

(英文)[認理歸真]15~受得苦中苦方為人上人

## 15) Bitterness Creates Buddhahood

Tao cultivation is initially resting on the pivot of sorrow and bitterness. It is neither totally pessimistic nor totally optimistic, but on the contrary, it teaches a truth, the great truth of Tao that is able to put an end to the temporary bitterness once and for all.

Ordinarily, the enjoyment of sensual pleasures is the highest and only happiness of the average man. The hearts of the world are captive of a happy and splendid life. What they detest most is hardship. So, they struggle and compete amongst themselves for wealth, fame to ease their materialistic heart. But such happiness is illusive and temporary. Even the richest man has his own sorrows. Nobody can escape from world bitterness and sufferings except through Tao. Take an example of a rich man's son who had never taste hardship since the day he was born. Spoilt and pampered, he indulged himself in pleasure entertainment. Soon the time came when he had spent all his money. His friends were no more his friends. They deserted him one by one. His happiness disappeared in a flash of light. Now he is left with unbearable sorrows. Another example of powerful personality such as the kings and ministers are also no guarantee to lasting happiness. An act of coup-de-tat or an assassination attempt may finish them off. Any immoral or corrupted case may leave behind bad names. In other words, the higher one climbs, the heavier he falls. So, what happiness does man has?

We should realise that wealth and fame is not everlasting. Real happiness is found in our own hands. It is not defined in terms of wealth, honour or fame. If such possessions are taken forcibly or unjustly obtained, they will be a source of pain and sorrow to the possessors. Instead of trying to rationalise suffering, one must take suffering for granted and seeks the cause to eradicate it.

Examples of such seeking and eradication are Shakyamuni Buddha, Goddess of Mercy, Confucius and Sheng Kwang Buddha.

Shakyamuni Buddha was brought up in the lap of luxury, but his contemplative nature and boundless compassion did not permit him to enjoy the fleeting material pleasures of a royal household. He knew no woes, but he felt a deep pity for sorrowing humanity. Amidst comfort and prosperity, he realised the universality of sorrow. The palace with all its worldly amusements, was no longer a congenial place for the compassionate prince. Realising the sanity of sensual pleasures in his twenty-ninth year, he renounced all worldly pleasures and donning the simple yellow garb of an ascetic, alone, penniless, wandered for in search of Truth and Peace. It was an unprecedented historic renunciation; for he renounced not in his old age but in the prime of manhood, not in poverty but in plenty. He made a superhuman effort for six long years, avoiding the two extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification. The former retards one's spiritual progress, and the latter weakness one's intellect. At the age of thirty-five, he eradicated all defilements, purified himself, and realising things as they truly are, attained enlightenment.

Goddess of Mercy is another example of renunciations and seeking the course of salvation for mankind. Born a princess, she also seeks the course to the people's suffering. One day, while in the palace garden, "Tar Mor" Buddha approached and taught her the art of Tao cultivation which she followed accordingly. She suffered much bitterness under the tests of her father, the Emperor. Ten years later, she also reached the state of perfection and became a Buddha.

In Tao cultivation, one is taught about what is suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path leading to the cessation of suffering. It prevents a person from being materialistic and it also prevents a person from being thrown into sand despair if he happens to meet with repeated failures and disappointment in his life. The believers in the law of Karma which state that good effects are produced by good actions and evil actions bring about evil results; gives one the strength of will and energy in counteracting the evil influences of vice with the good influence of virtue. Through firm heart and patient, a day will come when the result will bear fruits and he will enjoy the consequent fruitions of what he has done.

A person on reaching the state of perfection, a notice shall be sent down to inform him of the successful news. At the end of 'white stage' there will be a grand gathering called 'Long Wah Tai Hue' where all purified souls shall celebrate together with our Heavenly Mother of the fruitions done and one is able to enjoy blissful eternity.