

【文薈篇】 海外來鴻



I-Kuan Tao

A Modern Way Of Spiritual Awakening (II)

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Reality Of Life

LIFE IS TRANSITORY

Are you satisfied if you would live up to 80 years old? It's a difficult question to answer, isn't it? The answer could be if my life is enjoyable, I certainly would like to live as long as I can. Then the question becomes "How long?" Though not knowing how long, we do understand that one day in the future will be the last day of our biological life. It's a matter of "when", not "if". We all assume that tomorrow will always come, one day it won't. More than a quarter of a million people die every day. The reality is that our biological life is transitory and we have absolutely no control of when it would come to its natural end.

In various stages of our life we are often confronted by an unknown inner quest to define ourselves and our world. Why we are here? What would be the life before we were born or after our death? It seems that life is a journey to unknown, and we do not know how it will proceed and where it will take us. In the Gospel of Thomas, Jesus said: "I will reveal to you what no eye can see, what no ear can hear, what no hand can touch, what no human mind can conceive." Apparently Jesus was revealing

his disciples that they possessed some type of essence which was beyond human life. Taoist philosophy teaches: *"Life is only a temporary visit to this world, and death is only a temporary withdrawal. When beings return to formlessness at death, they retain reality without place and duration without time. This is the nature of Tao – the cosmic Oneness."* (Taoist Wisdom, Timothy Freke) In reality, every biological life is indeed the transient part of our spiritual life.

UNCONTROLLABLE LIFE

Do you have control over where and which family you wanted to be born? Can you avoid ailment that accompanies with the age? Can you evade being sick in your life? Can you remain fairly balanced when confronting bereavement? If we continue to expand the list of uncontrollable situations and explore the adverse situations we have to confront, most of us would very likely run into an abysmal mood. Through different stages of life, countless things would happen around us with unknown reasons. We can often bump into an unexpected circumstance where we have no control of it. *"Separate individuals are like passing waves on the vast sea of Tao. They rise and fall, appearing to have autonomous existence for a moment, and then returning to the Oneness. But everywhere and forever in reality there is only the ocean."* (Taoist Wisdom Timothy Freke) The Great One controls and we, as separate identities, are only transitory manifestations of this Great One. Why then do we care so much about trivia that happen around us? Are we chasing illusion and uncertainty with ignorant confidence? Do we know how much we can handle both in favorable and unfavorable circumstance? Lao Tzu made this comment: *"Both favour and disgrace imposed to us startle us. Favour when bestowed serves to worry us as much as when withdrawn."* The reason behind is the fear of uncertainty in life. When we are trying to grasp something that we have little or no control, the worry arises. The more we want, the intenser we dread.

KARMIC LAW

Buddhist philosophy teaches that the quality of our current life depends on how

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we acted in our previous life. Our future encountering is the product of our present actions. Nothing and no one can force us into the circumstance that we are now confronting or will confront. It is our deeds that form the trap. "As you sow, so shall you reap." **Karma** is the terminology used by the Buddhists, meaning the force produced by a person's actions in one of their lives which influences what happens to them in their future lives. We are bound by our karma and will continue to move within our karmic bondage until the time we look for and embrace actions for spiritual awakening. Our joy of life relies on how we free our karmic bondage to become true liberated persons. The ultimate meaning of life serves nothing but spiritual awakening.

Teaching Of I-Kuan Tao

All the great masters, both ancient and contemporary, teach two types of teaching. The teachings that are brought up in public for everyone regardless readiness, perceptiveness, and intelligence of the truth-seekers is meant to bring all the seekers with better understanding and to inspire them for their spiritual path. This type of the teachings are called **Equitable Teachings** or **Exoteric Teachings**. When the truth-seekers have undergone vigorous spiritual cultivation and are spiritually purified, intellectually ready, and committed to their spiritual life, the **Ultimate Teaching** or **Esoteric Teachings**, which is not taught in public, is then secretly unveiled to the seekers. Once taught, the truth-seekers might become enlightened instantaneously. The Ultimate Teaching is the most extreme grace from the masters to their disciples.

Though differing in languages and age, the great masters like Lao Tzu, Confucius, and Buddha Gautama all held the same lineage and revealed the same Ultimate Teaching to their disciples. This esoteric teaching is so powerful which had never been found and will never be written in any of the sutras or sacred scripts. When it is revealed to the truth-seekers, the experience is both wordless and stricken, instant and everlasting, simple and rejoicing.

(To be continued)

