

Blessing

IBDSCL, Dec. 16th, 17th, 2017, by Nancy Yu

Good morning everyone! The subject today is “Blessing”. I call it blessing just to make things simple. What is blessing? Blessing in Chinese is “福报”, in English is meritorious reward. In other words, I would say that it is good karma retribution.

Our teacher said there are 84,000 kinds of roots for people. Good root and wisdom root are two kinds that we often talk about. There are still countless other roots that people cannot say the names.

If there are 84,000 roots for people, there would be 84,000 kinds of blessings for people too. No matter how many kinds, in fact, they are only ways to describe root and blessing of a person. Everyone has root and blessing of his or her own. One's root and blessing are not plurals. When we say this root, that root, this blessing, that blessing, we are just trying to describe root and blessing from different aspects.

Everyone has different blessing, but every person's blessing is not perfect, which is the reason why people are not satisfied, not content and not happy.

Jinghui says, “It would be great if I could drive and speak English.”

Marshall says, “It would be great if my earning doubles.”

Mingzhen says, “It would great if I could stay in US.”

Lucy says, “It would be great if I have money and speak English.”

Lewis says, “It would be great if I could stay with the teacher every day.”

Sam says, “It would be great if I have a long-term visa.”

Nancy says, “It would be great if I have a free heart and know everything.”

What is blessing? The ancient people said there are five kinds of blessing. The first one is long life; The second one is wealth and honor; The third one is health and peace; The forth one is good virtue; and the fifth one is good-ending. If one gets all these five kinds of blessing, then his or her life is in the healthiest state.

The long-life blessing is how long you can live. To live a long life, one should have a nondestructive heart. Be nondestructive to your own life and other beings. Eat food that is nondestructive to the nature. Some people is greedy of eating and eat everything they like, and this is the reason for Sars, mad cow disease, bird flu, and so on. The prime blessing is a healthy body. To have a healthy body, one should have healthy diet and diet that is considerate to the society and environment.

Blessing of wealth means one is rich and one can obtain materials needed through hard work. Honor means noble character. Some people might be rich, but might not be honorable. If all people dislike one person, then there is no honor no matter how rich he is. If he is respected by people and he can lead the public and can affect people, then he is a noble person. A rich and honorable person should also be able to lead the society to develop towards a good way.

The third kind of blessing is health and peace. Some people might live long, however they don't live in peace. This is not true blessing. Even though there is a cause that might be made in previous life so that you can live long, however, if you did not make good cause this life, you did not cultivate well, you did not change your mind and still have lots of afflictions, then even though you can make it to 90 years old, this is not a happy life.

The forth kind of blessing is good virtue. Virtue is the virtue of mind. Being good to others is virtue. We say merits and virtues. Merits are accumulated from inside

action and virtues are accumulated from outside action. Having virtue means after you reach perfection, you can also treat others with true and honest heart. A person with virtue is a person with true blessing. If you look very beautiful, however, people around you don't like you, then you are sure not a person with blessing. For example, for some people who say they learn from Buddha, all their family members dislike them, this is because they don't have enough blessing.

The fifth kind of blessing is a good ending, which means that one dies peacefully. In our daily life, when we do things, we should have a good starting and a good ending too. If one thing is not finished yet, do not give up easily. Even if you are just boiling a kettle of water, wait until it boils before you go to the next thing.

Blessing has many sides, both invisible and visible. Some people think that blessing is just wealth and honor, however, this is not the truth. There was someone who wanted to put down his official position, leaving family life and becoming a monk. However, every time on the day before his leaving, he would get sick and also it was difficult for him to get well. Later on, he became downhearted and went back to his official position. And strange enough, once he returned to his position, he would get well right away. This is due to lack of blessing. He did not have enough blessing to learn Dharma and get to know the truth of the universe.

Other examples, for people who bribe and engage in corrupt practice, or run restaurants, it looks like they have lots of money, however, this is not true blessing because there would be great sufferings waiting for them.

One cannot cultivate without blessing. One cannot gain samadhi power without blessing. Wisdom cannot rise without blessing and becoming enlightened needs blessing.

Without blessing, one will not meet good teachers. Without blessing, wisdom will not be opened. Without blessing, no matter how much materials one possesses, he or she would not be happy.

For cultivators, blessing is one of the necessary provisions for the path to enlightenment. Without enough blessing, it would be hard to go forward. For people with deep blessing, anything he thinks about will appear. "All wishes come true" is a real state of consciousness.

The bigger the heart, the bigger the blessing. A great heart will hold great blessing. People with small heart/narrow heart will not have big blessing because he has a small cup and can only hold that much of water.

Great virtue can carry everything. If one's heart is not big, a sudden blessing might crush him to death. For some people, they don't try to change their virtue and go to buy lottery every day, expecting to win a 5 million prize. Even if he won the prize, without great virtue to carry, he will incur fatal disaster very soon. And this is the well-known "lottery Curse". Many people who won big found that they lost bigger and wished that they did not redeem their tickets at the beginning. And you can read lots of examples like this. People who won big might end up committing suicide, divorce, broken or even death. The reason behind is that they do not have enough virtue to carry the fortune.

Everyone was born with his or her own cup of blessing. Some has more and some has less. Good thoughts and actions will increase one's blessing and evil thoughts and actions will decrease one's blessing. We consume our blessing every day. Eating consumes our blessing (think this way, some people even don't have the blessing to eat and they may often be hungry.) Everything we use consumes our

blessing. If we don't know to add blessing into the cup, then blessing will be used up and eventually one would become poor.

For people who borrow money, they are consuming blessing of their future life.

That said, how to increase blessing? There are many ways to increase blessing.

Here are some ways for you to consider.

1. Be willing to suffer losses. If one is willing to help others, give to others either materially or mentally, especially without sense of self, without complaint, without regret after giving, then his blessing will increase.

2. Give: If one is stingy, then it is very possible that his heart is not big. Giving can help expand the heart.

3. Change the mind. When something unpleasant happened, you need to learn to change the mind. For example, if somebody scolds you, change your mind and think this way: His scolding will help decrease my karma and I am grateful to him. Wish that after he releases his discontent, the animosity between us will disappear. And wish he also pursues to be born in the pure land. Every time you change your mind and think this way, your heart will expand a little bit.

4. Settle down the mind and discern the truth behind. Many times, we cannot master our spirit because we cannot tell the truth behind. Build up your samadhi power, increase your wisdom, discern the truth behind. No matter what happens, you know this is just the result of combination of causes and conditions. Everything is like a movie, not real. Keep the mind unmoved and both merits and virtues will increase.

5. Break through. Sometimes you are very sick of somebody or something and cannot accept them. Then it's time to break through. Be cruel to yourself. Face the person or the thing patiently and compassionately. Patiently endure and accept.

After a while you may find that you might have broken through the resistance in your heart and there are no hard feelings any more.

6. Worship the Buddha. Buddha is wisdom, enlightenment, compassion and great love. Worshipping the Buddha can melt the icy heart, heart of pride. Bow to Buddha and feel the compassion of Buddha. Receive the blessing from Buddha. Your heart will soften and become compassionate. Gradually you will understand what is “being kind to all beings including those without affinities with you; being compassionate to all beings because we are all one.”

7. Read sutras and teachings. Recite sutras every day and learn from Buddha every day. Do what is difficult to do; endure what is difficult to endure and give up what is difficult to give up. Be persevere in learning from Buddha and you will find that you are standing on the shoulder of a giant and you can see far away and your heart is boundless.

8. Respect your parents. Your life was given by your parents. Without them there would be no you. For those who don't respect parents, they will accomplish nothing.

The Buddha told us that all beings have been our parents before. Our parents are suffering in the six realms and how can we ignore them? Even though we might not have the ability to rescue them now, we can bring out the vow to be born in the western blissed world to continue to cultivate and then come back again to take them across the suffering sea.

Blessing comes from doing good deeds and disaster comes from committing evil deeds.

“Don't think a good deed is too small and fail to do it; and don't think a evil deed is too small and do it.”

Wish we all expand our heart; increase our blessing; cultivate diligently; do our best;
step on the lotus station soon and return perfectly.

Thank you for listening!