

參話頭

INVESTIGATING HUATOU [THE MEDITATION TOPIC]

宣化上人1972年底冬季禪七開示 Instructional Talks by Venerable Master Hua during the winter Chan session in 1972



DHARMA TALK DHARMA RAIN | 法語法雨

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我們現在是打禪七，這個禪七最要緊的就是專一，你這個身、心、意都要專一。身，在這兒行就是行，坐就是坐，臥就是臥，一行一坐一臥都要守著這規矩。心，不打妄想，那麼能心念專一。心念專一，那個意也要專一。意，沒有貪心，沒有瞋心，沒有癡心，就一心參這個「念佛是誰」。

這個「參」字，就好像用一個錐子扎窟窿一樣。扎窟窿，用這個錐子鑽這窟窿，鑽、鑽，把這個木頭鑽透了；鑽透了，看到那邊去了，通了，

Now we're in the chan session. The primary aim of a chan session is to concentrate and to unite body and mind. The body must follow the rules when walking, standing, sitting, and reclining. The mind must not fantasize, so the mind and thought are all concentrated. Further, the consciousness is also concentrating without thoughts of greed, hatred, or stupidity. You must single-mindedly investigate, "Who is mindful of the Buddha?"

This investigation is like drilling a hole through a piece of wood with an awl; drilling and drilling until the hole passes through the wood and shows the other side. This penetrating through is called

這就叫開悟了。沒有通之前，這只是做這個通的功夫；沒有開悟之前，我們現在參這個「念佛是誰」，這也只是做這個開悟的功夫。現在只是做功夫的期間，在做功夫的期間，你不要說：「哦！我鑽不透這個窟窿」，就不鑽了。那你不鑽，它就不透。你要今天鑽這個窟窿，明天鑽這個窟窿，後天鑽這個窟窿，鑽來鑽去，你功夫到了，時間久了，那麼就通了。通了就是開悟了，就是你不明白的明白了，你不懂的懂了。

那麼這個功夫就好像什麼呢？「如貓撲鼠」，貓在那個老鼠洞的旁邊那兒，等著那個老鼠，看老鼠若出來，一爪上去就把這個老鼠給捉住了。你參「念佛是誰」，也就像貓撲這個老鼠。什麼是老鼠？你那個妄想就是個老鼠。什麼是貓？這「念佛是誰」就是個貓。這個貓就等老鼠，這是個比喻。

「如龍養珠」，又好像那個龍保護牠那個龍珠一樣。這個龍保護牠的龍珠，牠是念茲在茲的，時刻都不離這個珠，保護牠這個珠。

「如雞孵卵」；又好像這個雞想菴小雞子。牠在那兒就想了，想什麼呢？想：「我這個雞仔子就要生出來了。」所以牠在那個雞蛋上趴著，趴著就想：「啊！就快了，就快了，就快有雞仔子生出來了。」所以在這兒，哦！天天想牠這個雞仔子，想來想去，「卵以想成」，哦！就想成了，這個雞仔子就出來了，雞雛就生出來。這個雞雛生出來了，那麼牠成功了。

我們參禪呢？也像這樣子，也就像那個老母雞在那兒菴雞仔子、菴雞雛一樣。母雞在那個雞蛋上面，熱得不得了，熱得牠呵呵氣喘，

enlightenment. Prior to penetrating, there is the daily work of drilling. Prior to enlightenment, our investigation of "Who is mindful of the Buddha?" is the work to enlightenment. Now is the period of hard work, in which you don't say, "Oh, I cannot go through the hole," and then give up. If you don't drill, the hole won't penetrate through. You must keep drilling the hole today, tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, and day after day until your skill is perfect, and until the time is long enough to penetrate through. When our investigation penetrates, it's called enlightenment; everything which has not yet been understood will become clear.

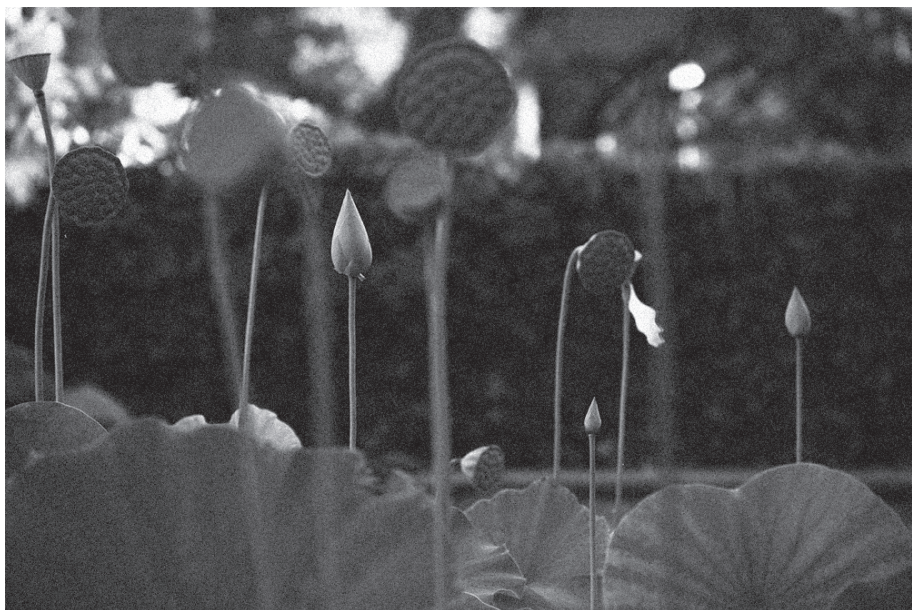
What would be the investigation skill? It's like "a cat stalking a mouse." The cat is waiting for the mouse by the side of the hole; the moment the mouse appears, the cat catches the mouse immediately with his paw. When you're investigating "Who is mindful of the Buddha?" it is like the cat stalking a mouse. Who is the mouse? The mouse is like one's false thoughts. And who is the cat? "Who is mindful of the Buddha" is like the cat. The cat is waiting the mouse; this is an analogy.

Investigation is also like "a dragon guarding its pearl." Always attentive to and protect just his pearl, the dragon never strays from his gem.

Again, investigation is like "a hen brooding over her eggs," in which the hen is thinking. What does she think? She thinks, "my baby chicks are going to be born." So the hen sits on the eggs and thinks, "Ah! It's almost there. My baby chicks are coming soon." She thinks about them day in and day out, until they finally hatch. [As the Sutra says,] "The eggs are hatched by thinking." The chicks are out and the hen succeeds.

Our investigation of dhyana, in the same way, is like the hen brooding over her eggs. The hen is so hot sitting on the eggs. Even she is wheezing she won't leave the eggs; she is conscientious to let the chicks out. The principle is the same during our investigation of dhyana here. Sometimes it's





背景荷葉攝影小歡提供

Background Photos of Lotus courtesy of Xiaohuan

啊！牠也捨不得離開，一定要把雞拖出來才算。我們這個參禪呢，和這是一樣的道理。在這兒有的時候熱得不得了，有的時候又冷得不得了，但是總要參這個——參禪。白天參，晚間參，時時刻刻地都參悟這個「念佛是誰」。

這個參禪的法門用的話頭有很多，有的參悟「如何是父母未生以前的本來面目？」參這個本來面目。還有參這個「無」字的。無，什麼都能沒有，什麼都是無，那麼什麼又是「有」呢？參這個「無」和「有」。有的參「怎麼樣是沒有了的？」世界上的東西都是成住壞空，什麼是不被這個成住壞空所轉的？參這個。

有的又參「狗子有佛性否？」那狗有沒有佛性，這也是一個話頭。有的又參那個乾屎橛子；什麼叫乾屎橛子，懂不懂？就是人那個大便乾了，叫乾屎橛，參那個東西。你聽得是很好笑的，但是你參悟起來很有味道的。並不是臭味，你不要笑，因為它乾了，沒有味了。那麼有種種的話頭，但是你用哪一個相應，你就用哪一個。

由清朝到現在，多數人是參悟這個「念佛是誰」，參悟這個「誰」字。要緊就是「誰」，誰？你不知道是誰；若知道了，那就是開悟了。就要知道這個是誰念佛，你若說：「哦！我念佛嘛！」你？若是你念佛，你死了，用一把火把你燒沒有了，

too hot, and sometimes it's just too cold; however, we must investigate the chan continually. We investigate through the day and the night. In every moment, we absolutely must get through to "Who is mindful of the Buddha?"

There are many topics which may be used to investigate dhyana. "Who was I before my parents bore me?" is one to ponder the origin before birth. Some people investigate "wu無" (not; nothing). Everything can become nothing; everything is "wu." Then what is "you有" (existence; substance)? So, one can investigate "wu" and "you." Some investigate "What does it mean nothing?" All things in the world follow the sequence of production, dwelling, decay, and extinction. "What in the world is not subject to production, dwelling, decay, and extinction?" is a topic for investigation, too.

Some people investigate "Does a dog have a Buddha-nature or not?" A dog and the Buddha nature become a topic. "Dried turd" is another topic. What is "Dried turd?" Do you know? It's human's dried excrement. Ponder that one. It sounds ridiculous, however, if you can investigate it, you'll come up with something that has a lot of "flavor" to it! Don't laugh; it's not stinking, because it's already dried out and has no odor! Therefore, there are various topics; whichever topic you respond to is the best one for you.

From the Qing Dynasty on, the topic most frequently used has been "Who is mindful of the Buddha?" The word "Who?" is most important, since



你又到哪兒去了？若是你念佛，你不應該死。死了，怎麼用火燒了又沒有了？這是個無常。所以要參這個「念佛是誰」。這是參禪的功夫，這功夫有淺有深。你初參禪的人，功夫沒有上路，就是不會參禪，那麼不覺得怎麼樣；你若參到水窮山盡了，水也沒有了，山也沒有了，然後柳暗花明又一村。

山窮水盡疑無路 柳暗花明又一村

「山窮水盡疑無路」，山也沒有了，水也窮盡了，懷疑沒有路可走了，就是這兒了。

「柳暗花明又一村」，又別有天地，另外有一個境界。另外有一個境界，這是你得到這種輕安的境界。

還有，你參禪用功用到極點了，這時候覺得身心自在，身心清涼，身心快樂，哦！再沒有那麼快樂了。說喝酒快樂了嗎？比喝酒更快樂。說吃好東西快樂嗎？比吃好東西更快樂，簡直就沒有可比的這種快樂。

現在在香港我們這個孟比丘，他得到少少的這麼一點境界，可是這種境界要繼續的，不可間斷。也不可以想叫它長快一點，也不可以說叫它不長，「勿忘勿助」，你也不要忘了它，還不要幫助它，就是參禪的功夫。你不要忘了

no one knows who is mindful of the Buddha. If you know, you are enlightened. The aim is to realize “who” is mindful of the Buddha.

“But the one mindful of the Buddha is just me!” you may say. If it’s you, when you die and have been cremated to ashes, where have you gone? If it’s “you” who are mindful of the Buddha, then you should not die. Why do you die and disappear after cremation? That’s impermanence. Therefore, one needs to find [the “you” of your self-nature,] who is mindful of the Buddha [and who does not die.] This is the spiritual skills of investigating dhyana, in which the skills may be basic or advanced. The beginners, without in-track skills, do not really know the practice of chan, and hence do not feel its specialty. When your investigation reaches the point as travelling to where the mountains and the rivers end, there is no more river [track] and no more mountain [path], however, a village with dark willows and bright flowers appears in front.

*When the mountains and the rivers end,
a doubt arises that there’s no way at all;
Well, beyond the dark willows
and bright flowers is another village.*

“When the mountains and the rivers end, a doubt arises that there’s no way at all.” There are no more mountains to pass, the river is ending, and you doubt that there’s a way at all; this is where you are now.

“Well, beyond the dark willows and the bright flowers is another village.” Although you



它，也不要幫助它，我常常給你們講那個比喻，不要像以前列國時期宋國那個人的樣子。

宋國的人怎麼樣呢？他種上了田，就覺得他這個田長得不快，他很痛心的，說：「人家那個地都長得那麼快，我種這個田，怎麼長得這麼慢呢？」啊！於是乎他就動腦筋了，白天也想，晚間也想：「怎麼樣能幫助這個苗長快一點呢？」想來想去，都是想出：「唉！沒有旁的辦法，只可以我幫著它長囉！」幫著這個苗來長，怎麼幫著長呢？譬如這個苗有三寸高，他到那兒在土裏一拔，拔出來兩寸，就五寸高了。連那個根哪，把這個苗本來三寸高，現在長了四寸了，長高一點了。他所種的苗，他就幫著這個苗往上長長長；長了一天，把這個苗都長高了一寸、兩寸的，就回家去了。

回家他就說了，說：「今日病矣！」他說今天我太辛苦了，我辛苦得太厲害了。「予助苗長矣」，說我幫著這個苗都長高了，所以累得我，上這個炕甚至於都要拉著這個貓尾巴才上得了炕。怎麼樣呢？就因為沒有力量上床了，所以這個貓往床上這麼一鑽，他拉著這個貓尾巴，跟著就上床了。這叫「拉著貓尾巴上床」。

他說他辛苦得這樣子，那麼他兒子一聽，高興得不得了，「我這個父親怎麼這麼大的本事，他在什麼地方學來的這個科學的方法，能幫著這個苗長高了？這一定是有一種機器的作用。」於是乎就趨而往視之。「其子趨而往視之」，趨就是跑得很快，到那個田裏去看看怎麼樣子，他父親用什麼科學方法來幫助這個苗長

felt there was no way, there is yet another world, another state—you then reach the state of light and peace.

Those who can investigate chan to the ultimate point can experience the ease, calm, and bliss of both body and mind—a bliss which is incomparable. It's even more blissful than drinking alcoholic beverage or eating delicious food which is considered as a bliss by people. Nothing can compare to it.

Bhikshu Meng of our Way Place, who is in Hong Kong now, got a little of such [blissful] state. However, he should continue this state and not let it stop; in the meantime, neither thinking to make it grow faster, nor letting it stop. "Neither forget nor force it" This is the skill of investigating chan: one must neither forget the work nor force it, a point which is well illustrated in the following story told in the Warring States Period (around BC 320).

There was a man from Song Kingdom who noticed that the sprouts in his fields were growing very slowly. He said with grief, "Why do the sprouts in others' fields grow quickly, and mine are so slow?" He thought day and night, determined to think of a solution. "How do I help the sprouts grow faster?" He thought over and over until he finally got an idea: "Alas! There is no other way; only I can help them grow." So, how did he help the sprouts grow? For example, if the sprout is 3 inch high, he pulled it from the ground straight up two inches higher; the total height now is 5 inches. The sprout was 3 inches high; now grows to 4 inches including the roots, it does look higher. In one full day he pulled each sprout straight up an inch or two higher than it had been.

When he returned home, he said to his family, "I'm exhausted today!" He said that he worked really hard today. "I helped my sprouts grow." He said he helped the sprouts grow up, and was too tired to be on the raised bed if without pulling the cat's tail. What happens? He didn't have the strength to climb into bed so when the cat jumped onto the bed, he held onto the cat's





Meditation Hall

的呢？「苗則槁矣」，到那兒一看，那個苗都乾了，不單沒長，都死了。這是宋國的人呢，就這麼聰明，做的這個科學的方法，但是行不通。

我們修道也是這樣子，你不要學種田的這個宋國的智慧人。我們可以叫他智慧人，不要叫他愚癡人。

妙在「勿助」，你要不忘了它，還不要幫助它。又有一句話說：「毋欲速，欲速則不達。」你不要想快，不要像那個果逸似的，在這兩年，說：「我兩年還沒有成佛呢！這有什麼用啊？」她說兩年還沒有開悟、沒有成佛，一點好處沒得到。那麼妳在家裏十多年、二十多年，妳得到什麼好處來著？妳開了個什麼悟？所以「毋欲速」，你不要想快。「欲速則不達」，你願意快就不能到那個地方，達不到目的。

「毋見小利，見小利則大事不成。」你不要貪圖小利，人家給你一塊豆腐，說：「我送給你一塊豆腐。」哦！你又叩頭又鞠躬的，說：「啊！多謝、多謝。Thank you very much! Thank you very much!」你又叩頭又作揖的，本來那一個人想給你一塊金子，他一看：給你一塊豆腐，你就這麼知足了，這個金子你一定受不了，啊！不要給了。所以呀，你不要見小利，見小利則大事不成啊！

tail and followed it up. This is called “go to bed by holding the cat’s tail.”

While he was talking about his hard work, his son was really excited, “My father is so capable, and where did he learn this scientific method to help the sprouts grow? There must be some mechanical functions.” So, his son ran to the field to check. His son, wondering what new scientific method his father had used to help the sprouts grow, went to the fields only to find that all the sprouts had withered and died. This is a such “smart” person of the Song Kingdom, with such a scientific method, but it didn’t work.

Cultivation of the Way is similar. You should not be like this wise man of Song. We can called him a “wise man”; don’t call him “stupid.”

The wonderful element of your cultivation is that you neither relax your cultivation nor force it. An ancient had said, “Don’t try to go too fast or you won’t reach your aim.” You don’t try to be fast; don’t be like Guoyi [one of my disciples] who, after two years here [of cultivation], she said, “It’s been two years, and I haven’t become a Buddha. What’s the use [of staying here]?” She said two years has passed and she has not been enlightened or become a Buddha; there is no benefit at all. [I asked her,] “You lived at home for more than ten years, or twenty plus years. What advantage did you gain in all that time? What kind of enlightenment did you get?” So, “wu yu shu 毋欲速,” don’t be in a haste. “yu shu ze bu dz 欲速則不達.” One who is in a rush cannot achieve his goal.

“Don’t be satisfied with small gains or you will never accomplish great works.” You don’t seek for small gains; Someone offers you a piece of tofu and said, “Here is a tofu for you.” You bow again and again saying, “Thank you very much! Thank you very much!” You bow some more with hands folded. In that person’s mind he would like to offer you gold, but seeing you so contented with a piece of tofu, he figures you won’t be able to bear the offering of gold, he withdraws. So, don’t be satisfied with small gains or you will never accomplish great works.