspects of the Twin Tower. The first thing you see if you reach the *main entrance* is of course, *KL Suria*. Then I ask you, 'What do you see on the inside? Did you walk in?' If you have not been there, you cannot describe. But if you have been there, you can describe via saying, 'Yes, the taxi guy took me there and I saw the Suria KLCC sign. He told me that is the Twin Tower. Then I walk in, I saw the shops, the escalator, then it took me down towards the end where there are a lot of food outlets. Then I can see many stories up.' The air conditioning is very good, you can describe all that. The food outlets, you can describe them. Then the musically fountain, you can also describe it because you have been there. Everyone who has been there can describe it differently because some arrive through the parking, they drive themselves down the basement parking, how they come up, they can tell you.

But everyone can be describing it differently yet you know they have been there before.

Just like those who went by LRT. They say after the LRT station, you come out, you have to clear the gate, and then you have to walk a short distance before you reach KLCC. Then you have a choice to come out or go into the mall etc. It means that person has been there. But you must have somebody who has completely understood *what KLCC is*. Then only he can know. 'Ah yes, this person has been there.' **No matter where you describe, he knows because he already has the full understanding of the whole thing.** But if you had only realized just the **Sainthood way** or what they call the **Arahant way**, you may realize it through your **own cultivation**, your own way, then **you can only describe that aspect of your realization.**

Then when other people said, 'No, when I went there, it was not like that. Where got LRT because I straightaway reached the main entrance, then I went in.' He only saw that part he came from. So **this is in a way quite similar as an analogy so that you understand.** After that form and mind awaken, he can describe in his or her own words what has been realized. **The moment he or she describes, the enlightened one who has gone through the whole training will understand.** 'Yes, that person has been there before, realized that awakening before.' That's why he can describe it using his own words. Even as an illiterate who doesn't have any education, he can still describe it.

Can you remember what Hui Neng told the merchant who chanted the Diamond Sutra? He was curious and he asked the merchant. *'What was it that you are chanting?'* he said. Then he was very amazed. **He knew Hui Neng was an illiterate, a woodcutter, who didn't understand anything. He was very surprised why Hui Neng asked him such a question.** He said, *'This is a very profound Mahayana Sutra. It's called the **Diamond Sutra**. How come you are interested?'* So Hui Neng just told him, *'When you recite to the point, *'the mind must have no dwelling'*, **my mind became greatly awakened, like I could understand the meaning very clearly and very deeply.**'* So this merchant knew *this guy Hui Neng must be gifted*. Then from there, he asked him where he heard this teaching.

He said it was from the **Fifth Patriarch** up in the north. Then he decided to go. He said, *'can you tell me how I can go there and meet up with this teacher or this monk so that I can learn from him?'* The merchant was **really excited and amazed**. He said, *'No problem. I can sponsor your trip and help arrange for your mother to be taken care of, before you leave. When he arrived, the moment he met the Fifth Patriarch, the Fifth Patriarch asked him (do you remember, the dialogue that transpired between the two?), 'Where are you from?' He said, 'I am from the south.'* The 5th Patriarch reply, *'Oh a southern, an uneducated, barbarian. Then why are you here for?'* He told the Fifth Patriarch, *'I'm here to seek Buddhahood, nothing else except Buddhahood.* The Fifth Patriarch was also surprised. *'Wah, you are a southerner, an illiterate and yet you want to seek Buddhahood, do you stand a chance?'* Asked the 5th Patriarch. The way Hui Neng replied was **so dramatic and beautiful** because from his past, he knew. He said, *'In physical form, there are north and*

south. But as far as the **nature** is concerned, **Buddhahood** is concerned, there is **no difference**. **Everyone has that nature.**' Then the Fifth Patriarch already knew that **this guy is gifted**. So he said, 'Ok. You talk too much. You go to the kitchen now.' He straightaway assigned him there. Those who have the awakening and the understanding, the moment they speak, the *enlightened one* will know, they will understand them. So, this part, do make a note.

We will continue. The Master said,

'I cannot read but if you take the Sutra and read it once, I will explain it to you.' So Fa Ta recite loudly until he came to the analogy chapter. The Master said, 'Stop! This Sutra is fundamentally based on the principles underlying **the causes and conditions** of the **Buddha's appearance** in the world. None of the analogies spoken **go beyond** that. What are the causes and conditions? The Sutra says, 'All Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, appear in the world for the **causes and conditions** of the One important matter.' The one important matter is the **knowledge and vision** of the Buddha. Worldly people, **deluded** by the **external world**, **attach** themselves to **marks**, and **deluded** by the **inner world**, they **attach** themselves to **emptiness**. **If you can live among marks and yet be separated** from it, (This is a **very powerful statement**, please do make a note: '**you can live among marks and yet be separated from it**'), then you will be confused by neither the internal nor the external.

This part is just like the lotus flower analogy because the **conditioned world recognizes mark, recognizes relationship**. The

form and mind **within the conditioned world** is 'real' and is **subject to karma**. There are such a thing as *birth, old age, sickness and death within the conditioned world*. That's why when you live life within the conditioned world, you **live among** the marks. You **cultivate with marks** like the **lotus flower** in the lotus pond. From the lotus pond, (the dirt, the conditioned world, the existential world) where all the **dirty things**, all the **evil roots** are all there. From there, **it can rise above** and **stand above the world**, the lotus pond. So, here is the same. If you **can live among marks**, (mark of a self, mark of a living being, mark of Dharma, mark of life or living), and yet, be **separated from it** knowing that they are **unreal and ultimately empty** you will be **beautiful**.

Then **nothing can confuse** you, whether **internal** or **external**, the **phenomenal** world. You **will not be deceived** and **deluded** because you **can live within the world of marks** and yet be **separated** from marks because you have the **true understanding, the awakening**. That's what 'Heart Sutra' is all about, 'in **true emptiness**, all these **don't exist.**' But in life, they exist. So, **this form and mind, this segmented life that you come is subjected to karma**. You cannot play a **fool** with it. You **cannot** say, 'Oh, I use my **true mind to act** hence **there is no karma.**' Huh? You can go and try it out. That form and **mind may not be you** but that one (it) is **subject to karma**. That one **recognizes relationship**. You cannot just say, 'It is just a form and mind. I can kill because there is nobody inside there. Hey no you and hey no me.' That is **delusional**. If you think like that, it **means you don't have the understanding**. You are **being deluded**. That's why Fa Ta **could not penetrate** because he had **a lot of doubts**. In fact a lot of **Theravada practitioners** have this same problem. When

you discuss with them **non-self, empty nature** and all those other dharma, they **cannot comprehend** because on the one side, he heard the Buddha say, *'you are born of your karma, heir to your karma, conditioned and supported by your karma and you are what you are because of your karma'*. They may argue via saying the Buddha said, *'I exist, I am born of my karma, heir to my karma, conditioned and supported by my karma and I am what I am because of my karma. Then why do you say, not me, non-self, etc. To them, it appears contradictory. So, what is your understanding?'*

Did the Buddha lie? *The Buddha didn't lie, isn't it?* Can you explain why the Buddha didn't lie? Because when He said, *'you are born of your karma, heir to your karma, conditioned and supported by your karma and you are what you are because of your karma'*, what is He referring to? What is the **entity** that He is referring to? That one came from the **karmic nature**. And He is referring to your **'form and mind'**. The *'form and mind'* is **born** of karma, that's correct. But this *'form and mind'*, the Buddha said, it's **not you**. That is the **penetrative awakening**. When one **realizes** this Dharma, **one is awakened**, then one will come to the **understanding that all these are condition-arising or dependent-originating phenomena hence not real and not what one thinks**.

The **'form and mind'**, both, are not real because they are *dependent-originating* or *condition-arising*. That's why they are **impermanent; dependent** on conditions, they **arise**. *When conditions cease to be, it cease to be*. So, *who are you, what are you?* This *'form and mind'*, **when the consciousness separates, did you die?** When they (all the aggregates) arise and pass away (which you

have already experienced in your meditation), did you die? **Feelings come and go, pleasant feeling becomes unpleasant, did you die?** You didn't die, isn't it? Thoughts arise and pass away, you didn't die. So, **thought is not you, feeling is not you, perception is not you.** And these will become very clear to you after one awakes.

If they are not you, then who are you? What are you? Then, how did it arise in you? This is what the teaching is all about. That's why you have **to silent your mind** through meditation, through **Sati**, to **awaken** to it, to **realize** it. This is what **Paṭicca Samuppāda** or **dependent origination** is all about. When *your mind is silent*, you are **in sati meditating**; you will see **how they come to be** as described in the **Satipaṭṭhāna Sutra**. How the **un-arisen mental hindrances** come to be, then how the **arisen mental hindrances** cease to be. You will see them, then you will come to realize they are all **dependent-originating**, and there is **no permanent unchanging entity behind**. This is what meditation is all about. Not, note this, note that, focus on this, focus on that, etc. - all those doings are **not** the meditation. The **true meditation** is just **silently aware** to **realize** all these **through an awareness** because your **physical form (body)** has the **senses**, your mind the **consciousness** that can make contact; then upon contact, **if you are mindful**, you are **aware**, you will understand what arises. It is **not a one dimensional dependent origination flow**, such as upon contact, feeling arise, then feeling conditions craving etc. No!

What really happens is, **together with feeling, so many things arise simultaneously. Without wisdom** (the *yoniso manasikāra* or *wisdom at the moment of sense experience*) **feeling will**

straightaway condition craving, then it will *condition grasping, clinging and becoming*, then you become that. You remember, Bro. Pang at the previous Thursday class? He asked me that same question, `Bro Teoh, this *dependent origination*, I have gone through it *many times*. But I cannot do anything about it because it happens **so fast,**' he said. `Upon contact, *straightaway suffering already*, that is, I *'react' already*. So how to see? You can only see if you have the **stability of mindfulness**. At the *moment of feeling*, feeling will remain as *pure feeling* because there is **no self-delusion**. But **before** you **have that understanding or ability**, it will **become craving** first.

Then **when it becomes craving**, you cannot **cut**, you cannot **stop** because *this dependent origination* is a *continuous link*. You can only **come to the understanding** if you continue to be **silently aware** and follow the **four foundations of mindfulness teaching** to realize it clearly; it means **seeing it in the meditation** that this is really *dependent originating*, **not what you think**; exactly like the **Buddha's explanation** in the *Anattā Lakkhaṇa Sutra*. That's why after the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutra*, He continued with the **Anattā Lakkhaṇa Sutra**, the Sutra on **non-self or empty nature of existence**. After that all the **five ascetics** become **Arahants** straightaway. That's why it is a **very powerful** sutra.

Anattā is *empty nature or non-self-nature (not a permanent unchanging entity)*. **Via** that **realization**, you will awaken. The five ascetics **were not** meditating. They were **just listening attentively** with their **Right View** developed from their *past cultivation* and *past pāramīs*. That's how it can happen, and **this is what meditation** is all about, **not what** you were originally taught by others those type of

meditation where they **instruct you to do the *noting, concentrating, focusing* and labeling, etc.** - they are **not the real meditation**. The *real meditation* **doesn't use thought**. You ***just aware, silent*** and that ***silent mind*** which is the ***meditative mind***, which is your ***true mind*** will **understand**. It will **awaken**.

But for you to have the **ability to be silent**, your **spiritual faculties** have to be **very stable**. Especially the ***mindfulness***, it **has to be very stable**. The reason why it is *not stable* is because of your ***wrong view, your delusion*** that ***conditions your five mental hindrances***. These mental hindrances are so powerful. They **constantly hinder** you from ***entering the meditative state of inner peace, inner calmness and inner mindfulness***. That's the reason why *throughout the day, living beings* are ***hardly mindful, hardly aware***. If you are hardly mindful and hardly aware, **how can you become enlightened?** How can you *meditate* and *cultivate*? The **Buddha** already **mentioned clearly under *Dhammapada Verse 21***, '*only the heedful never die and heedfulness is the path to the deathless whereas the heedless are as if dead.*' ***Heedlessness is the path to the dead***, which means ***spiritually*** you **don't stand** a chance, you **cannot awaken**.

If you *don't develop* the *understanding of what heedfulness is* and ***cultivate*** with that *understanding*, **you can never penetrate** His ***teaching to realize the awakening***. *Heedfulness* is defined clearly by the Buddha under ***Dhammapada Verse 23***, '*the constantly meditative, ever mindful and steadfast one* (means one who holds onto these two cultivations firmly), will realize the ***Supreme Borne-Free Nibbāna***,' which is the ***enlightenment***. So what is ***constantly meditative?*** ***Constantly*** *cultivating* the ***Noble Eightfold Path***, then

ever-mindful means you **not only** train your mind to be mindful, you **have to stabilize it until in the midst of life**, you are **constantly aware** and **ever mindful**.

This means the **mindfulness**, the **inner awareness** is **always there**. Then you are **destined for enlightenment**. You don't have to worry about what people say. **You just do that and you will realize the Supreme Born-free Nibbāna**. That's why **mindfulness is the first factor of enlightenment**. **Stabilize it until ever mindful** then you can **investigate Dharma**. Then **all the other enlightenment factors will follow**. Then **you can use it to cultivate Noble Eightfold Path**. This is **what heedfulness is all about**. If you are **constantly meditative**, **throughout the day**, **ever mindful to cultivate this noble teaching of the Buddha** which is the **Noble Eightfold Path**, it will lead to the **end of all suffering**, the **realization of Nibbāna** which is the **enlightenment** in the here and the now. Okay?

You have to **understand** the **above** very clearly. Then **your focus becomes very different** and **very clear**. Then you will not go back to your **old habitual way of meditation**. The **old way is just to seek peace** because the moment you sit, you just want to have **calmness** and **peacefulness**. Then you **just want to force your mind** to be **mindful, aware**, but you **don't know what you are doing, in the name of meditation** because you have **been conditioned** by your **habitual tendencies**. Besides, in the past, **almost all meditations** are taught that way; **like you must sit, must note, must do Vipassanā**, and **must do Jhāna**. When you do **without understanding**, you are **not focused**. Then **how can you progress?** Progress can only happen **when you understand**. So first thing to check against is

Dhammapada Verse 21 which states that, **'the heedless are as if dead.'** So you must check, **are you heedful or heedless?** If you are **still heedless**, what must you do? If throughout the day, *most of the time*, you are **not mindful at all**, then **how can you be heedful?** To be heedful, you *must be ever mindful*. Then use it to *cultivate Noble Eightfold Path* then only the whole teaching can be understood. That's what the Klang talk is about this. You must listen to the last Friday night's Klang talk, it's very beautiful. Then only the whole of the cultivation of the Noble Eightfold Path can come about.

The **Noble Eightfold Path** is **a very elaborate set of cultivation**, starting with **Right View (Right Understanding)**; the **three types** of Right Views: the spiritual *Law of Karma, Law of Mind, and the Four Noble Truths which is Dharma Niyāma*. That **one alone is a lot for you to cultivate**. Even to *understand the Law of Karma* leading to the *understanding of how the advice of the Buddha comes about* is not easy. That itself is *a whole set of very elaborate cultivation*.

You **have to train** your mind to be **ever mindful**. Then only you can **have the ability to be aware of your evil roots** that **condition** you into **karmic negativity**. Then you have to *understand clearly what constitute evil*. Then only you can *follow the advice of the Buddha to avoid all evil*. That is the first thing you have to do. So **without mindfulness**, you **cannot start**. You *can't even be mindful of who you are, what you are*. If you **don't understand** what constitute evil, **how can you cultivate the precepts** because you can't even be **aware** of the *evil roots*? That's the reason why you all have to go into all these to develop the understanding. Then when you have the *ability to identify them*, the next step is to *arise the Right Efforts*

to **abandon** the **unwholesome thoughts**, the **unwholesome speech**, **action** and **livelihood** that *have arisen* followed by the other *remaining 3 right efforts*.

Then, after you **have contemplated**, **reflected** and **straightened your view**, you **can prevent it from arising** via the **second Right Effort**. Then the **third Right Effort** is to **develop** those **virtues**, **wholesomeness**, **kindness** and **goodness** that are **still not in you**. So, *all these Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood or Right Living*, you **have to cultivate them all**. Basically the *third right effort* is to *cultivate the Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action and Right Livelihood* that are **still not** in you. To cultivate these you have to understand **what constitute Right Thought**, what **constitute Right Speech**, what **constitute Right Action** and what **constitute Right Livelihood**. Write them down then only you *can cultivate* them and **put them into practice** so that **they can become a part of you**. This is a *whole set of cultivation*. The way you *live your life*, you *have to be ever mindful, guided* by the Noble Eightfold Path.

You **cannot deviate**; otherwise, it is impossible for you all to understand all these. **When you can write it down**, only then **can you have the understanding** to arise the **right effort** to **cultivate** and **develop** all these **Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action** and **Right Livelihood** or **Right Living** that are **still not in you**.

Then finally the **fourth Right Effort** is to **purify or refine upon** them and **perfect all these virtues** of **Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action** and **Right Living** or **Right Livelihood**. This is a *very elaborate set of cultivation* by itself too. If you have *not been doing* all these, it

means you *still have a lot of work* to do. Then, after that, of course, you **can simultaneously cultivate** the *next path factor* which is **Sati** or **mindfulness**. After you have developed the Sati, you have to **stabilize** it until it is **ever mindful**. Then **Samadhi** will come. With **Sati and Samadhi in the midst of life, constantly meditative and ever mindful**, you will become *heedful*. Then you **can see things as they are, the direct seeing will awaken** your nature to the universal characteristics of impermanence, suffering state and non-self.

Then you are no longer deluded. After you *awaken*, you can **straighten your view**. Then you **can see things as they are**. Then you can cultivate the **Noble Eightfold Path** beautifully. This is how the whole Noble Eightfold Path is to be developed. When it comes to Sati, you **have to cover** the **Four Foundations of Mindfulness practices**. Otherwise you **cannot awaken**. Then only you can understand what those Enlightened Beings said: **'Truth is everywhere in the midst of life and nature. Why can't you see? For those who see, they always see because the universal characteristics are in all phenomena, all the time, everywhere, in the midst of life and nature.'** So this is what the actual teaching points towards. When you understand all these, then you should write it down, you can use it as a **check-list**, - to inquire stage by stage if you have **understood** all these? When you meditate you can check and inquire, **are you focused** on all these understanding? That's why the *first training is to train your mind to be mindful* then stabilize it then use it to cultivate the Noble Eightfold Path. Then only there is *this stability of mind to be ever mindful and constantly meditative* to begin the *real cultivation*. Hope you all understand.

That is follow what I have taught you all; from the **first Right View**, regarding the Law of Karma, cultivate as per the *advice of the Buddha*; **keep the precepts**, develop **mindfulness** to avoid *all evil*, then do good; cultivate the **four Right Efforts**, then understand what **constitute evil**, what **constitute Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood**, etc. All these, you have to do with *understanding*. Then *only you can put it into practice and cultivate until this heedfulness becomes a part of you*. Then the **four Foundations of Mindfulness** is what you have to do. Then you will come to understand that the so-called ‘Vipassanā’ or the formal meditation that you **all used to do in the past** is **only a small integral** part of the **whole Noble Eightfold Path practices**. The Noble Eightfold Path starts from the three Right Views and these three Right Views are very important, **from the Law of Karma**, all His **essential Dharma on avoiding evil, doing good comes about**. Then **purification of the mind** also starts from there. After that, you have the **second Right View, Citta Niyāma** - means order of the mind, to *understand how you function as a human being* following the **Paṭicca Samuppāda, Dependent Origination** teaching.

Then you must see *the link within your meditation, how your mind due to ignorance, creates Saṅkhāra activities*. When you see something, don’t react to it, don’t use knowledge via saying, ‘Oh, this is Saṅkhāra. Saṅkhāra Paccaya viññāṇaṃ....’ Forget about all these **verbalization** and **thought based doing**, just *silent your mind* to realize and understand. *Theory is theory. The realization is in the meditation itself*. Then *upon contact, not only feeling arises, Saṅkhāra also arises because ignorance-contact conditions what?* When you don’t have wisdom, it *will condition not only feelings, it*

becomes craving straight away, and then the **mind concocts through memory** via likes and dislikes, mental states and activities etc. That's why Avijjā Paccaya Saṅkhāra, or ignorance-contact conditions mental activities and **it moves so fast, you cannot see**. You still think, **upon contact feeling arise, or phassa paccaya vedanā** then you try to note 'feeling', note, note and note via **verbalizing**. The mind moves so fast, Saṅkhāra, inside churning and moving so fast, that's why concocting and yet you all are still so gullibly noting 'feeling, feeling, feeling' and want to cut at feeling. All these are **verbalization, thought-based, not the real meditation**. The **real meditation has no words, just silent**. *Through that silence, the true mind will awaken*. It will understand what this is. *Then all of a sudden, the understanding will be there*. The **mind will realize**, then **it becomes so different, so profound**. Then after that, your *mindfulness becomes very stable* because you *have straightened your view*. Straighten your view means **less avijjā** or less ignorance, and less delusion. Then what happens to the first two links? Yes! They are **weakened**. That's why **less thought**, just like what Sister Eng Bee said. That's why *if your meditation does not lead you to have less thoughts (within the free mind state), you are not doing it correctly*. But *if you force your thoughts not to arise through concentration and one-pointedness, that is also not the real one*. The **thoughts must be less and less in the midst of your daily life** leading to **more clarity** hence **more heedful living**.

Why must you think? You think because there is Avijjā . If there is no Avijjā, who is there to think? Thing is just the way it is. *Think also like that, don't think also like that*. Can you all remember what I told you all before? I **only use thought** when I **need to share** with people,

interact with people, and **communicate** with the world. Then I have to use thoughts, words, and speech. That's why this 'form and mind' is **just a segmented life for my nature to use while in this existential world. It's not me.** When you understand this, you can be in the **midst of mark and yet be separated from mark.** That is the true meaning of what cultivation is.

This 'form and mind' becomes *a vehicle and a tool for my nature to come and use. This is not me* hence I don't have to worry about it *getting old, getting sick and die.* I **trust** that **karmic nature** because *if I take care of karma, karma will take care of this 'form and mind'.* That's it. *If you take care of karma, karma takes care of your life.* If you don't take care of karma, the 'form and mind' suffer, becomes miserable, **even though not you** but *your consciousness is trapped inside.* That's why that 'form and mind' through delusion can still become afflicted, miserable and that *is what the teaching is all about. Even though not you, but you will grasp, you will cling, you will believe it's you.* That's why there's such a thing as suffering, such thing as birth leading to old age, sickness and death. This is **what the real teaching is all about, not what you think.** A lot of people **through delusion,** - do you know what they will say, 'Aiyah, it's Anattā, not me so I will do first, because next life, somebody else suffer,' they think this way. 'Now I rob, I rape, amass wealth, everything, then next life, not me, another guy suffer.' He goes and think like that.

Then when he kills, he also wants to justify via saying, 'this is only a 'form and mind', not me, not a being so I didn't kill.' Maybe, when they go to court, they can tell this to the judge, "I didn't kill. My

teaching tells me this one is not real, just a 'form and mind' only." You go and try, then see whether the judge believes you or sentences you. If in China, they will immediately, '枪毙' (Qiāngbì) you (sentence you **to death or capital punishment**), they kill you. So all these, **need understanding**. *Without understanding*, the thought can condition you into **this type of wrong thinking**. Then you still think you are right. You still want to justify your action. So this is the part because of conditions, I have shared it with you and hopefully it will help you all. Okay?

Now we shall go back to the Sutra.

So the one important matter is the *knowledge and vision* of the Buddha which is, I repeat,

Worldly people deluded by the external phenomenal world, attach themselves to marks (mark of what? - Of a self, of a being existing, cultivating or living life and mark of others.

That's why there is **division**, the mark of the phenomenal world, mark of life, mark of Dharma - all these are marks) *and deluded by the inner world ...*, (inner world, what is your inner world? What do you do when you are alone? You think a lot, isn't it? **Your inner world is your thoughts**, your **Saṅkhāra activities**, your *mundane mind, condition-arising mind, thinking mind*. That's why **you think a lot**. You **chatter a lot**. The other aspect is **verbalization** and **chattering**. You **verbalize** a lot, you **talk to yourself a lot**.) *...they attach themselves to emptiness (because they use knowledge.)*

Then the thought will tell them, “everything is empty, why worry? (Do you think they can be free from suffering when they use their thoughts to think that way?) Also they may quote, ‘according to Bro Teoh, everything is not so real’, then why do you attach, why do you cling, please let go”.

Bro. Teoh: But **how to let go?** The *person who holds cannot let go.* You need understanding. The moment you understand, **no need to hold.** Hence **you don’t need to let go.** *That is the understanding.* Not what they teach you, - ‘to practice letting go, practice non-grasping, cut at feeling so that craving cannot arise, etc.’ these are **all words only.** There is **no such cultivation!** If you don’t have **wisdom** or the **understanding you will grasp, you will cling, you will hold.** That’s why **you need wisdom,** and **awakening** because **nothing frees you except your understanding, your wisdom.** That’s why if you **don’t have the stability of mindfulness, the heedfulness to awaken,** you **can’t use Dharma knowledge to free.** Because you are **using words.** ‘The Buddha said ‘aniccam, dukkham and anattā’ i.e. everything is impermanent. If I give meaning and I hold, I will suffer, then not real, not me, non-self, etc. But when the physical body gets injured or got sickness, all the Dharma is forgotten. ‘Aiyoh, I must see a doctor. I must do this, I must not complain. How come this time it is so terrible? The last time, I went to see the doctor, he gave me some medication and I recovered. Now maybe old already’ - continue to complain. ‘When I was young, my body is so good. Now here rheumatism, there rheumatism, walk also not steady, vision also blur, hearing also not so well. Aiyoh, how lah!’ Who is saying all these? The ‘*form and mind*’, the **thought,** which is **not you.** That’s why the Buddha said the **five daily contemplations,** do reflect

on them. *‘This body of yours is of the nature to grow old, get sick and die for it goes the way of nature. It’s not you, it’s impermanent, it’s condition-arising, dependent-originating; - contemplate on all these, reflect on them every day.* Did you do this until it becomes very clear? Then you will understand because these are elements.

When you meditate, you will know why it is not you because apart from being elements only, there is **a consciousness trapped inside**. Then this **consciousness with its content** or the **other aggregates** keep on arising and passing away yet you are still around. Then *how can feelings be you, how can perception be you, how can the thinking, the views and opinions be you, then how can the consciousness that arises and passes away be you, how can the thought be you.* That’s why **there is no thinker behind the thoughts**. Then a lot of cultivators are **so gullible** and **so deluded**, every time, they *have anger or hatred or fear*, do you know what they will say? *‘Aiyoh, I fail again. I still have anger.’* Failing to understand that *‘Anger’* was never you. That’s why when your Sakkāyadiṭṭhi or self-delusion is still so strong; how can you be free?

Later when you meditate - thinking that *you are a very good cultivator* and you may think you will not get angry anymore, then when there is anger, *you are affected* and you *become unhappy* and complained, *‘I have been meditating for so long, and my vipassanā nana already confirmed by the monk, that I had attained what nana and what nana, yet I reacted, and still get angry.’* *So what is happening?* This is *not understanding* the Buddha’s teaching because the Buddha said, *‘before anger arise, there was no anger.’* You are supposed **to silent your mind, develop mindfulness** and be

aware to trace the **origination factors** as **to how anger arise**. Did you do that? If you do that, you will understand. Then you will not complain, 'Aiyoh, I still got anger. I come here to meditate. I am supposed to have more peace, more calm and have more clarity, leading to good meditative experiences. But I am not getting all these. My meditation is lousy. Maybe I should look for another teacher, use another technique, another method, or go to another temple.' *Sound familiar right?* This is what *your mind will tell you and create more doubts in you*. 'Maybe that teacher is not so good and I heard that one is very good, had realized Arahantship, already or whatever.' So this is what *gullible cultivators* will do because the *real understanding* is **not there**. That's why I said, 'you can go everywhere and yet you cannot find truth because the *truth is within you*.' Truth is **not outside** of you, it's within your nature. When *your nature awakens and realize*, **everything becomes clear, no need to search**.

Who is searching? The best is the **famous quote** by J Krishnamurti: '**what happens if the searcher is the searched?**'

You go everywhere searching for a teacher, an enlightened one. But the truth is, *the searcher is the searched*. What are you trying to search? You want to be enlightened, isn't it? You **meditate** because you **want to be free from all suffering**. So, this is what you are *searching, searching for enlightenment*. Who is searching? Actually, **your nature itself is searching**. But you don't understand what your nature is. You *use the mundane mind* which is **not your true mind** to search. That's the reason why you **cannot realize** because the **nature or true mind is within**.

This is supposed to be your nature. But instead, through delusion, you use the *mundane mind or thinking mind to search*. That's why **you cannot find**. This is what happens. The thought takes you around, maybe go many rounds, to 'Holland', and don't know how to come back because you use the **mundane mind to search**. You cultivate **all those thought-based meditation**, and **you never look within**. In fact, that nature *which is* your true mind, and your true nature *has always been there within you*. Your **nature is already awakened**. This is the **one you are searching**, your **true mind**. But you run all over the places, **searching outside**. That's why in the earlier sharing, if you may recall, Master Hsuan Hua *reminds you to reverse the light*, {hui guang fan zhao, 回光返照} and look within. That is what *meditation is*. This **silent mind cannot think**. It *can only be aware* of all the *movements inside* (meaning the *Saṅkhāra activities* of the form and mind), the *dependent-originating activities*, the *essential Dharma*, the *three evil roots*, the *5 mental hindrances*, the *5 spiritual faculties*, etc. within. They are *all inside* for you *to be aware*. But you all *never meditate this way*. You use the thought (the mundane thinking mind) to go and look, - look for what, look for impermanence, look for calmness, look for Pīti, look for nana, Jhāna, and all the psychic **via dharma knowledge**.

This is the part, cultivators don't understand/realize. If you don't have this understanding, you will not be able to understand the Buddha Dharma. You will not be able to awaken because to awaken is very simple. **Just search within because everything is within you**. **Everybody** has the **Buddha nature**. Everybody has the potential to realize that Buddha Nature. The *Buddha Nature is never apart from your form and mind; always connected*. The only reason why you

cannot realize it is **because you are lost in thought**, that's why you deludedly cling onto the *phenomenal world created by thought* - which is **essentially consciousness and its content**.

That's how the *phenomenal world of consciousness* deceives you and makes you believe that this is real; and makes you believe this is what you are. Do you remember the Shurangama Sutra's teaching? - Who becomes the *traveler* in space and time? *Consciousness created the world and the continents* and *who becomes the traveler in space and time*? Wah, so fast, you all forget. I will write it down so that you all can remember. *'Consciousness created the world and the continents.'* *Who is this traveler?* I can give you a hint. Start with 'k'. Very good. She got it. Huh, the **knower**. *The knower becomes the traveler in space and time*. This knower comes from where? From your **self-delusion** because you think the *consciousness is you*. You think there is *somebody who knows*. Who knows? Because you think there is a knower behind the thoughts. When you perceive something, *you think there is a knower behind the perception*. There is *somebody behind the feeling*. **That is self-delusion**. *This knower is an illusion*. It is **self-illusion**. You (the *thought* which is egoistic) *created the knower* there was *nobody there*. It's just the consciousness. Do you remember the **physics experiment**? The Buddha said, *'in the seeing, it's only the seeing consciousness.'* There is **no one to see**, - understand that *so that consciousness does not become egoistic*. How can you meditate *when your consciousness is so egoistic*? Most meditators complain via saying, 'I still have anger. My meditation is not good!' *Who is saying all these?* The *egoistic mind*, the I, the Me. Maybe my teacher is no good, - again the mind projects. Then how can you meditate? This is

Sakkāyadiṭṭhi. You are supposed to be **silent** and just **aware**. When you *are silent and aware*, it means *this 'knower' doesn't exist*. There is **nobody to be aware**. That's why the Buddha said, **'in the seeing, there is only the seeing consciousness.'** Like in the Physics experiment, do you remember the Physics experiment involving the **light bulb**, the **battery** and the **switch**? Upon contact, what happens? The **battery is analogous to the mind (power source) and this switch is the contact. Upon contact, what happens?** The **light bulb lights up** and you become **conscious** of what you see.

Do you need a God to create seeing consciousness? This is **automatic**, arise via **nature's law, isn't it?** Upon contact, the light bulb lights up. Your **seeing consciousness**, is **the same**, so is hearing consciousness; it's just like one becomes *conscious* of that thing. There's *nobody behind the seeing*. It's just the *seeing consciousness*. The Buddha explained this teaching to *two of the monks who met him, in the Vamika Sutra*. During Kassapa Buddha's time there were four monks then who later took birth during the Buddha's time and supposed to meet him and become Arahant. He taught two of them this same teaching. One of them met him when he was doing the Pindapata, the alms-round; he wanted to see the Buddha. The disciples said, **'No, you have to wait till the Buddha finish his alms-round then you can come'**. He said no, **'this is urgent, I cannot wait, I may not have the time to wait'**. Then the Buddha overheard this, the Buddha came over - saw and knew the conditions behind. Then the Buddha spoke to him, **'Okay, can you wait? Afterwards I will come back and I will teach you.'** The monk said, **'No! I may not live that long. I may die before that. So I need to talk to you now.'**

The Buddha then said, 'Okay. Now you can ask. What is it that you want to know?' I want to **understand life**. I want to realize the **enlightenment**. How can I awaken? Then the Buddha said, 'do listen!' Asked him to sit down, then through those conditions with clarity of mind, the Buddha instructed him. He just said these 6 things, '*In the seeing, it's just the seeing consciousness, there is no one to see. In the hearing, it's just the hearing consciousness, no one to hear. In the smell, taste, tactile and thought process, it's the same.*' There is **no being within**. But there is **an awareness** which can be **aware of all these**. Straightaway, he became an Arahant.

You want me to repeat? Then, maybe some of you can also become Arahant. It's really that easy, not that difficult. *When you are ready with the conditions, you will awaken*. This diagram (on the Physics experiment), I purposely draw it out to let you understand it clearly.

Every moment of sense experience, it's just like this **bulb, lights up** (or you become conscious). It's not a being inside that become conscious. Consciousness itself arise. At the moment of sense experience, it's just the consciousness. There is no one inside. But, **when did the ego, self-delusion or atta, goes in?** When? Huh, when **you act according to memory**. Your memory tells you what? 'I see, therefore I am'. Do you understand? Since birth until now, I always say, '*I see.*' When people ask you, '**who** is the one who sees?' Now we can go through it. Who is the capital 'I', because you always say, I see, isn't it? Let's go into specific. Who is this fellow? That's why if you are *gullible*, and you *never investigate* deep into it, **you will not** understand. This is the *egoistic mind* that we talk about. But you cannot define what this is. So when I ask you, '**who** is the 'I' that

sees?' How do you answer? You answer, 'That Form and mind', following the text again because you never investigate and *you are never aware*. But when you *meditate*, you will come to understand that *without eye*, you cannot see, isn't it? Without the eye functioning, you also cannot see.

Then if you are *gullible* you will say, 'maybe my eyes see.' But you never check. *Is it true that your eyes see? With eyes, you may not see* because *when you are asleep with eyes open, you cannot see*. A **dead man with eyes open also cannot see**. That's why **eye alone doesn't see**. Why can't you see? Then you try to be smart. I *need the mind* to see. Then you say, '**my mind sees**.' Then you introduce another one. Instead of eye see, you say, 'my mind sees.' Agree or not? Don't agree? Tell me why. Why the mind alone cannot see? With mind and the eye, I can see. But you say if it's the mind alone that sees, you are not right. Why? The **dead man without mind cannot see**. So you think you are right. With mind, only I can see. But, if you **ask a blind man with mind to see. Can he see? Can the blind mind see? He cannot see, isn't it?** So, *mind alone doesn't see. Eye alone doesn't see*. Then what is seeing? The *three conditions* have to be there. There must be the *eye that is functioning*, there must be a *battery with the energy similar to the mind*. There must be contact. When these **three conditions come together**, the **nature's law automatically triggers off seeing**. That's how the *consciousness arises or lights up*. So seeing is dependent-originating, condition-arising. It's *not created* by God. It's not a being, a soul inside that's responsible for seeing. Can you follow? You **are supposed to see all these in your meditation**. If you have **daily mindfulness, this is what you will see**. The *direct seeing* before the

egoistic mind comes in. *You see things as they are.* What does it mean? The *pure seeing* like a baby's seeing – seeing without word, without concept. That's what happens, during the early days of my cultivation, **after 1989**, *something just happened then when I looked at everything around me, I was **so amazed**.* I looked at thing as a **whole complete seeing**. I don't look at the concept of a flask or a Tupperware or a bell or whatever. **No, that is word.** The seeing is *the actual perception of it without the word.* When you say, 'I saw this table,' you are **not seeing**. This has become a **concept** you create in your brain, via your **mundane mind**. The 'I' is the egoic mind. The *direct seeing is just the consciousness that is conscious* of it. There is **no name. Seeing things as they are.**

Do you think this table knows that it is a table? To a Malay speaking person, it becomes 'meja' and to a Mandarin speaking person it is, '桌子'. Then what is this fellow? This fellow is 'as it is' has *no name* but because it performs *a function*, you give it a concept then it arise, and you call it a table. That's why the Zen master whacked his disciple who *claimed to be enlightened*. The master pointed to the table and asked, 'what do you see?' The student said, 'Table.' The master straightaway whacked him. Master said, 'you said you are enlightened and yet there is a still table.'

Because he still *perceived form*. '*Perception of form is consciousness whereas its non-perception, the direct seeing is wisdom.*' So, *consciousness created the world and the continents.* All of these that exist in this existential world, they are *all mind-made. Mind-made are they.* Only *Consciousness, and nothing else.* That's why the **whole of existence is a phenomenal world of consciousness.** If you

understand this, you *understand the teaching*. Ok? Can you all follow? This is like a revision. If you go back and read the *Heart Sutra notes*, it's all there. I had shared it under the *Shurangama sutra teaching before* and it's mentioned on many occasions within the Heart Sutra notes.

Ah yes, pass the mike to **Sister Mei Hsiang**.

Question by Mei Hsiang: I just want to clarify the *seeing consciousness*, we have the mind, the organ, and then we talk about the contact. Can you explain about the contact?

Bro. Teoh: Contact is just contact. When the mind is there, it will make contact, isn't it? When you direct your mind at the seeing consciousness, it will make contact, isn't it? Not only come together, your mind is the common *denominator*. The *mind that is aware can be anywhere*. When it's aware, if you want to see, it's not a person seeing. The 'form and mind', if it wants to see, what does it do? The mind will go to what it sees, isn't it? So that you can have the *consciousness of seeing*. Then if it doesn't want to see, like a very loud vibration comes to your ears, then what happens? It goes there because *this sense data impinging the ear is stronger*. So, this one takes over while you are daydreaming, *creating saṅkhāra* or '*building castles in the air*'. Then somebody, maybe Wai Hong comes from the back and call, 'Hey Mei Hsiang, or maybe darling, or honey, then what happens?' Your 'castles' suddenly no more. Your saṅkhāra also no more. Then, this one which is more powerful takes over. And you reply, 'anything?' Then he said, 'Nothing. Just a joke.' Then maybe you get angry. 'I was having this saṅkhāra creation, and

I was enjoying it then why did you suddenly come along and disturb me?' **That is how you may function as a human being.**

While you are walking, thinking, happy-go-lucky, let's say you didn't wear shoes, then suddenly, pricked by a nail or a broken glass or a sharp stone. 'Aiyoh', ***your mind goes there straight away.*** It means **contact** is there already. You forgot about what you think because that **sensation, that tactile consciousness takes over.** That's how you function as a human being. ***Wherever you place your mind, there will be contact.*** That's why I say, *wherever you place your mind, energy will build up there because it's consciousness.* Without the organ, how can the consciousness arise? That's why it needs the organ as a condition for it to arise, for it to light up.

Let's say the battery was put in the reverse order, then no current, light bulb won't light up, isn't it? It's like **if your karmic force is not there, no more heart beat, and you cannot become conscious anymore. That's why the light bulb cannot light up.** That's why a **dead man cannot see.** So when the battery is there, the moment you press the switch, it will light up. The switch is like your mind. *Wherever you place it, at the organ, it will establish contact.* Then upon contact, ***if you are mindful, it's very beautiful.*** It's just like this light bulb. 'Thuc!' You know what is 'Thuc' or not? Like you *become conscious.* Then, at that moment, **it can be nothing. You can be at the moment of contact, at the moment of consciousness.** That's why I said **when your mindfulness is very stable, you can be aware of or see all these.** It's not a *theory.* You cannot just say, Bro Teoh said, 'upon contact, seeing consciousness arise.' *Without the stability of mindfulness, you cannot be aware and be with the*

moment in silent awareness. *Straightaway, the perception* will come out, the *views and opinion*, the association with what you see will come out, and **then you start your description.** ‘Wah! This is very nice, very beautiful. I want to take a photo shot with my hand phone.’ While you are doing all these, you are **not mindful.** You are **hardly aware** because these are your **habitual tendency.**

This is *how most human beings live their life.* But **when you are mindful, it’s completely different.** You will have an understanding then you decide. It’s like what I had shared with you all before, in the morning, when your **bladder calls** and you to go to the toilet, most of the times, how you *come up* from the bed *also you are not aware, how you enter the toilet, how you open the door,* how you undress to answer nature’s call *also you don’t know.* Then how you sat in that posture also you are not aware or don’t know. The only thing you **may know** is when you are sitting on the WC answering nature’s call.

The Buddha said you are *supposed to be mindfulness of every action, every movements* in the **present moment.** You can only be conscious, but you are **not aware;** conscious when you have released it out because that **tactile consciousness** that is **disturbing you** is *no more.* You are **hardly aware,** you are **only conscious** that it is relieved already. That is **not mindfulness at all.** That’s why I say *you are conscious of life* but you **never live life.** You are **hardly aware.** You are **not with the moment.** When you are with the moment, **you can decide.** You can tell the thought, ‘*No, not you, I decide.*’ I can decide when to go, even under **very severe emergency,** you have to go, you can still decide. I have tried it before. ‘I just say

now I decide.’ Then I come out mindfully, **mindful of all the movements**, like how the comforter or blanket were moved, how the hand moves, how I turn, get down from the bed, **all fully aware**; then how I walk there, **body and mind as one**, which hand comes out to open the toilet door. Sometimes, if it’s not locked, I just push it. Then, **how I turn, goes on to the WC, undress, how I sit down, answer nature’s call, etc. - all fully aware.**’ That is what *mindfulness is all about*. It’s **not a joke**. You have to do it. **That is just the beginning**. You **have to be in that state throughout the day**. That’s why I say, **start with your daily activities at home**, things you can have control of, where you don’t have to be subject to **external interference** because the moment you move out of your house, all your **other senses are fully engaged especially** when you are driving your car. You have to be conscious of what you see. Then you must have the *awareness, the mindfulness*, and the **attentiveness to act and to drive**. There are a lot of things moving. That’s why if your **mindfulness is not stable enough**, you **cannot cope with life**. Your **six sense doors move so fast**, you are **fully engaged**. Saṅkhāra arise and pass away **so fast**, create **so many stories** for you. The egoic mind is **so fast**. Yet, you are **completely not aware**. You are *still thinking, thinking*. ‘Aiyoh, what to do when I reach the office? Aiyoh, red light already.’ Then, getting angry and unhappy, etc.

Most living beings are *not mindful, not aware*. You are *hardly aware* because you are **not able to be silent**. Your **spiritual faculties are not stable**, your *mental hindrances* are there, and you *haven’t straightened your views*. That’s why the *whole of the cultivation of the Noble Eight Fold Path* is a **very elaborate practice** or cultivation. You have to do it *to experience and understand all these* so that

what I describe and share, you can follow. If you have not done so, you **may not understand** and even be *skeptical* as to comment, '*Can the cultivation make you such? True or not?*' Then maybe you will go and ask Bro Song. If Bro Song says, 'I don't know. I also haven't done it.' Then you will have *more doubts*.

If you listen to this recording, it will help you a lot because *if you listen attentively* and **put it into practice** the cultivation can come about. Can you remember that day's sharing by Sister Mimi during the Tuesday class? What did she draw on the white board? The Buddha and His teaching - *what is lacking?* Phase 1 dharma is the learning of the teaching, understanding the teaching until it's very clear, and **then put it into practice**. This is what *a lot of people didn't do*. In fact, the first one, learning of the teaching also never do it correctly? You think you know, but you never write it out, you are **not focused**, you *don't have the full picture*. You only think, 'Ya, Bro. Teoh keep on **repeating** all these, - I must be mindful, I must be heedful.' But you never go into it. What is *heedfulness*? How is it possible for me to develop that quality of mind called heedfulness? Then you have *to start training your mind to be aware, developing the five spiritual faculties to overcome the five mental hindrances*. **Have you done that?** After you have done that, *your meditation will progress*. **When your spiritual faculties take over**, *no more mental hindrances*, then **most of the time**, *you are aware*. Then you **stabilize** that awareness. You can use *a method, a technique* or any **skillful means** like *ānāpānasati* to **stabilize** it. Otherwise you have to develop the *formal meditation* in whatever posture *that are more suitable for you*, whether lying down or *ānāpānasati* etc. until your mind becomes **so subtle and so quiet** until like **no more movement**.

Until your *mind enters Sati and passaddhi*. Only such a mind can come out into the daily life to *cultivate the daily mindfulness*. ***Unless the mind is in Sati, daily mindfulness is impossible.***

When the mind is in Sati, *do you know what will happens? Every moment of hearing is in Sati, every moment of seeing is in Sati, every moment of smell, taste, tactile, thought or arising of Saṅkhāra the mind is in Sati*. That Sati can see, can understand because it can be at the moment of contact, moment of consciousness, moment of feeling, moment of Saṅkhāra activities and all mental movements. **All these are possible because your mindfulness is already very stable**. Like I used to share with you all. It can be **at the moment of contact**, it **just stays there**. No sound, **but the awareness** is just there because *there is no more delusion*. That's why upon contact, the *feeling is there* and **Feeling** will remain as **pure feeling** because it **cannot move**. If you want to think, it will arise saṅkhāra, mental thinking. It can be at the **moment** of consciousness, at the **moment** of perception, etc. When it perceives something, the perception that comes out, although it's also from memory but it's the **pure non-grasping** aggregates of mind that you use. You are *not deceived* or *deluded* by it because you know this is condition-arising, impermanent, dependent-originating, empty, and not you. So, **feeling is not you, perception is not you, all these thinking, Saṅkhāra, views, opinions are not you**. Then why do you allow them **to delude** you, **deceive you** and make you *so miserable* and *afflict you* until *you suffer* until people can go into *depression* and want to *commit suicide*. For the *enlightened ones*, they know, *without delusion*, you will not get into all these **entanglement**. But *because of delusion*, it has its power. It becomes possible for living beings to

go through *suffering, misery* even to the extent of having *suicidal thoughts* because these are *very severe depressive thoughts* which have become *intrusive*.

You have heard of this word, isn't it? They call it *obsessive, compulsive* and *intrusive thoughts*. All these, *the psychiatrists* have a word for it. I forgot which word, they have got a term for it. Is it *OCD (obsessive and compulsive disorder)*? The *thoughts become obsessive* and *compulsive* and *keep on intruding* into your mind because of your *attachment* to that *incident* which can make you *very sorrowful*; like loss of a loved one, or a *very bitter* memory of something that has happened to you before, like *child abuse, relationship failure, divorce*, etc. It has such a *great impact* on you. That's why these thoughts keep on coming back *to haunt* you. It's so *obsessive, compulsive and intrusive*. You cannot stop it because of *your own delusion*, lack of understanding and clarity. This is what the *mundane mind* is all about; via delusion and ignorance, it can be conditioned into such states. So, have I answered your question? 'Yes!' Very good. Use the mic. (Question from Mei Hsiang again).

Mei Hsiang: Do you mind *if you can explain this concept again* with our thoughts?

Bro. Teoh: Explain again? You can listen to the recording isn't it? Why do you want it to be repeated? We can spend our time on other more useful things. If you listen to the recording and you still cannot understand, then you can ask again. Then I can explain to you one more time. It's recorded unless Miss Lee again makes a mistake, meaning the battery has not enough charging. Still got light?

Okay, good, it means it is recording. So, Mei Hsiang, don't worry, it's recorded. There is an assurance given. Now, you can have an idea of what this is. But, don't attach to it. Attach to it means **don't go and look for it.**

Before you have the *stability of mindfulness, you cannot understand.* So, **don't try to look for it in the meditation.** You may say, 'Bro Teoh, I can be at the moment of feeling.' You may try very hard in your meditation inquiring, 'is this contact?' Or *verbalizing* inside there, chattering and trying to confirm via saying, 'Yes! This must be contact. I saw the contact. Then the feeling come. Then *this feeling really become craving very fast.*' If you meditate this way, you can forget about it. That's why I said, when you meditate, **don't try to know. Don't do anything, just silent, just allow that mindfulness to understand.** The ***silent mind will understand by itself.***

How many of you have really tried that? Huh, **very good there are some who had done it.** Better let Sister Alicia share. Then after that, Mindy can also share because **these are the people who had done it** so they know because they *straightaway put up their hands.*

Alicia: Once I was doing my *repentance*, after that I called to mind *Pu Hsien Pusa.* Then my mind was just like what you said....

Bro Teoh: Yes, the **shift of consciousness**, then you become **fully aware** and you **connect** to the nature **via your faith (Saddhā).** Then after that, *the mind that is in Sati will know what it is.* That's why she after going through **17 over years of depression**, yet over the last three years, she can still be so 'beautiful' because she has

developed this awareness to be aware. She can even tell you how *all these Saṅkhāra activities* which are all *wrong thoughts* **torment** her until she can tell the mind, *'Enough, you had already deceived me for 17+ years. Enough is enough. Finish!'* Then all those wrong thoughts straightaway they are gone. These are *wrong thoughts*, - *thoughts that condition her fear, her worries, her anxieties, her sorrow and lamentation leading her into **depression*** for so many years. She understood what wrong thoughts are. She realized all the thoughts she was thinking previously (last time) were *envy, jealousy, hatred*, and the other unhappy thoughts. Every time, pointing finger at others.

Things like *'why is my sister-in-law like that? My brother-in-law like that, my husband, my children and my good friends also like that? **Why can't they understand me?'*** This is how people in *depression* will think. *'How come my life is so unlucky? Why is God so unfair?'* They keep on doing these until it becomes *habitual tendencies* because you keep on thinking about it. It *becomes a cocoon of thoughts*. That's how one *enters depression*; like **a tape recorder** that keeps on **repeating, repeating**. Then sometimes, you may have *a sense of remorse* because you have parents who have passed away. Then you lament and said, *'I should have paid more attention to what they said when they are still alive. If I know they are going to die, **I would not have reacted that way** and said *all those things to my parents.'**

Because of delusion and remorse, these things *can haunt* you and *make you miserable*. Why must you allow all these to torment you via clinging on to them through memories? **For the past is already**

gone so what must you do? It's no longer a reality, then what are you doing? You are still thinking about it - meaning you give meaning, you attach, you cling, you grasp, and you accumulate them into your memory. That's what you are doing. All these are ***your scars of memory; your anger, your hatred, you blame yourself for not doing enough.*** All these come from the egoic mind. Can you understand? That's why ***accumulation is the cause of suffering.*** How do you accumulate? Through your own anger, hatred, remorse, jealousy and your fears, your phobia, and your scars of memory, etc. you keep on *thinking* about it, *cling* onto it and *hold* onto it.

When People talk to you, you don't want to listen. You say, '*Enough. I do not wish to be disturb*' then you lock yourself up. That's how you *enter depression*. If there is ***no good karmic condition*** from the past, if you ***have not helped people before***, if you *don't have the condition to come out of it, nobody will come around to help you*. But *if you have helped people before*, like Alicia's case, then when she encountered such problem, there will be people who will bring her to the right Dharma. Then after *she understands, she helps so many people*, her good friend in Macau and other friends of hers, like Elsie, etc. She brings them to the Dharma.

So this is what karma is about. Karma is: '*you reap what you sow, do good begets good and do evil begets evil.*' Whatever goodness, wholesome action you have developed through your *pure love, compassion, genuine and sincere intention* to be a blessing to all, to help those who are in need of help will translate into merits and karmic fruitions that you will reap in the future. For *you reap what you sow*. In future, when you are afflicted, there will be people who

will come and help you, bring you to the correct teachers with the right Dharma understanding for you to come out of it. So *do not be selfish*. When you *have the understanding*, whenever there is condition, you should **play your role** and do **your duty** because it's just the '*form and mind*' subject to this law of karma. If there are conditions to act, to advise, **you just act, advice and do**. Then *you can invoke power of merits to arise the causes and conditions for you to avoid the foolish, meet up with the wise so that enlightenment in the here and the now can be realized*. So all these are so beautiful. Now we pass the mike to Mindy to let her share.

Mindy: Bro Teoh, I want to explain what I have experienced. The experience happened during my sleep. The consciousness understands that the body is just the body. The mind said, 'I want to do something.' So, from that time onwards, I understand that whenever the mind says 'I want to do something' – that is the **mundane mind**.

Bro Teoh: Yes! That is the *mundane mind, the thought*. That's the reason why I always advice you all via saying, 'you have to be *ever mindful*' is because of that. Whenever this thought arises and tells you things, you *have to be mindful*. So *what is thought? Saṅkhāra, right?* Then what is saṅkhāra? Why did the Buddha said, 'Sabbe Saṅkhāra *aniccam*, Sabbe saṅkhāra *dukkham* and sabbe *dharma anattā*. If you **had contemplated** on these, then straightaway, this *wisdom or understanding (yoniso manasikāra)* will arise, just like what Sister Eng Bee went through the last time. At the *moment of sense experience, it just knows that* these are saṅkhāra. Then the *deeper aspect* is like what Alicia has gone through. These are *all*

wrong thoughts that *conditioned her suffering, her sorrow, her lamentation, fear, phobia, insecurities and unhappiness, etc.* – all these are **wrong thoughts** that are **unfit for attention** and you are **supposed to abandon** them. *If you are aware and you had paid attention at the moment of sense experience*, what will happens? The **un-arisen mental hindrances** will *arise and proliferate*, the **arisen mental** activities will become **more intense**. That's why these are things that are **unfit for attention**, so **don't pay attention** to all these **wrong thoughts** which are **unfit for attention**. These are taught by the Buddha in the *Sabbāsava sutta*.

Things that are fit for attention, what are they? They pertain to the **4 Noble Truths, the essential Dharma** of the Buddha. So *very simple, isn't it?* One only need to be **constantly aware** and **check**, what are you **paying attention to from moment to moment?** Is it something that is *unfit for attention*, like *creating division over the Theravada and the Mahayana traditions*, why must you go and think this wrong thoughts which are **unfit for attention**, for it doesn't lead to **Dharma understanding**, and **harmony**, and it only leads to what? Yes! *Trying to be right, division, create more argument*, so why want to dwell on all these which has nothing to do with the teaching?

Of course you can argue with me via saying, 'Hey Bro. Teoh, Theravada and Mahayana Buddhist teachings are so different, why you say nothing to do with me?' What I mean is it has nothing to do with the *real Dharma*. Do you think the Buddha created Theravada and Mahayana? Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana come about a few hundred years later after the Buddha had passed away. It's

created by living beings. He *only taught the Dharma*, which is the truth. So this is a very important understanding.

Mindy's sharing is very good. When she has the **faith she just do**. I **remembered**, one or two years ago, when she first came to our class, she *just did the meditation according to the instructions in the recording* that I spoke on, **because she has faith and she just do**. Then **she was able to realize** the *silent mind*. For this teaching is the reverse of what she did earlier on. What she did **earlier on** was **thought based meditation** involving *energy field*. She, in the past **must have done** this type of **energy field** and **concentration type of meditation**, that's why she can see and experience all those things this life. Then she cried and determined not to go **the wrong way anymore**, because she had been looking for this teaching for a very long time already. This could have happened before during the **previous Sāsana**. This life, there is condition, and her nature recalled, then it comes out. Then she was able to go in *via the silent mind* because *the faith was there* and also because this teaching **develops the awareness**, not concentration. She then said, *when she was silent, the nature understands that the body is just the body, - not via the thought telling her anymore*.

Then later on, the thought comes in. The thought says, 'I must meditate like that, I must do this. I must try this.' These are all from the thought. So if you are really clear about the teaching, the focus is, '*what am I doing in the name of meditation?*' First, *am I training my mind to be aware? If you are not, you are out of focus*. If my mind is already trained, aware, *can I stabilize it and use it to cultivate the Noble 8fold Path so that I am heedful in the midst of*

*life? That is your focus but initially if you **can't even develop** the Sati or mindfulness, you **cannot train** it because the **mental hindrances are too strong**. So, what must you do when the mental hindrances are too strong? You **must cultivate the opposite 5 spiritual faculties!** Are you doing it? Do you know how to do it?*

*Through the Puja, the chanting, the salutation to the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, understand what they are, then Dhammapada Verses on the taking of refuge stating that, 'it's only in the Triple Gem that you can **find refuge safe**. There is **no other refuge safe other than the Triple Gem** because only in the Triple Gem, you can find the teaching.' So, **all these you have to develop the understanding. Then only your meditation can progress. If you don't do all these checks and you are not clear** about the teaching, then **you will not be able to develop the cultivation**. You cannot cultivate something that you **have not developed the understanding**. It means you do not know **what you are doing in the name of meditation**.*

*People ask you to note, you note, people ask you to focus, you focus, people say this method, this technique, you just do without understanding. Then you cannot progress. So the enquiry based on understanding is very important. Are my **spiritual faculties** there? If they are there, the **mental hindrances cannot arise**, so I have to focus on the spiritual faculties. The first two spiritual faculties of **saddhā and vīriya** are very easy. Like what I share with you before, you have to understand clearly **who the Buddha is and how wise and virtuous a being He is**. He is **not only virtuous and wise, he is the wisest and most virtuous living being ever to be born because***

He had cultivated over a long period. Then he developed the perfection of wisdom and virtues, the ten perfections to become a Samma Sambuddha. He is not only enlightened, he is fully enlightened. To have such a being to be your teacher, you should count your blessings, express your gratitude and deep respect for the Buddha

Then what are you waiting for? Also because of His long *cultivation and perfection*, He is able to summarize all of His understanding (His teaching, the Dharma) into just the **4 Noble Truths** (*essence of his teaching*) which is so *beautiful, so complete that can let you understand the secret of life*, both the **mundane** and the **supra mundane**. Then this will drive you to cultivate leading you to **enlightenment, liberation from birth and death, hence no more suffering**. Then what are you waiting for? So, that faith will drive you to cultivate. That's how your *vīriya* can arise. Then when your *vīriya* and *saddhā* become **unshakeable**, you will **listen attentively** to understand his teaching. The **vīriya (spiritual zeal)** will drive you to cultivate the **Sati** leading to the stability of it to cultivate the **Noble Eight Fold Path**, leading to **heedfulness in daily life**. If you do this, the Buddha via His Dhammapada verses 21 and 23 *guarantees you enlightenment* in the here and now because He said, '*the heedful never dies.*'

Heedfulness is the path to the deathless, hence you only need to train your mind to be *heedful*. Is it that difficult? It's not difficult, isn't it? I already shared with you, it's easier than learning how to ride a bicycle. Learning to ride a bicycle, you keep on falling and you hurt yourself. This one, the most that can happen is, you fail but you

won't hurt yourself. It could mean - not enough *vīriya*, when doing it. Like learning to ride a bicycle, every time you fall come up and try again. Fall down, come up again. Then, as you are able to have that one stroke of balancing, the first stroke, when you cycle and you can be on the bicycle, balance only for a while, then you put your other leg down. That will give you **confidence**. Wah! At least I can balance a little bit already. If I continue, I can make it. I remember how I learned to ride the bicycle. One morning, I tried doing it, by mid-day, I could already cycle, not good at balancing yet, but the first two hours was miserable, I kept on falling because the bike was so big, the one with a **centre bar**, not the lady's bike. Then I had to use my hand, **grabbed** onto the handle, one other hand hold this bar and one leg between the centre bar because that time, I was very small size, I use the leg to cycle. **Then when I fell**, I was trapped underneath the bicycle because I was so small size. But I was determined to learn because I wanted to understand how it was like to ride a bicycle. I wanted to learn to ride a bicycle to go to school. My school was 4 km away, I could cycle every day. *So, that vīriya drove me, inspired me* and gave me the will power to succeed. That's why *you must have the vīriya, to drive you on with* **heedfulness**. Then you will make it. It's not difficult.

Train yourself to be *mindful* like riding a bicycle. Initially, *maybe you cannot do it*. Then after a while, you start to *feel that you can*. At least, one cycle, then balance, fall again, come up again, then as you try, you become better and better on the balancing. Then *when you can ride for about 10 feet, I can tell you, that was my greatest joy*. Then I braked and I felt the joy. It's just like mindfulness. When you **cultivate until the mindfulness comes, your 'form and mind' will**

know. It's just like riding a bicycle. *You cannot lie, isn't it?* If every time you have to put your foot down, it means you still cannot balance the bicycle. But if you can cycle until you don't need to put your foot down because you can balance on the bicycle, it means **you have developed the skill and the understanding.** But you are not skilful yet. So, you continue to train. If every day I train I will learn very fast. Wah! Already 5.30pm - maybe no need to have the meditation today okay?

Just to *summarize*, so *heedfulness is not difficult. Easier than learning how to ride a bicycle.* First, develop the **5 spiritual faculties.** After that, you *just relax and sit*, then *very easy to meditate.* **Without** the **mental hindrances**, the *mind is quiet, straight away.* Then what you need to do is, you can use *any object of meditation that you are familiar with to stabilize it.* Even when you lie down, the **thoughts may still arise**, *let it arise.* After a while, it will **slow down and cease** because you **don't give it anymore thought or mental energy to continue the mental proliferation or thinking.** When you understand that the **untrained mind is heedless, thinks a lot**, you **will not try to resist, suppress and control the thought but instead you just let it be**, then *it will cease by itself.* It will return to **quietness** because the *original state of mind before the stirring is stillness, silent and aware.* So, *just let that mind go back to its natural state, that's it.* No need to do anything. Like one of the ladies just now mentioned, no need to do anything. The other important understanding is **don't try to know.**

Why? Because *when you try to know, your thought is active.* You are **no longer in Sati**, hence you **cannot meditate.** That's why you must

have faith (*saddhā*) and *vīriya*, then Sati will arise. And when *Sati* takes over, if you **don't create likes and dislikes**, which are *sensual desires and ill will (mental hindrances)* or label **it as pain** etc., your meditation will **progress very fast**. Then you *become very quiet, very still*. **Continue** to allow the stillness, the quietness to develop. Then later on, even your *object of meditation or skilful means* that you use to *initially anchor* your mind, you also don't need them anymore. The mind will become **very subtle** until **no more movement**. Then, during that time, **your mind has entered Sati**. It has *become more refined*. Then the mind that is **more refine** give rise to the **stability of Sati**. Then when you **come out** of the formal meditation, your form and mind will know, you are **completed different already**. Then *every action, every movement, like eh, the mindfulness is with you, everything like* **slowed down and magnified**. Even in your *formal meditation*, while sitting, the slightest movement (like your *subtle breathing*) will come back to you. Then *anywhere* you **maintain attention** with your awareness during that time, you will be **very sensitive**. That awareness is able to pick it up. Then you **can feel your own heartbeat** without the need of a stethoscope, you can feel your *own vibration* in any part of your body even in your brain. That is the **real Sati**, the *real cultivation* and it can be done. It's *not difficult especially during this Sāsana*. If you have **faith**, all these can come about. Okay? I think it's enough for today. **If you listen** to this **recording, it's going to help you**. It's beautiful. So we shall go on with the Sutra. You can rejoice. Sadhu! (3x).

Turn to page 273. This one important:

*The One Important Matter is the **knowledge and vision of the Buddha**. Worldly people, deluded by the external world, attach*

themselves to marks... (Just like what I had explained before, the mark of a self, the mark of others, the mark of life, the mark of the phenomenal world and deluded by the inner world, means your mundane world, your mental activities, your *saṅkhāra*, your verbalization, your chattering and your thought processes.) Then they attach themselves to emptiness. This is attachment to Dharma. They have a **concept of emptiness**. Emptiness is **to be realized** through an **awakening**, not a concept. Then the actual advice according to Hui Neng is:

*If you can live among marks and yet be separate from it, then you will be confused by **neither the internal nor the external**, means the external and the internal will no longer delude you, deceive you, and condition you into negativity and heedlessness. Do you know the difference between internal and external?*

External means what? Yes, all your *external sense objects*. That's the reason why I also want to ask you **how do you know the world** and how **do you interact** with the world? You **know the world through your senses, isn't it?** Upon contact, you become **conscious** of the world. Conscious of what you see, what you hear. They call it *sights and sounds*. Then conscious of what you **smell**, what you **taste**, what you tactilely feel and think. This is the **external** world. *That's why the external world is a phenomenal world of consciousness, mind-made are they, dependent-originating, condition-arising, not real because mind is the forerunner of all things. Mind is chief.* When mind arises, everything arises. So, **we choose to take care of mind**. That is a very important understanding in Dharma cultivation.

These are the pointers that you must have. Then **internal** means your **mental world**. There is no more external phenomenal world for you to perceive. Your *internal world is your own views, opinions, chattering, your verbalization, your own anger, hatred, remorse, unhappiness, etc.* Of course, if you know how to train your mind, develop the ability to be **mindful, peaceful, to be aware**, then you get to experience all the **good mind states**, the **tranquillity of mind**, the **stillness of mind**, the **silent mind**, all these are **possible** when you have the **understanding**, when you **have trained** this mind. You will come to understand, **without the thought, the true mind is naturally there and it's beautiful**. That's why **you don't need to do anything**. You **only need to allow the mind to be, means the mundane mind to settle down like the Buddha's analogy when he asked the monks to collect the water**. Every time **you stir** the water, you are not going to collect **any clear water**. When will the water be clear? When nobody cross the pool of water, when there is no bullock cart to *stir* or *churn* the water, then it will return to its **original state of clarity and stillness**. **Your mind is the same**. The *ripples, the waves, the movements, all that you see on the surface of the lake*, when you compare it to the rough sea, it is relatively calmer, right? Human beings who are **deluded (heedless)**, their minds are like the rough sea.

What is a rough sea? A lot of wind, a lot of waves, then sometimes, thunder, sometimes storm. Then before the storm comes, there is a calm that comes before the storm. But **if you have trained your mind**, most of the time, it is like a lake. *Quiet and still* most of the time because *little or no movement*. There are only ripples when branches fall or when people throw a stone in, you will see the

ripples spreading. Then the surface movement is like your *surface mind*, your *conscious mind*. You still have activity, sometimes a little bit of wind but it won't create waves. A lake is a lake unless there is monsoon or hurricane or whatever. Otherwise, it's relatively still.

Then, deep down, at the deeper part of the lake, there is **completely no ripple, no movement**. That is like your **true mind**; at the deeper level there is no movement. Whereas the stirring, the ripple movements, etc. they are condition-arising activities, like your *mundane mind*. But, when you **meditate**, as you **straighten** your **view**, you have **less ignorance**, (*avijjā*), then **you will think less**, you will **get less ripples, less surface movement**. Then, this mind is **like the lake**, become **quiet** on its own. Then you develop the **stability of it until** you are **most** of the **time** at the **lower depth** of the **lake**, no movement at all, just silence and stillness. Then it can be aware of all the things within the lake. **In a similar way, your true mind works the same.**

When the surface vibration, the *conscious part becomes quiet*, then you will **return** to your **original state** of *stillness before the stirring*. If you **leave the water as it is, it will become clear**. All the **sediments will settle down**. The **true mind** is the same, *all the thinking, activities of mind, saṅkhāra, reaction, stirring, etc. they will all settle down on its own because if you don't give it any negative energy, delusion, thought energy, it will cease to be. The reason being, these are dependent-originating and condition-arising phenomena*. Just like J. Krishnamurti's saying, '*How can the flower flowers?*' It will continue to Flowers because it has not finished blooming. But J Krishnamurti said, '**that very flowering of that**

thought is the very ending of that thought.' You let it flower until it cannot flower, then what happens? No more **supportive karma or energy** to flower anymore. So, once it finishes the full flowering, what will happen? It will wither, then it's gone, isn't it? Huh, **your thought is the same. When it thinks until its fully flowered, no more thought energy, then what happens? It will wither, it will cease.**

You **have to see it** in your **meditation**. That's why you have to find out - **is anger really you?** When there is anger, when there is fear, when there is phobia, when there is negativity of mind states or agitation, **just silent everything and stay with that mental state.** That is the **best way to find out** because **I broke free** during the early days **through mindfulness** from that moment of realization. Then suddenly, I realize, within less than 1 minute, the **agitated state, the unhappy state, the stirring that brought forth the emotions, they just slow down and dissipate** when I **don't do anything**. Then, all of a sudden, I felt at the **heart** there, **completely still**. Then there is this understanding. **No wonder the Buddha said, 'all these are not me'.**

The mental states, the emotions, the anger, the fear, the hatred, the envy and the jealousy, they are **dependent-originating**. Through **wrong view, we stir** and it **becomes** what it is. Then if you **allow it to be without feeding** it with **anymore wrong view**, then it **just dissipate and cease**. That's why I can understand what J. Krishnamurti meant when he said, 'the very **flowering** of that **emotion or thought**, is the **ending** of that **thought**.' It ends, it ceases. You **have to realize that cessation. Then you can realize your true**

mind. When you can allow it to be, it will stabilize, then you can *reflect and contemplate* on what happen, after you come out of the meditation. It will be very beautiful because you will have so much joy, immediately after you experience that cessation. Then you will come to realize, the *mundane mind* is not what you think, it's not you, exactly like what the Buddha taught and that is the awakening after you have silent your mind and stay with it to witness it ceasing. It's not a theory anymore. You witness it through your own inner awareness. Then you realize these are dependent-originating mind states and this is what saṅkhāra is all about. That's why saṅkhāra aniccaṃ. It comes and goes, *arises and passes away*. It's dependent-originating, condition-arising. Without conditions, it doesn't arise. What are the conditions for its arising? You have to trace the origination factors. How come every time you react you become *emotional, angry and unhappy*? It is because of your wrong view. You perceive that person with negativity and you want things your way. These are attachments, craving, clinging, borne of wrong view because you fail to see things as they are and you fail to understand living beings for what they are.

If you continue to cultivate this way, you will progress very fast. Then, all of a sudden, one day, things will become so clear and your mind becomes different. No more wrong view, no more delusion, the phenomenal world ceases to have any effect on you. Then, you can just be at peace, happy, have this inner peace and clarity of mind. Then most of the time, you are just aware, that's how heedfulness comes about, then all the teachings like become very clear to you. Why did the Buddha say attachment borne of self-delusion is suffering? What is attachment? It's no more the word,

it's the exact understanding - **understanding clearly** the meaning of attachment, craving (taṇhā), etc. All these will become very clear to you. So, these are **the ways you can develop** the **awakening and understanding of the Dharma** when you really try it out in the meditation. That's why don't be **afraid of emotions and anger**. **Even when** there is **fear, stay there, stay with it**, and see what happens. It will cease to be. Everything will cease to be. But you **have to stay with it, experience it and go through it**. That is real cultivation because it can give rise to **realization** as you go through the process. That's why I say you have **to be aware** at the **moment** of its **arising** (the phenomena), **its sustenance** and **its passing away**. It means you have to see the moment it arises, stay with it until it passes away and ceases. At **the moment** of sense experience, **its arising, sustenance and passing away**, you *have to see it there and then with mindfulness*. Then only this **awakening to the three universal characteristics** becomes **very stable** and **very clear**. But **without a stable mindfulness**, you cannot see all these. Maybe in the formal meditation it is easier **but in the midst of life**, which is the real one, you **have to have this stability of mindfulness**. That's why **daily mindfulness** is a **must, there no other way to awakening**; even for those who do Samatha or concentration meditation, they have **to release it out and go into daily mindfulness**. Otherwise, they can't develop the awakening because all the anusaya or latent tendencies, delusion, they are **not rooted out as yet**. They are **all suppressed** because **of energy field**. **Without wisdom** you cannot root it out. You cannot develop the **understanding to liberate your mind**.

If you awaken to this Dharma in one moment, your mind will open to the enlightenment.

(This is exactly what I told you. The **moment you understand, you are free**. It's **not a gradual process**. **Wisdom is immediate**, you have means you have, you don't have means you don't have. You cannot learn it, you have to awaken to it.)

*So, if you awaken to this true Dharma, the true understanding, in one moment, your mind will open to enlightenment. **It will just cease then you will understand**. Then the **direct knowledge and vision** of the reality is just that.*

(It is just that, means you awaken to what the Buddha has realized. You develop the understanding of it.) *So, the Buddha itself is enlightenment.*

*There are **4 divisions**:*

- (i) **Opening** to the *enlightened knowledge and vision*, (means your insight into phenomena, develop the **understanding** via the **direct seeing** and awakening).
- (ii) **Demonstrating** the *enlightened knowledge and vision*, (After your insight, you can **reflect and contemplate into it, to stabilize** the **understanding until** it **become a part of you**. Then you can use it.
- (iii) **Awakening** to the *enlightened knowledge and reality*. (This part is the **true awakening**. The earlier one is **demonstrating** means it **shows it** to you.)

(iv) **Entering** the enlightened knowledge and vision. (This one is after you have reflected and contemplated. Then it becomes so stable. Then after that, **you can teach, you can share**. If you don't reach the 4th stage, **you cannot teach, you cannot share**. You only understand yourself. You are very limited in your ability to express all these. You know what it is, you have awakened to that enlightened knowledge and vision but you have not yet **entered** the enlightened knowledge and vision).

Then Hui Neng continued,

'If you listen to the opening and demonstrating, you can easily awaken and enter. That is the enlightened knowledge and vision, the original true nature becomes manifest.

(So that **true mind, the true nature, you really have to come into contact with it and realize what it is**).

Then Hui Neng continued.

He gave this advice, *be careful not to misinterpret the Sutra*. (This is what I have been telling you all).

*By **thinking** that the opening, demonstrating, awakening, and entering of which it speaks is the Buddha's knowledge and vision*

(Because these are words, this is knowledge, this is not the real thing. The real thing is when you had realized it).

...And that we have and that we have **no share** in it. To explain it that way would be to slander the Sutra and defame the Buddha. (See, you must never use your thought or your mundane mind to express it). Since he is already a Buddha, perfect in wisdom and virtue or knowledge and vision, what is the use of his opening to it again? You should now believe that the Buddha's knowledge and vision is simply your own mind, for there is no other Buddha. All **Buddha nature is the same oneness nature, the source, the original true nature before everything arises.** But, because living beings **cover their brilliance with greed** and with the **love of states of defilement**, means **your evil roots, external conditions and inner disturbance make slaves** of them. It means you become slaves to your thoughts, to your own delusion. That troubles the World-Honored One to rise from Samadhi, and with **various reproaches and expedients**, he **exhorts living beings to stop and rest**, not to seek **outside themselves**; See, **reverse the light and seek within**, and to make themselves the same as he is. That is called 'opening the knowledge and vision of the Buddha.' I, too, am always exhorting all people to open to the knowledge and vision of the Buddha within their own minds, or true nature. "The minds of **worldly people are deviant. Confused and deluded**, they commit offenses. Their speech may be good, but their minds are evil. They are greedy, hateful, envious, given over to flattery, deceit, and arrogance. They oppress one another and harm living beings. Thus they open not the knowledge and vision of Buddha but that of living beings. If you can with **an upright mind** constantly bring forth wisdom, contemplating and illumining your own mind, (see, this is cultivation, mindfulness, that's why he said you have to

constantly bring forth wisdom, means the **understanding via contemplation**).

*Then use that contemplative understanding to illuminate your mind. If you can practice the good and refrain from evil, (means follow the advice of the Buddha with mindfulness), you, yourself will open to the knowledge and vision of the Buddha. In every thought, see, (**ever mindful** is this meaning), you should open up to the knowledge and vision of the Buddha; do not open up to the knowledge and vision **of living beings**. To be open to the knowledge and vision of the Buddha is **transcendental**; (means to go **beyond thought**), to be open to the knowledge and vision of living beings is **mundane**, (means the mundane mind). If you exert yourself in recitation, clinging to it as a meritorious exercise (greed), how does that make you different from a yak who loves his own tail?*

This is trying to tell Fa Ta because he thinks by chanting, he has **accumulated** a lot of merits via chanting the Lotus Sutra. So he said if you exert yourself in recitation, means very diligently keep on reciting, and then thinks having a lot of merits, means you have progressed. So, clinging to it as a meritorious exercise, **thinking that is meditation**, how does that make you different from a yak that loves its tail (means you are not cultivating, you are wasting your time).

Ok. We end here. We'll go into the commentary next Sunday. Sadhu!
(3x).

Next Sunday is house dana by Brother Chin How. So, we cannot have the class. Then we will wait for the next Sunday. Anybody has any questions? Is there anything you want to clarify? Oh ya, 31st what day is it? It's a Thursday, which means I'll be back by 1st night. I'll be flying off on the 30th night to Alor Setar, then the next day, I'll be in Hatyai with my family. There I will stay one night (31st night) and I will fly back on the 1st of September which is a Friday, hence the class for next Sunday will be on.

If you want it to be off, then, cancel it. So next two Sundays, no class. Don't worry. Sis Lee will send out the notice. I'll be away on the 30th night, come back on the 1st September night. Okay. Any questions? Don't have questions, then we'll do the sharing of merits.

Let us recall to mind all of the ***wholesomeness or meritorious*** actions that we have developed over the past three hours and share these merits with all beings:

Akaṣaṭṭha ca bhumaṭṭhā Deva nāga mahiddhikā
Puññaṃ taṃ anumoditvā Ciraṃ rakkhantu loka sāsanaṃ
Ettāvatā ca amhehi Sambhataṃ puñña sampadaṃ Sabbe deva
anumodantu Sabba sampatti siddhiya
Idaṃ me ñātinaṃ hotu Sukhitā hontu ñātayo (Repeat 3X)

Iminā puñña kamma Māme bāla samāgamo Sataṃ samāgamo
hotu Yāva nibbāna pattiyā. Sadhu! (3x)

Let us **pay respect mindfully** to Lord Buddha, Quan Yin Bodhisattva and all the worthy ones.

