

Some Thoughts on the Cultivation of Tao I

By Henry Chang
Translator: PC Chen
Editor: Kenneth Howell

An analogy has been suggested that a practitioner of Tao is like water, whose destiny is to be in unity with the ocean. The distance between the water and the ocean is like karma. A person with great virtues is like water with a great volume that can easily find its own way to the ocean, such as a river. If the water has only a small volume, then it needs to find an appropriate channel or water pipe to get to the ocean. Otherwise, the Earth will quickly absorb it or it will evaporate, and thus it will never reach the ocean. In this analogy, the appropriate channel is the so-called Dharma Gate, which is an environment for Tao cultivation. One's attitude is like the level of the water. The higher the water level is; the easier it is for the water to reach and unite with the ocean; similarly, the more people cultivate Tao, the easier it is for people to find their true self and unite with the great Tao.

Listening to Tao's lectures can bring you only knowledge of Tao. Adversities in life can truly make you apply Tao. Only when you start to apply Tao, can you truly understand Tao. After you understand Tao, you will gain wisdom. With wisdom, you can act correctly and quickly in order to advocate Tao.

Before knowing Tao, one has to rely on material entities to understand Tao in the abstract.

Knowing Tao is knowing the One and the whole.

Though there are millions of different material entities, they all share the same One.

After knowing Tao, if one does not attach oneself to or deny material entities, then one successfully breaks the attachment to images and appearances.



After knowing Tao, one can eliminate distinction, goodness or badness, comparison, likeness or unlikeness, and one can act according to one's True Self. Prior to reaching this point of awakening, one still has to rely on language, literature, science, philosophy, etc. to learn about Tao.

One needs to cultivate virtues and to achieve accomplishments in order to gain opportunities and a good environment to learn about Tao.

Pursuing Tao can increase the opportunities to listen to the Truth and witness the Truth. More than pursuing one's own salvation through Tao, one needs to ask others to share the benefits of Tao.

A cell in the body has its own living space and function; however, its activities may not violate the functionality of the whole body. As long as the body follows Tao, it can evolve into a more advanced cell in the body.

Emptiness can be understood as a state when a baby is still in a mother's womb: in that state, the baby and the mother are One. If one eradicates greed, jealousy, and dullness, then one can enter the state of emptiness and be in harmony with the whole.

The cultivation of Tao depends upon the realization that Tao comes in the following order: Human Tao (individual), Great Tao (group), and Heavenly Tao (wholeness). When Heavenly Tao and Human Tao are united in One, there will be no distinction between self and others. If it is good for oneself, it should be also good for others. If it is beneficial to others, then one will also benefit from it. One and others are in the same boat and share the same glory or dismay, and there will no longer be images of self, others, people in need, and people in longevity.

