

Short Notes Teoh Thu 180426

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1. Bro Teoh welcomed a newcomer, Bro Eric's friend and briefed him on the activities of this weekly class.
2. Sis Keat Hoon's question: The **concept of self** – 'that *this form is not me*'; *how does one break this label called self?*

Bro Teoh's answer:

- The concept of a 'self' comes from the **egoic mind** which believes *this human being is real* or *is what he is*.
- The meaning of **Anatta** (as expounded by the Buddha) has **very deep meaning** and *many Buddhists do not really understand what it is*. **Anatta** is *not only non-self* but its *deeper meaning* is, 'it is **not a permanent unchanging entity**' that one can call this is 'Me' and this am 'I'. Hence the reason why it is **impermanent**, leads to **suffering** if one attach to it as the 'self' via **self-delusion**.
- This so-called human being (the five aggregates of form and mind) is *condition-arising* and *dependent originating*; hence it is *impermanent* leading to its *empty nature characteristic*.
- The **three conditions** that bring about the *arising of a human being* are - i) the union of sperm and ovum leading to conception, ii) the rebirth consciousness and iii) the life or karmic force.
- Initially, the fetus gets its food supply via the mother's placenta and eventually when the fetus's sense bases, organs, etc. are formed, the *consciousness enters*; *resulting in the so-called human being (the form & mind)*.
- The baby that is born will have the *rebirth consciousness* (which is *pure* because there is no memory as yet).
- The child will eventually be conditioned by its parents and the environment.
- The Buddha advised us **not to be deceived** by the *so-called human being* which is *sustained by conditions* and ceases to be *when the supporting conditions are no more*.
- This entity is **sustained** by the *physical body*, the *trapped consciousness* and the *life or karmic force*.
- The so-called human will cease to be when any of the above supporting conditions cease to be.
- The human consciousness (or mundane mind trapped inside the body) is actually *a bundle of memories or accumulation of life experiences* (both good and bad). They are your views, opinions, conditioning, belief system, fear, phobias, worries, anxiety, sorrow, lamentation and scars of memories, etc.
- When the **mundane mind is silent**, this form and mind *can connect* to the **true mind**.
- The karmic force comes from one's karmic nature.
- Bro Teoh gave the *analogy* of the candle and flame (candle, wick and flame) to equate to the human condition and the three equivalent conditions to support its life span.
- When a person dies, the *remnant of consciousness* will leave the body but being energy, it never dies.
- The **rebirth consciousness** (Patisandhi citta) arises *immediately after the last thought moment or death consciousness* (Cutti citta).
- The **craving force** that **binds the consciousness** to the physical body will start **to dissipate** during death.
- Without mindfulness, most people *cannot see this happening* because for **most people** the **karmic consciousness** has taken over. With mindfulness, the *karmic consciousness* will not take over.
- For those who have mindfulness, they will be able to be aware of it happening. Just like what I have been telling you all, 'if you know how to die, you will come to understand that not one actually dies.'
- However, for most people who are *approaching death*, without a developed mindfulness, the karmic consciousness will takes over so the dying is not conscious anymore.

- The karmic consciousness (through the subconscious mind) will manifest the realm of their next rebirth.
- The human being which is a condition-arising entity is impermanent. Depending on conditions, it arises. When conditions continue to support it, it continues to sustain itself. But, when any of the conditions ceases to be, the human being will also cease to function anymore. It loses its identity.
- Venerable Assaji said to Sariputra, *'whatever that arises, there are causes and conditions behind, and these causes and conditions my teacher had explained,'* Sariputra become enlightened and realizes Sotapanaship.
- Here the Buddha was referring to the entity of the *human being which arises due to causes and conditions*. Hence, the human being is **impermanent** and **not so real** in that sense but is a condition-arising phenomenon, thus impermanent, non-self and its empty nature (anatta). Conditions arising and dependent originating all the time so how real can the human being be?
- The Mahayanists use to say, *'Empty handed we come, empty handed we go. In between, why do we grieve over emptiness?'*
- Back to Sis Keat Hoon's question, the **only way** to break through this **self-delusion** is **to meditate**. Knowledge is only theory so it can't break this self-delusion *whereas* **wisdom** can arise through the **meditative approach**. When the **mundane mind is trained**, the **true mind** will develop this wisdom **via the direct seeing**.

3. The **phenomenal world is a world of consciousness** with its 3 universal characteristics. That's why the Buddha said, *'Mind is the forerunner of all things. Mind is chief. When mind arises, everything arises.'*

- The consciousness trapped inside us is the greatest magician.
- Train the mind to be ever mindful, to see clearly how the **mundane mind** has been **stirred** into likes and dislikes and various emotions of fear, anger etc. *to condition your mental suffering* via your **wrong view**. Then *retrospectively reverse it via meditation* to develop the wisdom (after straightening of our views) to free our mind. The mind that is **ever mindful is very sensitive** hence the *slightest stirring* of the mundane mind, the awareness or sati will be able to be aware of it. Then the wisdom or yoniso manasikara will liberate the mind.
- When the mind is silent, there are no words and no concept. So, who is inside there to create the egoic mind? With this realization, how can the egoic mind and the human being be real? The physical body is made up of elements only, goes the way of nature hence not you (5 daily contemplations).
- The **direct seeing** is via the **silent mind in sati** and **not through the thought or knowledge**.
- The *real awakening can only happen* when the form and mind **despite all its memories, accumulations and conditioning, etc.** can still see **truth or reality as it is** via the *direct seeing with the silent mind in pure awareness*.
- The *human body is just a karmically conditioned vehicle* for us to come to this world so use it appropriately so as not to be deluded by it via *worrying about it growing old, getting sick and die*.
- It is very important to meditate to root out this self-delusion, cultivate the right views leading to right thoughts, right speech and right action etc. following Noble 8-fold path.

4. Bro Wen Chuen's question:

Does it mean that we don't think about anything, understand the Noble 8fold Path and through cultivating this, wisdom will arise?

- a) Before one is enlightened, thinking cannot stop. Ignorance conditions mental activities because human beings want to know so thinking will definitely arise. This is also the conventional teaching where we are taught to think when we don't understand. Thinking and memories are only needed when learning technical and

mechanical things and memorizing/storing factual knowledge but not to store **psychological memory** which can cause mental suffering via recalling our phobias and scars of memory.

- b) Remember that thoughts are *like a tool* for us to use to live life with understanding and wisdom. Do not project the thought to arise the fear and the worry and anxiety etc. or think about the past to become miserable as both are not realities anymore. The **user of thought** is more important. If the user of thought is *wise then thoughts will become right thoughts*. Similarly if the *user of thought is evil and deluded* then thoughts will be wrong thoughts causing our karmic negativity and downfall.
- c) When we are so busy thinking, planning and worrying about life, we are not in the moment to truly live life. Drinking a cup of tea is so beautiful when one is **fully aware** in the present moment without thought.
- d) To be happy, follow the advice of the Buddha, to avoid all evil, do good and purify the mind.
- e) Keep the precepts, train the mind to be aware, understand what *constitute the 3 evil roots* which condition the *wrong thoughts* and understand *what constitute right views and right thoughts*. All these have to be understood before one can put it into practice.
- f) *Silent the mind* to develop **heedfulness** to observe and **awaken to the truth** via the **daily mindfulness**. As long as this is not done, the thoughts will keep on arising and make one **heedless** in the midst of life.
- g) *Relax into every moment* and into *every mind state that arises*. *Silent the mind* and stay with whatever that arises and **relax into it to cultivate the silent mind**.
- h) Find out what happens to the emotions (maybe anger or fear, etc.) that have arisen. The very flowering of thought is the ending of thought. The mind returns to its original state when no energy is given to the emotion that has arisen. This will enable you to understand **why the emotion is not you** because it is condition arising hence impermanent and not real.
- i) Listening attentively is very important then writes down the key points to have a deeper understanding of what has been taught. Then only put it into practice.
- j) When **one's mindfulness is sensitive**, the **slightest movement of the mind can be felt**. This is how **mindfulness frees** the mind.
- k) Use the five ways taught by the Buddha **to abandon** the unwholesome thought.
- l) Without the stability of daily mindfulness, one cannot see things as they are. The daily mindfulness will culminate into an ever mindful state leading to heedfulness.
- m) Sister Keat Hoon said she is still seeking. Then Bro Teoh quotes this J. Krishnamurti's quote to her: 'what happens if the seeker is the seek?' That is '*Mindfulness is seeking the true mind*'.
- n) With sati and samadhi, you can see things as they are.
- o) The mundane mind is thought hence it cannot realize that which is beyond thought and the mundane mind.
- p) Your thought is never your good friend if you lack wisdom. It is always there to deceive you.

(Note: The above draft was prepared by Puan Chee.)