

If You Hold the Eye's Opinion, You Get Eye Suffering

Zen Master Dae Bong on Sutra Study and Zen

Excerpt from a dharma talk during Winter Kyol Che 2014–2015 at Mu Sang Sa Temple

Student: How do I make Buddhist studies balance with my practice? Could it become a hindrance, if I am going to prepare to go to school?

Zen Master Dae Bong: When you are studying, just study. That's all. The sutras are written to be meditation. That's why they are chanted. If you are paying attention, they become meditation themselves.

I don't read the sutras often, but for example, the sutras read something like this:

"If you hold the eye's opinion, you get eye suffering. If you hold the ear's opinion, you get ear suffering. If you hold the nose's opinion, you get nose suffering. If you hold the mouth's opinion, you get mouth suffering. If you hold the body's opinion, you get body suffering. If you hold the mind's opinion, you get mind suffering. If you put down the eye's opinion, then correct eye appears. If you put down the ear's opinion, then the correct ear appears."

That is how Buddha teaches. If you were to study classical Western music from Mozart or Beethoven, they come up with an interesting theme, a melody. Then they repeat it three or four times. Then they make variations on it. Then they repeat it again, and then finish. Back then, nobody had a tape recorder, nobody had an iPod, so maybe they were never going to hear it again. So the composers repeat it, repeat it, repeat it, do some interesting variations and repeat it, repeat it, repeat it. Then it's in your consciousness. You don't think about other things.

You become one with the music.

It is the same with the sutras. When I started reading the sutras, I was amazed. There are six sense realms. So Buddha teaches about each one. Then he changes something, and teaches about each one. Then he changes again, and teaches about each one. After a while, you are on a ride somewhere, and it's not where your desire, anger and ignorance mind takes you. It's taking you into "clear," a clear view of the universe. This clear view is already the path to enlightenment, the road to enlightenment. So when you are reading, just read. Look at it as music and pay attention. Just do it. Otherwise, as Zen Master Seung Sahn used to say, "The book is reading you." That's all. You don't need to think about it. That is why the sutras are chanted over and over.

We chant the Heart Sutra in Korean and English every day, every day, every day, and I have done it now for 38 years, twice a day. But still sometimes when we are chanting the Heart Sutra, I feel, "Wow! What the sutra says is amazing." It's so much better than some crap on television about somebody and somebody else. So you are lucky: instead of watching soap operas and gossiping with your friends about your relationships, you are reading the sutras over and over and over again! You don't need to think about it. Then it will start to hit you if you pay attention, OK? Then you add that to correct bowing, chanting and sitting, and *Boom!* Get enlightenment. OK? So don't spend a lot of time thinking in school. Just do it. ♦

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Kyol Che Is Three Great Things

Zen Master Dae Bong

Excerpt from the Hae Jae dharma talk at Mu Sang Sa Temple, Winter Kyol Che 2013–2014

Zen Master Seung Sahn always taught that Kyol Che is three things. First, Kyol Che is a dry cleaning machine. Our brain and body are the number-one best computer in the world but they have lots of dust. Desire, anger and ignorance dust; also many opinions dust. So during retreat we only go straight don't know. We use this "don't-know"

soap, put down our opinions, desire, anger and ignorance, only follow the situation together and keep a big question, just don't-know mind. Then this don't-know soap is cleaning, cleaning, cleaning our consciousness. After Kyol Che our consciousness is much cleaner. We can keep the correct situation, correct function and correct relationship

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