

「有」的基本要義、 佛教與念佛

Existence's Fundamental Issue, Buddhism, and Buddha-Recitation

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What is Existence?

Existence, as most people know it, consists of our world of living and non-living things. Living things refer to plants, animals, and human beings, which have the characteristics of life like birth, ageing, sickness, and death. Non-living things are all the other things like air, water, fire, and earth, which do not have those characteristics of life. Buddhism classifies (1) the plants as non-sentient beings, and (2) animals and human beings as sentient beings. They have feelings, perception, mental activity, and consciousness, while the non-sentient beings do not.

Common Questions about Existence.

There are several questions or issues related to the existence of a sentient being, especially a human being, which are of interest to people at one time or another, as follows :

(1) Why birth? (2) Why death? (3) Who or what controls a person's birth and death? (4) What happens upon a person's death? (5) What is the fundamental issue about existence? (6) What can we do about this issue? (7) What is the best way to deal with it?

World Religions' Teachings about Birth and Death, What Happens in Death, and Who or What Controls Birth and Death?

All the world religions have their own teachings about existence and the birth and death of a human being. Basically, all of these teachings can be classified into three categories, namely, (1) Eternalism, (2) Nihilism, and (3) the Middle Way or Impermanence. Both Eternalism and Nihilism are non-Buddhist teachings, while only the Middle Way or Impermanence is the Buddhist teaching.

什麼是有

「有」，就如眾人所知，包括有生和無生。有生如植物、動物和人類，其有生命的特徵，例如生、老、病、死等。無生係指其他，例如地、水、火和風，並不具有生命的特徵。佛教區分(一)植物為無情眾生，和(二)動物和人類為有情眾生，因為具有情感，知覺，腦力活動和意識，而無情眾生則無。

關於「有」的一般問題

有時候人們對有些事，尤其是特別對於人類的「有」——這一種覺知有一些問題，為何生？為何死？生和死的主宰者/因由？人死的時候會發生什麼事？「有」的基本意義是什麼？我們能做些什麼？什麼是最好的處理方法？

世界宗教有關生死的教法，死的時候會發生什麼事，以及什麼是控制生和死的主宰和主因

世界上所有的宗教都有自己關於人類生死的公案和教育。基本上，所有這些教義可以分成三類：永恆、虛無和中道或是無常。永恆和虛無並非佛教的教法，佛教的教法是中道或是無常。

Buddhism Teaches the Middle Way Principle or Impermanence.

This principle states that a person's existence originated in the beginningless time in the distant past, due to his own ignorance, attachment, and karma (volitional action). Since then, he has undergone innumerable cycles of birth and death, in accordance with the impersonal and impartial law of karma or cause and effect, which governs his birth and death in each lifetime. That is, he reaps what he sows by undergoing birth and death.

If he does wholesome or virtuous deeds in a lifetime, he will be reborn in a wholesome realm in the next life. However, by doing unwholesome or evil deeds when he is alive, he will be reborn in an unwholesome realm upon his death. He may be reborn in the same realm again or in another realm after each lifetime, depending on the karma maturing, his final deeds, or thoughts at the time of dying. This will continue indefinitely into the future until he has learned how to end his rebirth by cultivating his mind with the Buddhadharmā.

So, there is a past, a present, and a future life in the person's existence, and he has a certain measure of control over his destiny in each lifetime as a human as he can think and use his inherent wisdom to cultivate his mind. Each lifetime has its own lifespan, and it is temporary, and impermanent. Every birth is followed by death, and death is followed by another birth.

This is a brief description of the Buddhist middle way principle or Impermanence which provides everyone an equal opportunity for liberation from birth and death. This principle is clearly explained by the Buddha as the Twelve Links of Dependent Origination or Causation which a Buddhist must study.

佛教教法的中道或無常觀

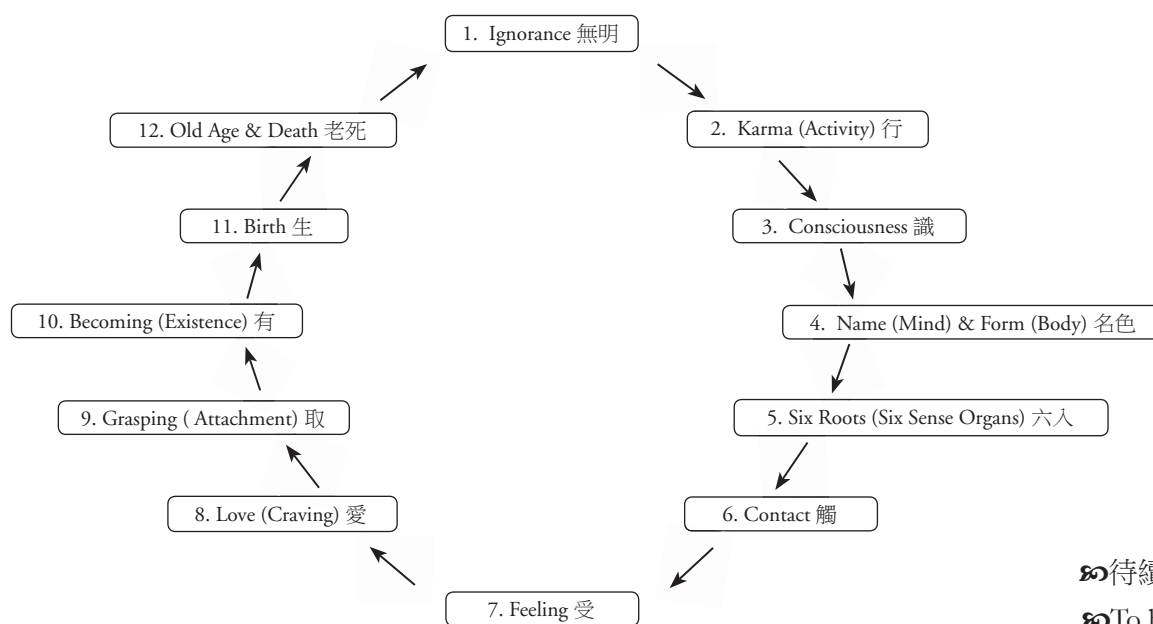
這個原則敘述人類的存在，在時間上來說是源自於「無始」遙遠的過去，因為自身的無明，由意的行為造成執著和業障。然後開始無盡的生死輪迴，依據「業」或因果無私的定律，決定他在每一生的生和死；亦即是他因過去所種的因而得生死的果。

如果他在世時有好的行為或是德行，來生會出生在善界。如果他在世時做了惡行，死後就會投生到惡界。依據業報成熟、或是他的行為，或臨終時的意念，他可能在同一個界重生或是出生到另一個界。這樣的生死輪迴會一直延續，直到他知道如何以佛法來修行，才能停止。

因此一個人的存在，包含過去、現在和未來的生命，他可以有一定的辦法，在每一生的人身中控制自己的命運，和使用傳承的智慧來修行。每一生有其一定的時程，而且是暫時無常的。每一生都會有死，死後還會再生，輪迴不斷。

這是簡單介紹佛教中道的理論或是無常觀，給每一個眾生有平等的機會從生死輪迴得到解脫。這個原理在佛陀教導十二因緣中說得很清楚，是每個佛教徒都要學習的。

Diagram of the 12 Links of Conditioned Arising 十二因緣圖:



待續

To be continued