

Dogen Zenji's
SHŌBŌGENZŌ
(The Eye and Treasury of the True Law)

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A Complete English Translation of DŌGEN ZENJI'S

SHŌBŌGENZŌ

(The Eye and Treasury of the True Law)

TRANSLATED BY
KŌSEN NISHIYAMA

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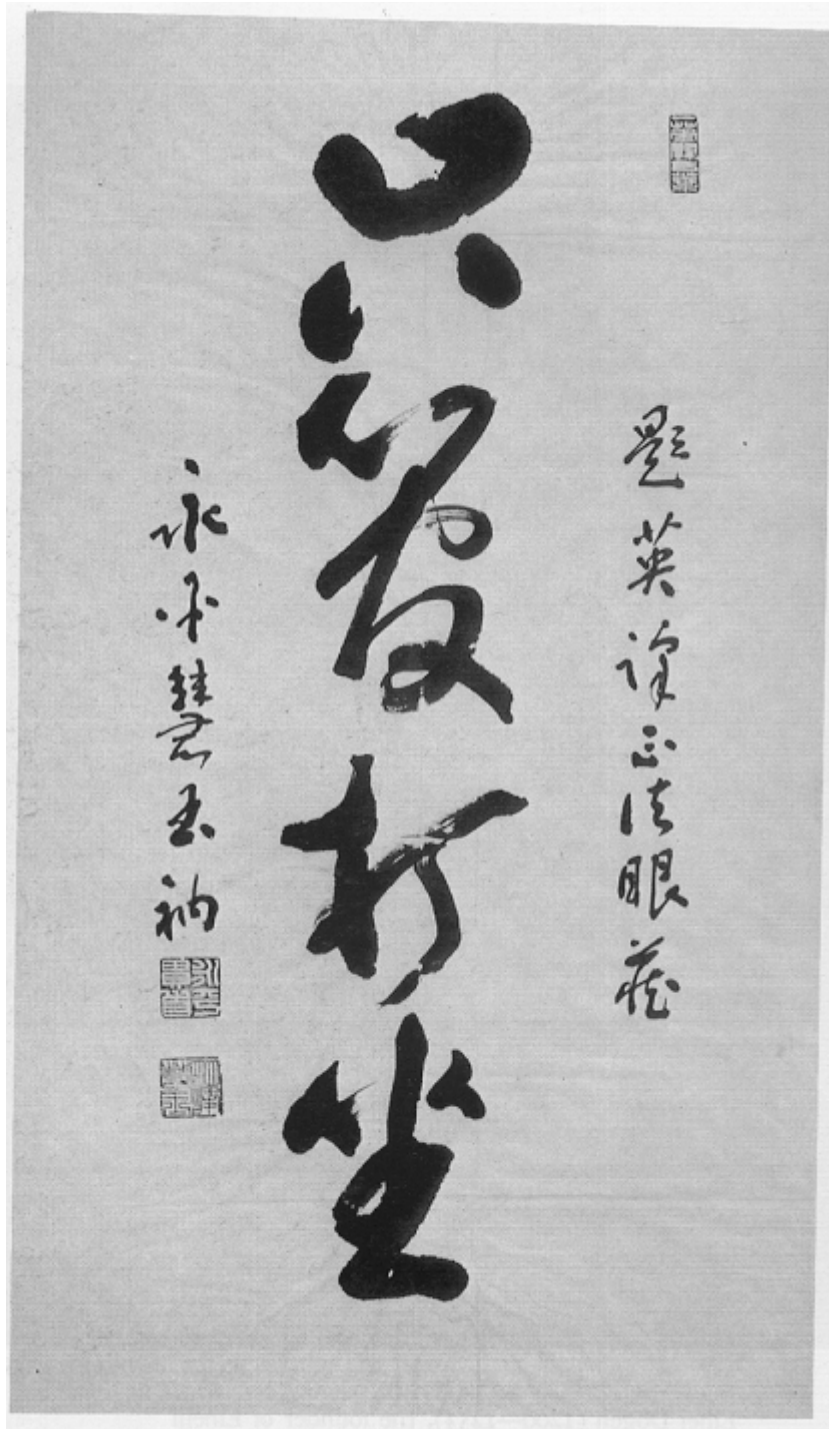
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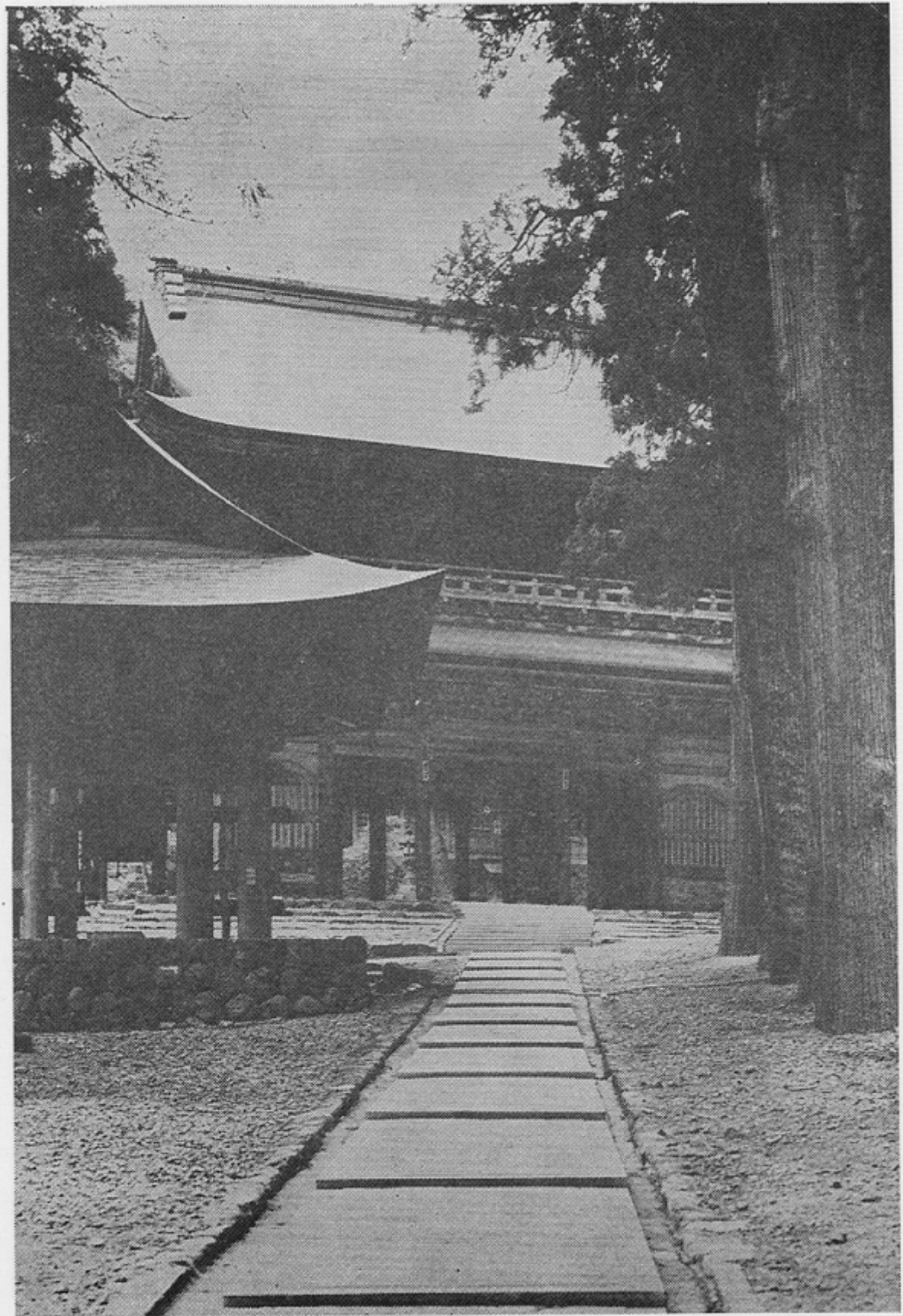


Treasury of Eiheiji

Eihei Dōgen (1200 – 1253), the founder of Eiheiji

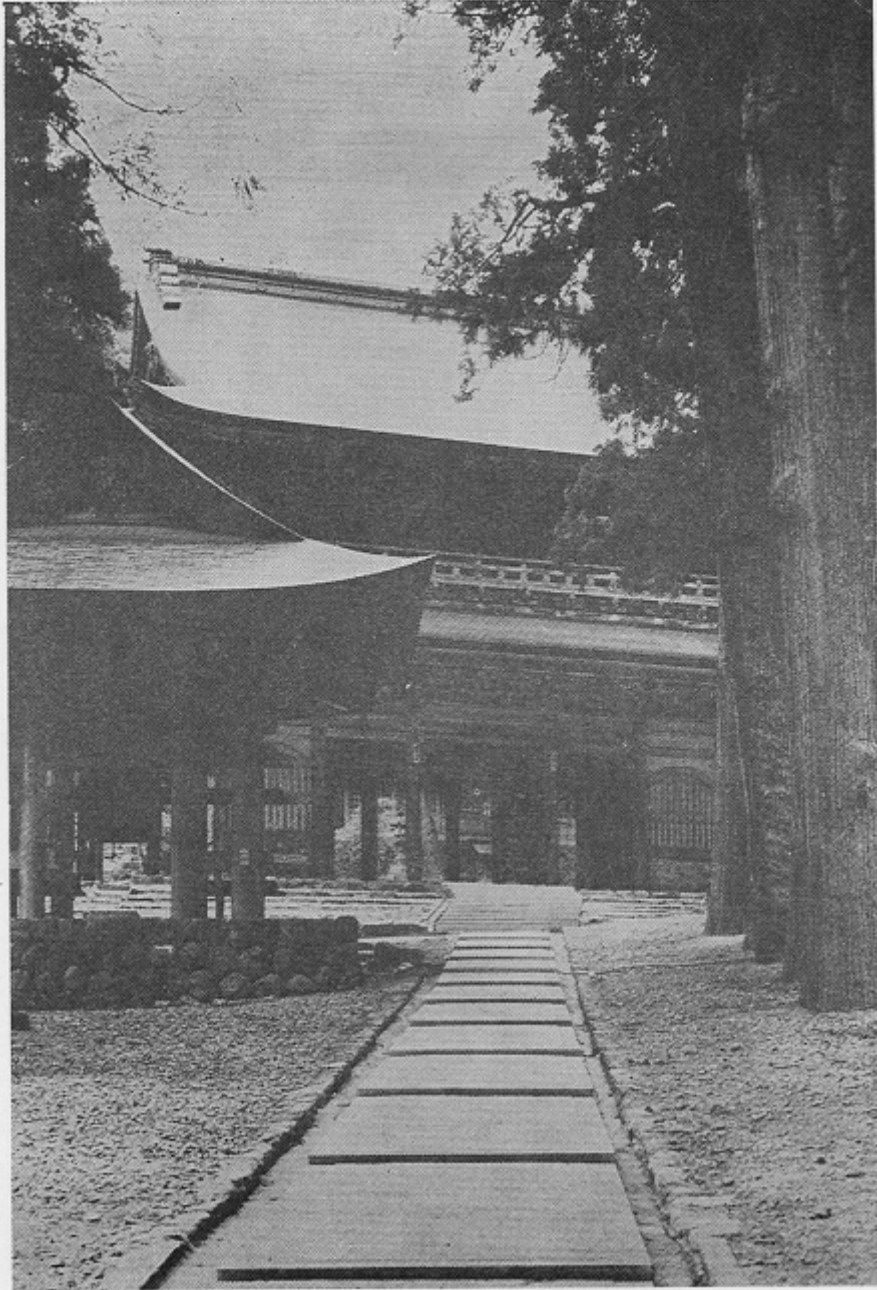


Shikantaza, single-minded sitting in Zazen. Calligraphy by Hata Egyoku, Abbott of Eiheiji and Primate of the Sōtō Zen School.



Chokushi-mon (Gate for emperors)

PRESENTED BY EIHEIJI



Sanmon (Main Gate of Eihei-ji)

PRESENTED BY EIHEIJI

Dedicated to all those seeking the True Way

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PREFACE (1)

For more than fifty years I have been studying the life and thought of Dōgen Zenji, transmitter of the True Dharma to Japan over seven hundred years ago. Since then his profound insight has had a pervasive influence on Japanese thought and culture and has nourished and cultivated the Japanese spirit. I feel that his major work, the *Shōbōgenzō*, is the most superlative religious and philosophical work produced in Japan. I have worked for many years, compiling an accurate text and doing research on Dōgen, to promote the study of the *Shōbōgenzō* among all types of people – priests, students, scholars and lay men and women. The *Shōbōgenzō* contains the vast and unlimited world of religious experience; and it is open to all if only we look for it.

Now, with this publication of a complete English translation of the *Shōbōgenzō*, Dōgen's universal thought will become universally known. Mr. Nishiyama and his collaborator Mr. Stevens have worked very diligently to produce an excellent, readable translation which I hope will be widely used by all those interested in Buddhism. It is my sincere wish that the dissemination of Dōgen's unique thought will contribute to the creation of a truly international culture, combining the best of East and West.

May, 1975

Dōshu Okubō, Lit. D.

President, Tohoku College of Social Welfare

PREFACE (2)

Beginning with the publication of Oswald Spengler's *Decline of the West* and Nietzsche's pronouncement that "God is dead," the spiritual foundations of western society have been continually shaken. People like Ludwig A. Feuerbach wanted to do away with theology completely and establish a totally human-centred religion. In addition, the rapid expansion of technology and scientific knowledge has not given us all the answers; on the contrary, it has created more difficult and complex problems, e.g., the population explosion, shortages of food and natural resources, pollution, and destruction of the environment. Most of these problems have arisen because the natural balance of our world's life system has been disrupted by technological advancement and the development of civilization. Without exaggeration we may say that all those disruptions adversely affect the inner life of human beings and cause many serious spiritual crises. Consequently, we must both strive to create a new culture with a different set of ethics based on the harmony – spiritual and physical – of our life system and to re-establish correct observation of the nature of the world (i.e., the Buddhist chain of causation).

I strongly believe that Dōgen Zenji's interpretation of Buddhism is the most complete and that his concept of shikantaza, "single-minded sitting in Zazen," is the best way for us to restore human life. As you know, the True Law began in India, was developed as the Dharma of the Buddhas and Patriarchs in China, and reached its culmination in Dōgen's *Shōbōgenzō*, the Eye and Treasury of the True Law. In that work, the Buddhist Way was crystallized; it has been the dominant spiritual influence in Japanese culture for more than seven hundred years. The world of the *Shōbōgenzō* is an extremely profound study, full of unsurpassed religious experience; it illumines Japanese thought like a brilliant pearl.

This supreme work of Japanese Buddhism has attracted the attention of foreign students, but due to its difficult and subtle nature it has not been as widely read as other Buddhist classics.

I am also continuing to lecture on the *Shōbōgenzō* in the English and French languages for my mission in Europe; I have already published in Paris a French translation of some parts of *Shōbōgenzō*, with my commentaries on it; however it is very hard to achieve this work without the help of some able collaborators. But now, thanks to the efforts of Mr. Kosen Nishiyama, assistant professor of Tohoku College of Social Welfare, and his able collaborator, Mr. John Stevens, an English translation is being made available. For me, this translation is especially valuable in helping establish real Zen practice among my many European students.

TAISEN DESHIMARU

President of the Zen Association of Europe.

Paris, 23rd November, 1976.

Forward

Zen Master Dogen, author of the *Shōbōgenzō*, was the high patriarch who transmitted Sōtō Zen from China to Japan. In Japan, there are three Zen schools: Rinzai, Sōtō, and Ōbaku. Although the introduction of Rinzai Zen into Japan is generally attributed to Eisai, there were actually several other transmissions by various priests. At present, there are more than ten branches of this sect. The Ōbaku school, the smallest of the three, was brought to Japan by the Chinese priest Ingen.

Since Sōtō Zen became a religion directed towards ordinary people and Rinzai and Ōbaku never had much following outside the aristocracy, the Soto school developed into one of the largest of all Buddhist schools in Japan, with over fifteen thousand temples. The sum total of all the Rinzai sects is less than half that number. Although all the schools are based on Zen, there are a number of differences in both practice and theory. Most westerners are more familiar with Rinzai-style Zen made popular by the late D.T. Suzuki.

Among Dōgen's many works, the *Shōbōgenzō* is considered to be his masterpiece. He usually wrote in classical Chinese, but for the *Shōbōgenzō* Dōgen used Japanese which can still be understood today. The *Shōbōgenzō* is an expression of Dōgen's profound understanding and deep experience of Zen and the real meaning of his words is extremely difficult to grasp. Readers will need to have some background in Buddhism and Zen in order to truly appreciate it. The *Shōbōgenzō* demands several thorough re-readings. Kosen Nishiyama, a Sōtō Zen scholar and heir of Dōgen's teachings, has spent fourteen years on this translation. His sincere effort deserves special praise.

March, 1983

Kogen Mizuno

President, Komazawa University

TRANSLATORS' NOTE

This translation basically follows the method used in the modern Japanese translations of Dōgen's original text i.e., a combination of translation, commentary and paraphrase. A literal translation is almost totally incomprehensible and even a semi-literal one produces a mutant brand of English that alternately confounds and amuses the reader. The method used in the present translation is that of a native speaker interpreting Dōgen's thought to a modern western audience in as clear and natural English as possible. Consequently, while much of this translation follows the original text quite closely, there is some paraphrasing or interpretation of certain passages in order to make it intelligible to western readers. To be sure, there is a certain loss in the profundity and vigour of Dōgen's original style in this method but that is unavoidable.

Because of its extremely subtle and profound nature any translation of the Shōbōgenzō will be subject to a barrage of criticism and no one is more aware of the defects and shortcomings of this present work than the translators. Yet we feel that this translation reproduces the spirit of Dōgen's original text and will prove to be of value to all those seeking the Way.

In the text all the proper names are in the Japanese reading. The Chinese pronunciation and dates of individuals are given in the footnotes. Diacritical marks are given for all Sanskrit words except for those which have entered the English language i.e., Dharma, samsara, nirvana, karma and Shakyamuni. When "Dharma" appears it always refers to the "Buddhist Law." Both "Dharma" and "Law" are used interchangeably in the text. Prajñā (insight or wisdom) and samādhi (concentration or mediation) are left untranslated as they are familiar to most western students.

Satori is translated as "enlightenment" and ku (śūnyatā) as "emptiness." Although there is some question about the accuracy of those words we have adopted them since they have been extensively used in western Buddhist literature. Other words or expressions that appear frequently are: gedatsu, translated as "detachment" or "liberation"; genjō, "actualization" or "manifestation"; shinjindatsuraku, "body and mind drop (or are cast) off"; shikantaza, "single-minded sitting in Zazen"; and Shōbōgenzō, "the Eye and Treasury of the True Law." "My late master" is always Dōgen's Chinese master Tendō Nyojō (T'ien t'ung Ju-ching, 1163-1228).

The text used for our translation is from the Kohonkōtei Shōbōgenzō compiled by Dōshu Okubō (Chikuma Shobō). The number of chapters in the Shōbōgenzō is usually given as ninety-five but that includes variant texts for the chapters Shinfukatoku, Butsukojoji and Butsudō, which we have not translated. Consequently, this English translation contains ninety-two chapters, to be published in three volumes: Volume I, with chapters I-35; Volume II, 36-70; and Volume III, 71-92.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS (1)

The most important commentaries and modern Japanese translations consulted were Gendaigō Yaku Shōbōgenzō by Soichi Nakamura (Seishin Shobō); Gendaigō Yaku Shōbōgenzō by Kenchin Takahashi (Risosha); Shōbōgenzō Keiteki by Bokusan Nishiari (Daihōrinkaku); Shōbōgenzō Zenkō by Ian Kishizawa (Daihōrinkaku), Dōgen Zenji den no Kenkyū by Dōshu Okubō (Chikuma Shobō); and Dōgen by Michio Takeuchi (Yoshikawa kobunkan).

We would like to thank Dr. Okubō, president of the Tohoku College of Social Welfare, for writing the preface, granting us permission to use his compilation of the Shōbōgenzō as the basis of our translation, writing the Chinese characters, that appear on the dust jacket, and for his general encouragement. We also wish to express our gratitude to Professors Kurebayashi, Mizuno and Sakurai of Komazawa University and to the assistant abbot of Eihei-ji, Egyoku Hata for their support and assistance.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS (2)

Throughout this project I have been helped by many people to whom I extend my sincerest thanks. I am particularly indebted to John Stevens who has assisted with this translation since 1974. I would also like to thank Steve Powell who, having worked with me continuously for the past two years, made the completion of volumes three and four possible. And, for their assistance with various chapters during their stay at my temple, Ian Reader and Susan Wick have my gratitude.

Without the invaluable assistance of these people, this project could never have been completed. I do, though, of course, take full responsibility for the numerous shortcomings of this tentative translation.

I am grateful to Egyoku Hata, abbot of Eihei-ji, for his support and encouragement. To the late Reirin Yamada, former abbot of Eihei-ji, the late Shōshun Iwamoto, former abbot of Sōjiji, to Dr. Kogen Mizuno, former president of Komazawa University, and to Dr. Shūyu Sakurai, president of Komazawa University, who provided forwards to the volumes, I reserve special thanks.

For his advice and general encouragement, I am greatly indebted to my late father and master, Zentei Nishiyama. I would also like to thank the people at Japan Publications Trading Co. Ltd. and Nakayama Shobo, overseas and domestic distributors of these volumes, for their patience and help.

Finally, I offer my heartfelt apologies for the long delay in bringing the final two volumes to print.

June 1983

Kōsen Nishiyama

Daiman-ji

Sendai, Japan

INTRODUCTION

A tiny hut, deep in the mountains
The Way not yet perfectly attained.
Even on the highest peak of this
splendid mountain
The dirt and dust of this world –
I beg for the help of the Tathāgata.

(Sanshōdōei)

The Shōbōgenzō is a collection of discourses and essays given or written in Japanese by Dogen Zenji during the years from 1231 until his death in 1253. It is truly a monumental work based on Dōgen's unsurpassed religious experience and his unique interpretation of the Buddhist Dharma. As the title indicates his followers considered Dōgen's talks and essays to be a treasury of the right observation of the True Law. In modern times his work has attracted the attention of many westerners and he continues to hold a central place in present day Buddhist thought, highly regarded by all the various sects and schools.

Dōgen's life can be divided into five periods: first, his youth and the initial experience of the transitory nature of this world; second, entrance into the Buddhist priesthood at the age of thirteen and the period of study and practice on Mt. Hiei; third, his trip to China and his practice and realization of the Way under the master Tendō Nyojō – "body and mind cast off"; fourth, the return to Japan and the foundation of the Kōshoji monastery in Uji, near Kyoto, the first independent Zen monastery in Japan; and the fifth, culminating in the construction of Eihei-ji monastery in Fukui prefecture.

Dōgen was born in the south-east district of Kyoto known as Kimata in 1200. His father, Kuga Michi'chika, was a central figure in the confused history of that time. A powerful aristocrat, and a member of the Murakami branch of the Genji clan, he was deeply involved in the various intrigues and struggles between the court and the newly established Kamakura Shogunate. In 1198 Michi'chika had his grandson installed as the emperor Tsuchimikado. Michi'chika became Regent and assumed control of the court. However, he suddenly died at the height of his power in 1202, possibly assassinated by his rivals.

Dōgen's mother was said to be Ishi, the third daughter of Fujiwara Motofusa. She was originally married to Kisoyoshiyaka, another influential man in the court, but he was exiled and Motofusa offered her to Michi'chika, who was his brother-in-law, as a concubine.

Dōgen was only two years old when his father died and he moved with his mother to a cottage in the suburbs of Kyoto. His life there was lonely and sad; and in the winter of his eighth year his mother passed away. As the greatly bereaved young boy watched the smoke drift from the incense during his mother's funeral he perceived the transitory nature of all things. It was at this time the resolve to find the True Way awakened in him – both his parents were gone and he was now determined to overcome this ephemeral world of pain and pleasure, joy and sadness.

All things are impermanent

Life follows the law of destruction;

Yet birth and death are nothing

but destruction

Here within lies the bliss of nirvana.

Just before her death Dōgen's mother told him to become a monk and pray for the welfare of his parents and to work for the salvation of all sentient beings. Her death and his first experience of the fleeting nature of this world were perhaps the decisive events in his life. Thereafter his determination to find the True Way and attain enlightenment never wavered.

Following his mother's death Dōgen went to live with Michitomo, Michi'chika's half-brother. Michitomo was a renowned composer of waka and introduced Dōgen to the world of poetry which he retained an affection for throughout his life. He began to study the Buddhist sūtras and commentaries from the time he was nine years old. His determination to find the Way increased daily and when he was twelve years old he visited his uncle Ryōkan (his mother's brother), an influential aristocrat, to ask permission to become a monk. The uncle was highly displeased and tried to dissuade him. However, Dōgen was not moved and the uncle finally acceded to his request. Dōgen was taken to a small temple on the skirt of Mt. Hiei and introduced to the abbot Jien. Soon after a new abbot, Kōen, took over and gave Dogen the Bodhisattva precepts on April 9, 1213.

Dōgen immersed himself in the study of both the exoteric and esoteric: aspects of the Tendai school and learned the various monastic rules and precepts. Early in his study, however, he encountered a problem that seemed insoluble: "Both the exoteric and esoteric schools teach that all beings possess Buddha-nature and original enlightenment. If that is so, why do all the Buddhas of the three worlds arouse the Buddha-seeking mind and search for enlightenment through practice?" No one on Mt. Hiei could satisfactorily answer the young Dōgen's question. Furthermore, he was disgusted at the monks' avarice and their constant squabbling, and therefore decided to leave Mt. Hiei and visit other masters.

Dōgen then proceeded to Miidera monastery and met the abbot Koin (1145 – 1216), a famous scholar who had recently abandoned the intellectualism and abstract doctrines of the Tendai school for the simple faith of the Pure Land. Koin recommended that Dogen visit the master Eisai (1141-1215) at Kennin-ji, who had recently returned from China and was now teaching the Rin-zai method of Zen enlightenment.

What Dōgen did next is not clear. According to one account (the Kenzeiki) Dōgen immediately went to Kennin-ji and met Eisai; the Sanragyōgyōki^{1-EN} says he did not visit Kennin-ji until four years later and makes no mention of any meeting with Eisai. It seems however that Dōgen did actually meet Eisai and was impressed by his strong character and his emphasis on the practical experience of Buddhism rather than philosophical profundity or scholastic learning. An interest in Zen was kindled and the desire to study in China, present from the earliest days of his monastic life, was strengthened.

Soon after this Myōzen (1184 – 1225) took over as abbot and Dōgen became his disciple. At that time both the exoteric and

1-EN Two well known biographies of Dōgen.

esoteric doctrines together with the practice of Zazen which Eisai brought from China were taught at Kenninji. Myōzen himself was a master of both the exoteric and esoteric teachings and had received both the Tendai and Zen precepts from Eisai. He was only thirty-four when Dōgen first met him and a warm relationship developed between them. Dōgen continued to study all branches of the Buddhist teaching and was said to have read the entire Tripitaka twice during this stay at Kenninji. Yet he was increasingly drawn towards the practice of Zen and its method of enlightenment. In addition, many of Dōgen's relatives were being killed and banished during this period. This no doubt underlined his perception of the transitory nature of fame, wealth, and position and made him more determined than ever to find the True Law.

Consequently, he asked Myōzen's permission to visit China. Myōzen not only agreed but also decided to accompany Dōgen. There is a famous story in *Shōbōgenzō Zuimonki*^{2-EN} concerning his decision. Myōzen's master, Myōyu (n.d.), became seriously ill just before Myōzen and Dōgen were scheduled to depart. The master pleaded with him to postpone the trip. Myōzen called all the disciples together and asked their opinions. All of them, including Dōgen, counselled him to put off the trip. However, Myōzen told them,

"Even if I were to stay, it would not prolong the life of this dying man. Even if I took care of him, I could not put an end to his suffering. Even if I were to comfort him on his deathbed, I could do nothing to help him escape from the cycle of life and death... All this would be of no use whatsoever in my renunciation of the world and attainment of the Way, and might even lead to evil acts by interfering with my determination to seek the Dharma. However, if I proceed with my plan to visit China and attain even a small measure of enlightenment it will benefit many people... To waste valuable time for the sake of just one person is not the Way of Buddha. Therefore I will leave for China as planned."

Dōgen admired Myōzen's resolve and Buddha-seeking mind and they both were determined to continue their practice in China.

On February 22, 1223, Dōgen, Myōzen, and two other monks left Kenninji for the port of Hakata in Kyushu. The voyage from Hakata to China was a difficult one, troubled with numerous storms and heavy seas. Dōgen was stricken with severe diarrhoea and suffered greatly. They finally arrived at a port in Minshu, located in the central part of China, in the beginning of April.

Myōzen immediately left the boat after their arrival and visited several monasteries before settling on Mt. Tendō (T'ien t'ung). Dōgen, on the other hand, remained on the ship for almost three months in order to gradually adjust to his new surroundings and prepare for his future travels. He only visited nearby temples and returned to the ship at night. He was in somewhat of a quandary at first since his initial impression of Chinese Zen was not a good one. He was disappointed at the local abbots' lack of understanding of the sūtras and precepts and at their general appearance and outlook, which seemed to him to be quite secular.

One day, however, he happened to meet an old cook who had come to the port to buy some Japanese mushrooms. He had walked from his monastery about twelve miles away and Dōgen invited him to spend the night aboard ship. Dōgen was interested in this old monk and wanted to talk further. The monk told him that he must return that evening; he had to fulfil his obligations as kitchen master and furthermore he did not have permission to be gone overnight from the monastery. Dōgen then asked him why he had accepted such a burdensome task as kitchen master instead of concentrating on Zazen, sūtra reading, or study which would be far more profitable and much less difficult. The old man laughed and said, "My young friend from abroad, it is clear you have much to learn about the true meaning of practice and letters." He then invited Dōgen to visit his monastery sometime to observe real Zen practice and bid him goodbye. To Dōgen this old, unknown monk seemed to personify the living tradition of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. His entire life, all of his everyday acts were Zazen – "one's bearing is the Buddhist Law" was to become a central part of Dōgen's teaching. All our actions must be an expression of our enlightenment and practice cannot be separated from realization.

Dōgen then decided to go to Mt. Tendō and began his formal training. The monastery on Mt. Tendō was one of the largest and most famous Zen temples in China; it was also one of the strictest, closely adhering to all the traditional monastic rules and precepts. Dōgen practiced diligently but was still unable to resolve his doubts. Moreover, he felt like something of an outsider being a foreigner and was disappointed in the general spiritual level of the monks which was not as high as he expected. He complained to the abbot Musai (Wu-chi) about all this but of course nothing could be changed. The abbot himself was quite fond of money and his own reputation.

Even though Dōgen was not able to learn anything from the so-called chief monks and scholars he continued to find true Zen practice in lesser known, more humble monks. He happened to meet the old kitchen master again ("What are letters?" Dōgen asked this time. "One, two, three, four, five," answered the old man. "What is practice?" "Nothing is hidden, all things are revealed", the monk replied) and met another old monk who insisted on doing his appointed tasks regardless of how troublesome or difficult they were. Once more Dōgen realized that physical work is the key to practice. Self-realization – or rather, realization of one's non-self – must be based on, and grounded in, everyday, practical life. Dōgen witnessed many examples of simple, unknown monks transmitting the mind of the sixth Patriarch. Further, he saw that the life of the Buddhas and Patriarchs must be received from a true master and transmitted in both body and mind in the present moment. This is the real meaning of shiho, the seal of transmission. Single-minded practice, abandonment of any desire for fame or wealth, and adherence to the precepts is absolutely necessary.

Nevertheless, Dōgen still could not attain the final liberation of body and mind. He left Mt. Tendō and once again embarked on a pilgrimage seeking an answer to his questions – but to no avail. He decided to return to Mt. Tendō and see Myōzen; he was on the verge of giving up his study in China and returning home.

As Dōgen was on his way back to Mt. Tendō he received news of Musai's death and the appointment of Nyojō, at the request of the Emperor, as abbot of Mt. Tendō. Dōgen had heard many good things about Nyojō during his peregrinations and was anxious to meet him.

Tendō Nyojō (T'ien-tung Ju-ching, 1163-1228) was an outstanding master. He received the transmission of the Buddhist Way from the line of Setcho Chikan (Hsueh' t'ou, d. 1052) and was intent on re-establishing the traditional and right teaching of that master. He insisted that all his disciples devote themselves completely to the practice of the Way and he chose only the most earnest and diligent petitioners as his students. Dōgen wrote him a letter requesting formal permission to study under his direction. Nyojō had heard of the young foreigner's resolve and immediately accepted him.

On May 1, 1225, they met for the first time. Nyojō quickly recognized Dōgen's potential and compared their meeting with

2-EN A record of Dōgen's informal talks recorded by his chief disciple Ejō.

those of Shakyamuni and Mahākāśyapa on Vulture Peak, Bodhidharma and Eka on Mt. Suzan, and Kōnin and Enō on Mt. Ōbai. Dōgen had finally found his long sought after master and was overjoyed.

Nyojō was severe yet compassionate. Contrary to the custom prevalent in China at that time, he would not allow any relaxation of the rules or shorten the hours of Zazen. Rather, he told them, "If you lack the proper resolve to seek the Way, you will fall asleep even if the time is shortened; on the other hand, if you have the right attitude and determination you will welcome the opportunity to practice no matter how long it is." He would strike those who fell asleep with his fist or slipper, not out of meanness, but out of compassion to goad them on and help them destroy their delusions and find the Way.

Nyojō told Dōgen to completely cut off all attachments and immerse himself in his practice. The mind must be soft and fluid, abiding nowhere. (Later on, after Dōgen had returned to Japan someone asked him what he had learned in China. "Not much," Dōgen replied, "except nyunan-shin, a soft and flexible mind.")

One night during the summer training period of 1225 the monk next to Dōgen fell asleep. Nyojō said in a loud voice, "Zazen is to drop off body and mind. Why are you sleeping?" When he heard that, Dōgen was profoundly enlightened. He later went to Nyojō's room, lit some incense, and prostrated himself before Nyojō. "Why are you doing that?" asked the master. "I have come here with body and mind cast off." Dōgen answered. "Now cast off body and mind!" Nyojō said, thus confirming Dōgen's enlightenment. All doubts had vanished and his realization was complete. He was twenty-five years old.

Dōgen continued to practice under Nyojō for two more years, occasionally visiting other masters in order to deepen and perfect his understanding. Meanwhile, Dōgen's teacher and companion Myōzen took ill and died at the age of forty-two. Consequently, Dōgen decided that the time had come to return to his native land. He had been in China for almost five years.

Before he left, Nyojō told Dōgen that in order to transmit the enlightenment of Shakyamuni we must transcend all ideas of past, present, and future and realize that enlightenment is always present, right now and never ends. He gave Dōgen the seal of transmission and said, "When you return to Japan work to enlighten the minds of all people throughout the land. Do not live near the capital or by rich and powerful persons. Avoid emperors, ministers, and generals. Stay in the deep mountains remote from worldly affairs and devote yourself to the education of young monks, even if you have only one disciple. Do not terminate the transmission I have given you."

Dōgen probably left China during August of 1227. He came back, as he wrote in *Eihei Kōroku*, empty-handed; he brought no sūtras, commentaries, images, or religious articles. What he carried with him was the Buddhist Dharma he had received from Nyojō. After he returned to Kenninji and had Myōzen's ashes interred he began work on his first treatise, *FukanZazengi* (General Promotion of the Principles of Zazen). In it he outlined both the theoretical and practical aspects of Zazen: the Buddhist Dharma is absolute, universal, and all-pervading; in it there is no creation or destruction, coming or going. Yet if we discriminate between things we are immediately separated from the Way and lost in confusion. Zazen is the union of enlightenment and practice. Sit up straight, abandon all thoughts – good, bad, enlightenment, illusion – and manifest the Way. Since body and mind form one essence, practice and enlightenment are not two different things. "Zazen is the Dharma gate of peace and joy" he wrote and then urged everyone to follow this Way, used by all the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Unfortunately, the monks at Kenninji were not at all receptive to Dōgen's ideas. During his absence the morals and discipline of the monks had greatly deteriorated and the spirit of Eisai was almost extinct. The monks were lazy, full of greed, and constantly involved in the various disputes within the order. In addition Dōgen received news of the death of Nyōjō who entered parinirvana on July 17, 1228. He now felt that he must fulfil his promise to train at least one disciple and that it was impossible to remain at Kenninji. Consequently, he moved to a small hermitage near Fukakusa called Anyōin in 1230. Here he composed the first book of the *Shōbōgenzō*, *Bendōwa* (A Story of Buddhist Practice).

In *Bendōwa* Dōgen emphasized the following points: 1) he reaffirmed his contention that Zazen alone is the right gate to enter the Buddhist Way, transmitted by all the Buddhas and Patriarchs; 2) again he stated that practice and enlightenment are not different i.e., Zazen does not consist of a series of steps leading to enlightenment – practice itself is perfect enlightenment; 3) the equality and inherent Buddha-nature of all people – monks, lay disciples, men, women, high, low, clever or dull. There can be no such distinctions in the Buddhist Law; the most important thing is to possess a right minded attitude to seek the Way. (Later on, Dōgen was to modify this somewhat. He became more conservative and began to insist that to find liberation it was absolutely necessary to renounce the world and receive the monastic precepts); 4) rejection of the teaching of the right, semblance, and final stages of the Buddhist Law. In the Buddhism of that time the teaching that the Buddhist Law had three stages – the right Law of the first period after Shakyamuni, the semblance of the Law in the next period, and the final degenerate stage (*mappō*) of the present days – was widely circulated. Dōgen taught that our ability to attain the Way depends entirely on our resolve and attitude for practice. Everyone contains the seed of *prajñā* and enlightenment is always present, permeating time.

Soon after he arrived at Anyōin Dōgen was obliged to move into a larger building due to the growing number of monks and laymen. Several run down buildings of a monastery called Gokurakuji were restored and Dogen moved there in 1233, renaming it Kannondōri-in. In the winter of 1234 Koun Ejo (1198-1280), Dōgen's future chief disciple and Dharma heir, became his student. Ejo is responsible for the transmission of his master's literary work to posterity and also recorded a number of Dōgen's informal talks in the popular, easy to understand *Shōbōgenzō Zuimonki*.

The number of students and disciples continued to increase and Dogen decided to construct a real *dōjō*, a place to practice the Way. By 1235 he had collected enough donations to start work on a new monastery. On October 5, 1236, an opening ceremony was held at Kōshōhōrinji, the first independent Zen monastery in Japan.

The period from 1233-1243 was the most fruitful of Dōgen's life. He had many good disciples, a wide following among lay people, and a well run monastery using the rules of traditional Chinese Zen practice. He exhorted all his followers to put attainment of the Way above all else. He was very strict and demanding like his master Nyojo and emphasized the need for repentance:

O Buddhas and Patriarchs, enlightened by the Way, have compassion on me and grant me release from all bad karma and evil deeds committed in my past. Remove all obstacles from my study of the Buddhist Way. The virtue of the Buddhist Way fills the entire world; please have compassion on me; remember that all the Buddhas and Patriarchs have shared my condition. I vow to follow the true Way so I also can be a Buddha. (*Shōbōgenzō Keiseisanshoku*)

Dōgen was always compassionate but his compassion differed from that of Shinran, his contemporary and founder of the *Jōdō*; Shin school. For Shinran, compassion is based on the realization of one's sinfulness and that one must depend on the absolute mercy of Amida Buddha for salvation. Compassion therefore is to inform others of Amida's great mercy and the

futility of relying on one's own effort. Dōgen, on the other hand, said that real compassion is to throw of compassion – it must be detached and based on insight into the true nature of man. That means we must work to help everyone perceive and manifest their enlightenment; this is the meaning of salvation for Dōgen.

At any rate, the neighbouring monks on Mt. Hiei were neither compassionate nor friendly and began to harass Dōgen and his followers, accusing them of "innovations." They descended on his monastery and attempted to burn it down in the summer of 1243. Needless to say, Dōgen was quite apprehensive about the future of his community and the safety of their present location. He also recalled Nyojō's advice not to settle near the capital but to train his disciples in a remote place far from the temptations and troubles of the world. Consequently, Dogen accepted the invitation of his lay disciple Hatanō Yoshishige, the daimyo of Echizen (present day Fukui prefecture), to establish a monastery in his domain. He abandoned Kyoto and left Kōshōji in the end of the summer of 1243.

When he first arrived in Fukui he stayed at the small temple Kippōji (Yoshiminedera) for about one year. Soon after he reached Kippōji, land for a new monastery was donated, cleared and construction begun. On July 13, 1244, an opening ceremony was held for the new temple, called Daibutsuji. In 1245 Dogen changed the name to Eiheiji, the "Temple of Eternal Peace", after the Eihei period of Chinese history when Buddhism first entered the Middle Kingdom.

After many difficulties and setbacks Dōgen had finally succeeded in establishing a permanent monastery where the True Law could be propagated for the good of all sentient beings. This Law was beyond the limits of any one school or sect and Dōgen denounced the classification of his teaching as that of the Zen school and rejected the name "Sōtō Zen sect." He insisted that "All sentient beings are the Buddha-nature" contrary to the usual understanding of the Buddha-nature as something within living beings that forms their essence or core. All beings themselves, in their totality, are the Buddha-nature – the Buddha-nature and sentient beings are absolutely inseparable, completely non-dual in character. Furthermore, there can be no such thing as "gradual" or "sudden" enlightenment. Each moment, as it is, contains total enlightenment. Moreover, every moment is independent of past, present and future – time is being, being is time. "Each instant covers the entire world... every single object, each living thing is inseparable from time. Time includes every being and all worlds" (Shōbōgenzō, Uji, "Being-time"). These ideas together with the previously mentioned concepts of "practice and enlightenment are one" and "one's bearing is the Buddhist Law" constitute the essence of Dōgen's thought as reflected in the Shōbōgenzō.

In 1247 Dōgen reluctantly agreed to visit the general Hojō Tokiyori and stayed in Kamakura for about six months. Tokiyori wanted him to remain and offered to build a temple for him but Dogen refused and returned to the solitude of Eiheiji. His health began to fail but his life continued to be as austere as ever. He kept up the instruction of his many disciples and continued his writing. Gradually his condition worsened, however, and he was urged to seek medical care in Kyoto. He officially appointed Ejō as his Dharma heir and abbot of Eiheiji and left for Kyoto a few weeks later. He was examined by several noted doctors but nothing could be done. He entered nirvana on the night of August 28, 1253. His death verse:

For fifty years seeking to illumine the great

matter of life and death;

Constantly striving, finally overcoming all

obstacles and doubts.

Now no more requests or desires

still living I enter parinirvana

Although the Shōbōgenzō is his masterpiece containing the Full spectrum of his thought Dogen also wrote the following major works:

FukanZazengi (General Promotion of the Principles of Zazen)

Gakudōyōjinshū (Precautions for the Study of the Way)

Tenzōkyōkun (Instructions for Kitchen Attendants)

Eihei Kōroku (General Observations of Eihei Dogen)

Nihon Koku Echizen Eiheiji Chiji Shingi (Rules for Chief Monks at Eiheiji Monastery)

Kichijōzan Eiheiji Shuryō Shingi (Rules for the Monks' Quarters of Eiheiji Monastery)

Fushukuhampō (Rules For Taking Meals)

Sanshōdōei (A Collection of Dōgen's Poetry)

1. GENJOKOAN

現成公案

“The actualization of enlightenment”

When all things are the Buddha-Dharma, there is enlightenment, illusion, practice, life, death, Buddhas, and sentient beings. When all things are seen not to have any substance, there is no illusion or enlightenment, no Buddhas or sentient beings, no birth or destruction. Originally the Buddhist Way transcends itself and any idea of abundance or lack – still there is birth and destruction, illusion and enlightenment, sentient beings and Buddhas. Yet people hate to see flowers fall and do not like weeds to grow.

It is an illusion to try to carry out our practice and enlightenment through ourselves, but to have practice and enlightenment through phenomena, that is enlightenment. To have great enlightenment about illusion is to be a Buddha. To have great illusion about enlightenment is to be a sentient being. Further, some are continually enlightened beyond enlightenment but some add more and more illusion.

When Buddhas become Buddhas, it is not necessary for them to be aware they are Buddhas. However, they are still enlightened Buddhas and continually realize Buddha. Through body and mind we can comprehend the form and sound of things. They work together as one. However, it is not like the reflection of a shadow in a mirror, or the moon reflected in the water. If you look at only one side, the other is dark.

To learn the Buddhist Way is to learn about oneself. To learn about oneself is to forget oneself. To forget oneself is to perceive oneself as all things. To realize this is to cast off the body and mind of self and others. When you have reached this stage you will be detached even from enlightenment but will practice it continually without thinking about it.

When people begin to seek the Dharma [outside themselves] they are immediately far removed from its true location. When the Dharma has been received through the right transmission, one's real self immediately appears.

If you are in a boat, and you only look at the riverbank, you will think that the riverbank is moving; but if you look at the boat, you will discover that the boat itself is actually moving. Similarly, if you try to understand the nature of phenomena only through your own confused perception you will mistakenly think that your nature is eternal. Furthermore, if you have right practice and return to your origin then you will clearly see that all things have no permanent self.

Once firewood is reduced to ashes, it cannot return to firewood; but we should not think of ashes as the potential state of firewood or vice-versa. Ash is completely ash and firewood is firewood. They have their own past, future, and independent existence.

Similarly, when human beings die, they cannot return to life; but in Buddhist teaching we never say life changes into death. This is an established teaching of the Buddhist Dharma. We call it “non-becoming.” Likewise, death cannot change into life. This is another principle of Buddha's Law. This is called “non-destruction” Life and death have absolute existence, like the relationship of winter and spring. But do not think of winter changing into spring or spring to summer.

When human beings attain enlightenment, it is like the moon reflected in the water. The moon appears in the water but does not get wet nor is the water disturbed by the moon. Furthermore, the light of the moon covers the earth and yet it can be contained in a small pool of water, a tiny dewdrop, or even one minuscule drop of water.

Just as the moon does not trouble the water in any way, do not think enlightenment causes people difficulty. Do not consider enlightenment an obstacle in your life. The depths of the dewdrop can contain the heights of the moon and sky.

When the True Law is not totally attained, both physically and mentally, there is a tendency to think that we possess the complete Law and our work is finished. If the Dharma is completely present, there is a realization of one's insufficiencies.

For example, if you take a boat to the middle of the ocean, beyond the sight of any mountains, and look in all four directions, the ocean appears round. However, the ocean is not round, and its virtue is limitless. It is like a palace, or an adornment of precious jewels. But to us, the ocean seems to be one large circle of water.

So we see that this can be said of all things. Depending on the viewpoint we see things in different ways. Correct perception depends upon the amount of one's study and practice. In order to understand various types of viewpoints we must study the numerous aspects and virtues of mountains and oceans, rather than just circles. We should know that it is not only so all around us but also within us – even in a single drop of water.

Fish in the ocean find the water endless and birds think the sky is without limits. However, neither fish nor birds have been separated from their element. When their need is great, their utilization is great, when it is small, the utilization is small. They fully utilize every aspect to its utmost – freely, limitlessly. However, we should know that if birds are separated from their own element they will die. We should know that water is life for fish and the sky is life for birds. In the sky, birds are life; and in the water, fish are life. Many more conclusions can be drawn like this. There is practice and enlightenment [like the above relationships of sky and birds, and fish and water]. However, after the clarification of water and sky, we can see that if there are birds or fish that try to enter the sky or water, they cannot find either a way or a place. If we understand this point, there is actualization of enlightenment in our daily life. If we attain this Way, all our actions are the actualization of enlightenment. This Way, this place, is not great or small, self or others, neither past or present – it exists just as it is.

Like this, if we practice and realize the Buddhist Way we can master and penetrate each dharma; and we can confront and master any one practice. There is a place where we can penetrate the Way and find the extent of knowable perceptions. This happens because our knowledge co-exists simultaneously with the ultimate fulfillment of the Buddhist Dharma.

After this fulfillment becomes the basis of our perception do not think that our perception is necessarily understood by the intellect. Although enlightenment is actualized quickly, it is not always totally manifested because [it is too profound and inexhaustible for our limited intellect].

One day, when Zen Master Hōtetsu of Mt. Mayoku^{1-EN} was fanning himself, a monk approached and asked, “The nature of the wind never changes and blows everywhere, so why are you using a fan?”

The master replied, “Although you know that the nature of the wind never changes you do not know the meaning of blowing

1-EN Pao-ch'è of Ma-ku Shan, a disciple of Baso (Ma-tsu). Dates of birth and death are unknown

everywhere." The monk then said, "Well, what does it mean?" Hōtetsu did not speak but only continued to fan himself. Finally the monk understood and bowed deeply before him.

The experience, the realization, and the living, right transmission of the Buddhist Dharma is like this. To say it is not necessary to use a fan because the nature of the wind never changes and there will be wind even without one means that he does not know the real meaning of "never changes" or the wind's nature. Just as the wind's nature never changes, the wind of Buddhism makes the earth golden and causes the rivers to flow with sweet, fermented milk.

This was written in mid-autumn, 1233, and given to the lay disciple Yō-kō-shū of Kyūshū^{2-EN}.

2-EN Almost nothing is known about him.

2. MAKAHANNYAHARAMITSU

摩訶般若波羅蜜

“The accomplishment of the great wisdom of Buddha”

When Kanzeon Bodhisattva^{1-EN} experienced and comprehended the truth through prajñāpāramitā^{2-EN} he perceived that existence is formed by the five skandhas: matter, perception, mental conceptions, volition, and consciousness.^{3-EN} When the five skandhas are observed through prajñā you will perceive emptiness. Through this observation, you will discover that the skandhas themselves are empty – each skandha is detached and originated in prajñā.

When you understand this you will be able to comprehend the formula “Form is emptiness. Emptiness is form.”^{4-EN} Form is form, emptiness is emptiness. It is the hundred grasses and all phenomena. Prajñāpāramitā can be thought of as either the twelve or eighteen methods of analysis: The twelve are eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind, form, smell, sound, taste, sensation, and reasoning; the second is the above twelve ways plus the six perceptions: visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile, and mental.

There are four kinds of Prajñāpāramitā: 1) all things are suffering; 2) the cause of suffering; 3) the destruction of suffering; and 4) the Eightfold Path. There are six actions of the Bodhisattva, called the six pāramitās: 1) giving; 2) precepts; 3) observance; 4) effort; 5) contemplation; and 6) wisdom.^{5-EN}

In prajñāpāramitā there are three kinds of temporal understanding: past, present, future; six kinds of physical and spiritual understanding based on earth, water, fire, wind, air, mind; and four understandings of the actions of daily life: going, staying, sitting, lying. Each and every prajñāpāramitā is actualized in the eternal present i.e., supreme and perfect enlightenment.

In the samgha of Shakyamuni there was a monk who was constantly absorbed with the question of prajñā. He secretly thought to himself, “I respect the profound prajñāpāramitā. Its merits are expressed by the five aspects of dharmakāya: precepts, contemplation, wisdom, detachment, and intellectual comprehension based on detachment. There are such things as the Hinayana practice of the four stages: 1) sotāpanna, abandonment of all false views; 2) sakadāgāmin the stage where one will have only one more birth before nirvana; 3) anāgāmin, the stage of non-returning to this world; and 4) srāvaka, enlightenment by listening to the Buddhist teaching. I also know about pratyekabuddhayana^{6-EN}, the vehicle of single enlightenment, the Bodhisattva vehicle, supreme enlightenment, the Three Treasures, the turning of the wheel of the Law, and the vow to save all sentient beings.”

Shakyamuni realized what the monk was secretly thinking about and said to him, “What you are thinking is right. However, the profound prajñāpāramitā can never be fathomed or analysed by our intellect.” The monk had respect for all the various forms or phenomena, especially for the prajñā that reveals the world of life and death. When we truly respect prajñā it actualizes itself. This is what we call precepts, sāmādhī, insight, and the vow to save all sentient beings. In other words, we call it Mu, nothingness. It arises in accordance with the above principle. It is called prajñāpāramitā – extremely profound, subtle, and beyond measure.

One day Indra asked Subhūti^{7-EN}, “O Virtuous One! If a Bodhisattva or Mahasattva wishes to learn the profound prajñāpāramitā how should he approach it?” Subhūti replied, “O Indra! If the Bodhisattva or Mahasattva desires to learn prajñāpāramitā he must learn emptiness. To learn prajñā is to learn emptiness, and to learn emptiness is to learn prajñā.” Indra then said to Buddha, “O World Honoured One! How can devoted men and women disciples preserve correctly the profound prajñāpāramitā they have received and proclaim it to others? Please have compassion on us and show us the right way.” But Subhūti answered instead of Buddha, “O Indra! Is it possible to completely protect the Dharma?” Indra said, “No, O Virtuous one, it is not possible. I can not find any safe way to protect it”.

Subhūti then said, “O Indra! If devoted men and women disciples follow the teaching [of Shakyamuni] prajñāpāramitā will protect the Dharma and never depart. We should know that all men and sentient beings seek the means [of prajñāpāramitā] and if you think you lose it when you begin to look for it, it will never be obtained. O Indra, if you want to preserve the Dharma you must follow the teaching of Buddha. There is no difference between prajñāpāramitā, Bodhisattvas, and emptiness.”

Here we must know that receiving, reading, and chanting the sūtras together with rational cognition protects and preserves prajñā. To protect [the Dharma] is to receive, read, and chant [the sūtras].

My late master once said:

The entire body is the mouth, hanging in the air [emptiness].

It does not matter from what direction the wind blows

– north, south, east, or west –

The wind bell always makes the sound prajñā

– rin, rin, rin.

This is the sound of prajñā in the transmission from generation to of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, in the entire body of self and others, in the north, south, east, and west.

Shakyamuni once said to Subhūti, “All sentient beings should respect and revere prajñāpāramitā in the same manner as the Buddhas have done. Every time you consider prajñāpāramitā you should think of it as a reverence towards Buddha. Why?”

1-EN Avālokiteśvara, the Bodhisattva of compassion.

2-EN The supreme wisdom or insight. Prajñāpāramitā and prajñā are left untranslated in the text.

3-EN All physical and mental elements are classified into five kinds of aggregates: 1. rūpa, a generic term used for matter; 2. vedanā, perception; 3. samjñā, mental conceptions and ideas; 4. saṃskāra, volition; and 5. vijñāna, consciousness.

4-EN The famous line from the Shingyō, Prajñāpāramitā-hriḍaya-sūtra.

5-EN Dāna, śīla, ksānti, virya, dhyāna, prajñā

6-EN A self-enlightened Buddha.

7-EN One of the ten great disciples of Buddha. Of all of the disciples he had the best understanding of sūnyatā, emptiness.

Because prajñāpāramitā is not different from Buddha and vice-versa. The prajñāpāramitā is Buddha, and Buddha is prajñāpāramitā. O Subhūti, is it not true that the Tathāgata's enlightenment comes from prajñāpāramitā? Furthermore, Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas, Pratyekabuddhas, Arhats, and those who have attained anāgāmin, sakadāgain, and sotāpanna, all come from prajñāpāramitā. And even the ten good deeds^{8-EN} the four types of meditation^{9-EN}, the four kinds of meditation on emptiness^{10-EN}, and the five miraculous powers of the gods^{11-EN} derive from prajñāpāramitā?."

Therefore, all the Buddhas are nothing but prajñāpāramitā. Prajñāpāramitā is the entire Buddhist Dharma; and this Dharma is the form of emptiness – no creation, no destruction, nothing pure or impure, not increasing, not decreasing. The manifestation of prajñāpāramitā is the manifestation of a Buddha. If you seek the truth, you will learn that to honour prajñāpāramitā is to meet the Buddha, and you cannot say you have truly met the Buddha unless you serve him.

This was delivered to the monks at Kannondōri-in during the summer training period of 1233, and transcribed by Ejō in the chief disciple's quarters on March 21, 1244, at Kippōji in Fukui prefecture.

8-EN The ten good deeds are to refrain from: killing, stealing, committing adultery, lying, using immoral language, slandering, insulting others, coveting, giving way to anger, or holding false views.

9-EN Four stages of meditation which systematically purify and clear the mind and lead to rebirth in the dhyāna heavens.

10-EN The four samādhis of unlimited emptiness, unlimited consciousness, emptiness beyond consciousness, and pure non-conceptual emptiness.

11-EN Miraculous eyes and ears, clairvoyance, remembrance of one's past existence and total freedom of activity.

3. BUSSHŌ

佛性

"Buddha-nature"

Shakyamuni Buddha said, "All sentient beings totally possess Buddha-nature. The Tathāgata is permanently abiding, not subject to change."

Although this is the turning of the Wheel of the Law of the Great Teacher Shakyamuni, it is also the essence and enlightened vision of all the Buddhas and Patriarchs. This teaching has been studied for 2190 years, having been directly handed down through fifty generations (up to my late master Tendō Nyojō – twenty-eight generations in India, and twenty-three in China (including Nyojō). All the Buddhas and Patriarchs of the ten directions possess and maintain this teaching.

What is the meaning of "All sentient beings totally possess Buddha-nature?" It is the turning of the wheel of the Law of "What has come?" Sometimes, it is called "sentient beings," "animate beings," "living things," "living species," "totally," equals sentient beings, all living things. "Totally possess" is Buddha-nature; One part of possessing is sentient beings. At the proper time, inside and outside of sentient beings is Buddha-nature totally. It is not only valid for transmission of skin, flesh, bones, and marrow, but for all transmissions of "you possess my skin, flesh, bones and marrow."

We must know that the "possess" of "totally possess" is not related to possession or non-possession. "Totally possess" is the word and tongue of Buddha, the enlightened vision of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, and the nostrils of Zen monks. "Totally possess" does not mean initial, original, miraculous or any other kind of possession. It is, of course, not attained as a result of karma or delusion, and has nothing to do with mind, circumstance, nature, form, etc.

Therefore, that is why the correct understanding of "sentient beings totally possess" does not occur through the influence of karma, does not arise by illusory causation, does not occur naturally, and is not developed through the miraculous power of practice and enlightenment. If the "totally possess" of sentient beings depended upon karma, causation, or nature and so forth, so would the realization of saints, the awakening of the Buddhas, and the enlightened vision of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. But, that is not the case.

The entire world is free of dust, and here there can be no second person. This is because we are unaware that the root of illusion is cut off and there is no way for the disturbed flow of karma to cease. It has not been bred by deluded causation since nothing in the relative world has ever been concealed. "Nothing has been concealed" does not necessarily mean that all worlds exist. That the relative world is self-existent is an erroneous view of non-believers. Existence is not original being because it is not confined to past or present. It is not an initial occurrence because it contains nothing extra.

It is not independent existence since it is interrelated, nor is it uncreated, for it occurs simply as it is. It is not originally appearing but means rather "our everyday mind is the Way." We must first of all know that it is extremely difficult to find sentient beings within "totally possess." If we comprehend the true meaning of "totally possess", these words themselves signify complete liberation and detachment.

When scholars hear the word "Buddha-nature," they think it is a kind of "eternal self," like that expounded by the non-believer Senika. This is because they have never met a man of the Way, nor clarified their self, nor met a master. They mistake the wild movements of their minds for the enlightened wisdom of Buddha-nature. Who can say that there is enlightened wisdom in Buddha-nature? Even though enlightened persons are Buddhas, Buddha-nature is not enlightenment or awakening. The "enlightenment" of the enlightened and awakened Buddhas is not the misconceived enlightenment most people speak of. And, it is certainly not the enlightenment of a confused mind. Only the face of each Buddha and Patriarch is enlightenment.

From the Han through the Tang to the Sung dynasty, many sages of the past have travelled to India, and many have claimed to be teachers of gods and men. They taught that wild movements of the mind is the enlightenment of Buddha-nature. This is a great pity, due to a lack of study of the Buddhist Way.

Neither advanced nor initiate students of the Buddhist Way should make such a mistake. Even though one studies enlightenment, it is not the wild movements of the mind. Even if you study that movement, it is not what it appears to be. If you can understand the real movement, you will understand true enlightenment and awakening. If we can understand "Buddha," we can understand "Nature," since they penetrate each other. "Buddha-nature" is surely, then, "totally possess" because "totally possess" becomes "Buddha-nature." "Totally possess" does not mean a myriad of things, nor unified existence. Express it by raising a fist; it is not large or small. To say "Buddha-nature," is to be beyond the level of all the saints, and beyond "Buddha-nature" itself.

Some say that Buddha-nature is similar to the seed of a plant; when it receives the nourishing rain of the Dharma, it naturally sprouts – leaves, flowers, and fruit appear, and the fruit contains its own seeds. This is the view of ordinary, unenlightened people. Those holding such a view should learn that the seed, flowers and fruit each and at the same time have the pure mind [of Buddha-nature]. Within the fruit there are seeds. Although the seeds are not visible, still the roots, stem, and the rest grow. Without outside assistance the branches multiply and a large tree appears. This procedure is not outside or inside; it is true for any time of the past or present. Therefore, even though we have an unenlightened view, the root, stem, branches, and leaves all live, die, "totally possess," and become and are Buddha-nature simultaneously.

Buddha said, "In order to know the principle of Buddha-nature watch for the proper time and circumstance. When the time comes, Buddha-nature will be manifest." "In order to understand the principle of Buddha-nature" does not mean simply "knowing", but means also practising, enlightening, clarifying, and ultimately forgetting. This explaining, practising, enlightening, and mistaking or not mistaking are all "proper time and circumstance." The way to watch for proper time and circumstance is through proper time. Watch for proper time with a fly whisk, a staff, and so on. Original enlightenment, initial enlightenment, non enlightenment, right enlightenment, and their wisdom cannot be seen through either worldly or sacred knowledge.

"Watch for" is neither related to the watcher or the watched, nor to true or false watching. It is just watching. It is pure watching – not the own perception nor of the others. It is to "watch" beyond proper time. It is Buddha-Buddha, nature-nature.

Many people in the past and present have taken "the proper time and circumstance" to mean "wait for a time in the future for Buddha-nature to appear." They say, "If we practice like that, Buddha-nature will naturally appear at the proper time. Even if we study under a master and seek the Dharma, if it is not the proper time, Buddha-nature will not appear. People with such

views are wordings who expect good things to fall directly from heaven. Such people are like the non-believers who hold that everything occurs by chance.

"In order to know the principle of Buddha-nature" means "directly knowing the principle of Buddha-nature." "Watch for the proper time" and circumstance means directly knowing the proper time. That is, if we want to know Buddha-nature, we must seek the proper time and circumstance.

The expression "when the time comes" means the "time has already come." Even if we doubt it, still Buddha-nature has emerged in us.

You should know that "when the time comes" is manifest in each hour of the day. "When it comes" is as if it has already come." "When the time comes," Buddha-nature has not come. Therefore, that is why "the time has already come" is the manifestation of Buddha-nature. In other words, the truth is self-evident. "There has never been a time that has not come right now and an actualization of Buddha-nature that has not appeared right here."

When the Twelfth patriarch Anabotei, was explaining the ocean of Buddha-nature to the Thirteenth Patriarch he said, "The mountains, rivers, and great earth all depend on Buddha-nature; samadhi and the six spiritual powers appear through it."

Therefore; mountains, rivers, and the great earth are all the ocean of Buddha-nature. "All depend on" means that mountains, rivers, and the great earth depend on the right time [of Buddha-nature]. You must know that "all depend on" is like the form of the ocean of Buddha-nature; it is not concerned with inside, outside, or between. If this is so, to see mountains and rivers is to see Buddha-nature. To see Buddha-nature is to see a donkey's jaw or a horse's mouth [that is to say, it is all around us]. "All depend" equals "entirely depend" – beyond under- standing or not understanding.

"Samadhi and the six spiritual powers appear through it." You must know that appearance and non-appearance of all samadhis depend upon Buddha-nature. All six spiritual powers manifest or not manifest also depend on Buddha-nature. These six spiritual powers are not limited to those described in the Āgamas (of the Hinayānists). "Six" is not merely a convenient number; it is the perfected six pāramitās. Therefore, we should not study the six supernatural powers as being "the bright tips of a myriad grasses and the bright mind of the Buddhas and Patriarchs."

"Although we are involved with the six spiritual powers, such an obstacle occurs with the flow of the ocean of Buddha-nature.

The Fifth Patriarch, Zen Master Kōnin, was from Mount Ōbaku. He was born without a father and attained the Way while very young. He is said to be an incarnation of Saishodōsha. In his previous life, he was on Mount Sei in Kishā planting pine trees when he happened to meet the Fourth Patriarch, who was at that time travelling around the country. The Fourth Patriarch said to him, "I would like to transmit my Dharma to you, but you are too old. If you are reborn, I'll be waiting for you." Kōnin agreed. Later, he was reborn into the Shu family. His mother abandoned him in a river, but he was protected by the gods and remained unharmed for seven days. He was rescued and raised as a normal child for seven years. Once as he was walking on road in Mount Ōbai, he accidentally met the Fourth Patriarch, Dōshin. When the Patriarch saw him, although he was just a small boy, he could see he was special. The Patriarch asked him, "What's your name?" The boy replied, "I have a name, but its not a regular name." The Patriarch then asked, "What name is it?" The boy said, "It is Buddha-nature." The Patriarch said, "You don't have Buddha-nature." The boy told him, "Buddha-nature is empty, that is why you say I don't have it." The Patriarch realized that the child was a vessel of the Dharma and made him his attendant. Later, Dōshin transmitted the Eye and Treasury of the True Law to him. Thereafter, the Fifth Patriarch lived on the Eastern Mountain of Ōbai, and his profound teaching spread throughout the land.

"What is your name?" These words of the Fourth Patriarch are a profound teaching – consider them very carefully. In the past Zen Masters would often ask trainees "what's your name?" or "where are you from?" The trainees would reply "I am from [that place], or "my name is [that]." In essence the master is saying: "I am that, and you are that too."

The Fifth Patriarch answered: "I have a name, but it's not a common one." That is, there is a name but it's not a common one; a common name is not my real name. The Fourth Patriarch asked: "What is your name?" In other words, "what" is "this." "This" is Buddha-nature. He is asking about "this"; "what" is "this." Both "what" and "this" are the name. We can find this in everyday life, eating a meal or drinking green tea.

When the Fifth Patriarch said "my name is Buddha-nature," he meant "this" is Buddha-nature. "What" is that which becomes Buddha. It ["what"] is not restricted only to the family name but is "not this" and covers Buddha-nature; thus we understand "this" indicates "what" [Buddha]. When we are detached from this, there is a name. That name is Shu [all pervading]. This name is not inherited from one's father or ancestors, nor does it resemble one's mother's name. Certainly it has no relation to another person's name.

The Fourth Patriarch said, "You have no Buddha-nature." Here, "you" is not anyone in particular; understanding varies according to the person, but still it remains "no Buddha-nature." Does no-Buddha-nature exist at the highest state of Buddhahood or even in the state beyond Buddhahood? These are questions we must ask. Realize that no-Buddha-nature is all pervading and neither try to define [limit] it nor search for it. No Buddha-nature may be experienced in a moment of samadhi. When Buddha-nature becomes Buddha, or when Buddha-nature is aroused by the Buddha-seeking-mind, is it then no Buddha-nature? Ask the temple pillars this question; even ask your own Buddha-nature.

The expression "no-Buddha-nature" originated with the Fourth Patriarch. It was understood by the Fifth Patriarch who transmitted it to Joshin Daie. The latter made it his focal point of practice. Even given that "what is" is the standard of "no-Buddha-nature," still we need great effort to clarify "no-Buddha-nature." "You," "this" or "Suzu" are also [sometimes] used to clarify "it."

The Fifth Patriarch said, "You say I have no Buddha-nature because Buddha-nature is empty." Be careful here; don't interpret "empty" as meaning "nothing." If you seek to clarify the emptiness of Buddha-nature, avoid light expressions, rather speak of the finality of "no." When we say "empty" we do not mean "empty"; likewise when we say "no" we do not mean "no." We say "no" because Buddha-nature is emptiness. Through "no" used as a standard, we understand emptiness, and through emptiness we understand "no." Emptiness here differs from the emptiness of "form is emptiness." "Form is emptiness" does not mean form is transformed into emptiness or that emptiness is transformed into form. This emptiness is that of emptiness is emptiness. Within this emptiness a solid rock is emptiness. Thus the Fourth and Fifth Patriarchs questioned the existence of Buddha-nature, the emptiness of Buddha-nature, and the "is" and "is not" of Buddha-nature.

Once when the Sixth Patriarch of China, Zen Master Enō, was studying under the Fifth Patriarch Kōnin, he was asked "Where do you come from?" The Sixth Patriarch replied, "Renan." Konin said, "Why have you come here?" Enō replied, "To become a

Buddha." Konin said, "People of Renan have no Buddha-nature. How do you expect to attain Buddhahood?"

Whether people of Renan have or do not have Buddha-nature is not the point here – it is simply "People from Renan have no Buddha-nature."

"How do you expect to attain Buddhahood?" means "What kind of Buddha do you expect to become?" Generally speaking, few in the past have understood Buddha-nature. Certainly Hinayānists or scholars knew nothing about it. Only descendants of the Buddhas and Patriarchs receive and transmit it. Buddha-nature is actualized only after becoming a Buddha, not before. Actualization of Buddha-nature and attainment of Buddhahood occur simultaneously.

We must seek to clarify this principle – though to do so is not an easy matter. The ten saints and three sages failed altogether. While others have taken twenty or even thirty years to do so. We should know this. "Sentient beings possess Buddha-nature; Sentient beings do not possess Buddha-nature." Realize, actualization of Buddha-nature and attainment of Buddhahood occur simultaneously. This is the Buddhist Dharma. Had this principle not been studied, the Dharma would not exist today. If we fail to clarify this principle we will neither clarify attainment of Buddhahood nor realize it. Thus the Fifth Patriarch said to the Sixth Patriarch "People of Renan have no Buddha-nature."

"Sentient beings do not possess Buddha-nature." To a man who has just encountered a Buddha and heard the Dharma for the first time, this is the most incomprehensible, most taxing statement of all. Later, whether through having followed a good master or through having studied the sūtras, this statement is the most joy giving of all. If we do not totally feel the truth of "sentient beings do not possess Buddha-nature," then we have not yet experienced Buddha-nature.

When the Sixth Patriarch, a sincere seeker of Buddhahood, met the Fifth Patriarch, the latter said, "People of Renan have no Buddha-nature." He said nothing more than this and used no other method.

Thus we realize, the very questioning and studying of "no-Buddha-nature" is itself the direct path to Buddhahood. At the right time of "no-Buddha-nature" there is Buddhahood. If we have neither experienced nor clarified no-Buddha-nature, then we have not yet attained Buddhahood.

The Sixth Patriarch said, "Although men differ from north to south, Buddha-nature does not." Think about this very carefully; it has great significance. What does he mean "north and south"? Seek to clarify these words, for they too are a profound teaching. This statement implies that while man can attain Buddhahood, Buddha-nature cannot. I wonder whether the Sixth Patriarch intended to imply this.

The words "no-Buddha-nature" used by the Fifth and Sixth Patriarchs express the entire truth, they are absolute detachment. In the same spirit, when past Buddhas such as Shakyamuni and Kāśyapa turned the wheel of the Law they said with full conviction, "All sentient beings possess Buddha-nature." If there is a "possess" in "possess Buddha-nature" how could there be no transmission of "no-Buddha-nature."

The words "no Buddha-nature" were heard long ago in the rooms of the Fourth and Fifth Patriarchs. "No Buddha-nature" – what does this really mean? or "Buddha-nature" – how do we interpret this? These are fundamental questions. Had the Sixth Patriarch been nearer the truth, these are the questions he would have asked, leaving until later the question "not" in "possessing or not." Present day people, too, never ask what is Buddha-nature. Only they question whether it is possessed or not. While this latter question is not wrong, it is not of fundamental consideration. Therefore the "no" which is the basis of all things must be learnt as the "no" of no-Buddha-nature.

"Men have north and south, Buddha-nature does not." Consider these words of the Sixth Patriarch; study them from different angles, over and over, and contemplate them in silence, for these words have a profound meaning that must be grasped. Foolish people, misunderstanding the Sixth Patriarch's words, believe that the reason men have North and South and Buddha-nature does not is because the former has form, while the latter, being all-pervading, does not. What a ridiculous idea. Train diligently, and you will realize the stupidity of the statement for yourself.

The Sixth Patriarch said to his disciple Gyoshi^{1-EN}, "Impermanence is itself Buddha-nature; permanence is the discriminative mind."

The Sixth Patriarch's understanding of impermanence is very different from that of non-Buddhists or Hinayānists. Even though the latter teach impermanence, they do not fully realize its implication.

Therefore, teaching, clarifying impermanence, and practice are by their very nature impermanent. Kanzeon proclaims the Dharma by manifesting himself in a form best suited to save sentient beings. This is Buddha-nature. Sometimes the bodhisattvas use a long form to proclaim a long Dharma, sometimes a short form to proclaim a short Dharma.

Impermanence is itself Buddha-nature"; thus both saints and ordinary men are impermanent. Only in the eyes of small minded, ignorant people is this not so. If this latter view were correct, the body of the Buddha would be very small indeed. Hence the Sixth Patriarch's statement: "Impermanence itself is Buddha-nature." Permanence is "not turning." In other words is something that is unaffected by attachment – detachment, coming-going, and so forth. In this sense it [Buddha-nature] has permanency.

Therefore, since grasses, trees, and bushes are impermanent, they are Buddha-nature. The very impermanence of man's body and mind is Buddha-nature. Supreme enlightenment and parinirvāṇa, because they are impermanent, are Buddha-nature. Hinayānists and scholars of the ābhidharma and sūtras must be surprised and puzzled by this; truly they are no better than devils.

The Fourteenth Patriarch, Nāgārjuna, is sometimes called Ryusho or Ryumo. Although a native of western India, he proclaimed the Dharma in the south – a region where men believed good action resulted in [material] gain. They listened to his words and spoke among themselves. "Wealth is the most valuable thing to man; yet he speaks only of Buddha-nature, a thing unseen. Nāgārjuna said, "If you want to see Buddha-nature, you must break free of the self" They asked, "Is Buddha-nature large or small?" He replied "Neither, nor is it wide or narrow, painful or pleasurable, nor is it related to death or birth." Upon these words all were converted.

Once, when Nāgārjuna was sitting in Zazen, he manifested the form of complete freedom – a radiant full moon. Those present listened to his words; they could not see his form. Among those in attendance was a rich man's son called

1-EN Hsing-ssu [-740] The founder of the Seigen school. He was given the title Kōsai-zenji after his death.

Kānadeva^{1-EN}. He said to the assembly: "Do you see his wonderful form?" They answered, "Our eyes see nothing; our ears hear nothing; our minds know nothing; our bodies experience nothing." Kānadeva said, "The venerable one is manifesting the form of Buddha. It is formless Samadhi, like the full moon. Buddha-nature radiates from within and illuminates." With these words the Dharma talk ended and the moon disappeared.

Sitting in a lotus posture, Nagarjuna recited this verse:

"Manifesting a full moon.

I express the body of all Buddhas.

The proclamation of the Dharma is without form, Neither has it shape nor sound."

Understand, true proclamation of the Law is without shape or sound; it is "no form." Nagarjuna proclaimed the Dharma many times and in many places. Once he said, "If you want to see Buddha-nature, you must break free of the self." That is, there is a way to "see" but it involves "breaking free of the self." Consider the self: it is not singular, yet it still amounts to seeing Buddha-nature. Think of it in terms of every day seeing. '

"Buddha-nature is neither large nor small." This refutes the Hinayanist and ordinary person's View that Buddha-nature is vast. Adopt the principle "Buddha-nature is neither large nor small" and think and speak accordingly. Thinking and hearing, which are tied up in these words, should not differ.

Manifesting a round full moon is actualization of all the Buddhas. Since all the Buddhas are actualized, the form of a full moon appears. Therefore, we must study all the forms of long, short, square, and round body. If we fail to grasp the meaning of "body" and "manifesting," the full moon will not be understood; consequently the bodies of all the Buddhas will not appear. Fools think, "He is expressing his form as a full moon." A ridiculous idea, proof that these people have not inherited the Buddhist Way. How, and at what place and time can he express his form in a body other than his own. Nāgārjuna was simply sitting on the dais – his form no different to anyone else who is just sitting. Realize that the body is an actualization of the full moon.

The actualized body is not square, round, existent or non-existent, hidden or revealed, or is it limitless form – it is just actualization of form. Here the moon is full, but know that it can be either full or quarter.

Since the actualized body does not relate to the self, it is not Nāgārjuna – it is the body of all the Buddhas. Furthermore, because of its nature it transcends all the Buddha bodies. That is to say it is beyond the body of Buddha itself.

Buddha-nature is a radiant full moon. This is true, but it is not limited to this form; much less can it be put into words, or actualized as body or mind. It cannot be found in the world of phenomena, yet it appears in the phenomenal world as the body of all the Buddhas. It is characteristic of proclaiming the Dharma with no form. When no form becomes formless samadhi, the body is actualized.

The assembly looked at the full moon's shape, but could not see the real form of Nagarjuna: his proclamation of the Law had been transformed into the boundless and formless [Buddha-nature]. Now seen, now hidden – this is the function of the moon's roundness. At the right time of sitting and manifesting a body of absolute freedom, the entire assembly is merely hearing the sound of the Law and not seeing the master's form.

Nagarjuna's Dharma heir, Kānadeva, clearly saw the full moon's shape, its roundness, and its actualization and knew all Buddha-natures and Buddha-bodies. There are many who studied under Nāgārjuna, but none can be compared to Kānadeva. He was permitted to sit on his master's right, become head of the assembly, and finally assume his master's position. Later, he transmitted the Dharma, the Eye and Treasury of the True Law, just as Mahākāśyapa had done on Vulture Peak. Before Nāgārjuna was converted to Buddhism he had many disciples. After he began practice of the Way all left him. Later, it was to Kānadeva, his only Dharma heir, that he transmitted the Eye and Treasury of the Great Law. Such one to one transmission is the tradition of the supreme Buddhist Way.

Still, though, evil men proclaiming themselves Dharma heirs of Nāgārjuna wrote many treatises and commentaries, which they ascribed to Nāgārjuna. These forged works have been responsible for confusing and misleading many. Nāgārjuna's only true disciple was Kānadeva; he alone transmitted his master's words. Realize this, for it is a correct belief. Even though they knew these works were forged, still some received and transmitted them. This is truly a great slander of the wisdom of Nāgārjuna's transmission. We can only pity such people.

Honourable Kānadeva, pointing at Nāgārjuna's manifested body, announced to the assembly: "This is actualization of Buddha-nature in the form of Nāgārjuna. How do I know this? Because formless samadhi is like a full moon. The principle of Buddha-nature is perfect emptiness, clear and bright."

Among those in the thousands of worlds of men and gods who have heard the Buddhist Law, Kānadeva alone understood that Buddha-nature was being actualized in Nāgārjuna's manifesting body. Others think only that Buddha-nature cannot be seen, heard, or recognized. They do not realize that actualization of a body is Buddha-nature, thus they cannot understand this [previous] expression. Patriarchs do not conceal this knowledge, only most people, with their eyes and ears closed, cannot find it. They lack bodily awareness of it, so they are unable to understand it. Even when they see and venerate before formless samadhi, which is like a full moon, they lack total understanding. "The principle of Buddha-nature is perfect emptiness, clear and bright."

The actual body of Nagarjuna clarifies Buddha-nature – it is clear and bright, perfect emptiness. Therefore, the body that is clarifying Buddha-nature expresses the body of all Buddhas. There is not one Buddha not actualizing Buddha-nature in the form of Buddha. Buddha-form is the actualized body. The actualized body is Buddha-nature.

Therefore, the Buddha-form and Patriarch form are actualized in the four elements and five skhandas. All virtue of the Buddha is contained in this virtue. The virtue of Buddha is completely formed and actualized in our body. The unlimited, boundless activity of virtue is one part of the body's actualization. The words of Nāgārjuna and Kānadeva are the ultimate in Buddhist wisdom, the like of which has not since been heard anywhere. How many scholars of the sūtras and abidharmas have mistaken the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs?

Since the ancient Sung Dynasty, many have attempted to portray this relationship in our body, mind, in emptiness, or on a

1-EN Āryadeva. Lived in south India in the third century. He was the founder of the Mādhyamika school. He was killed by a non-believer.

wall. By brush they accomplished nothing more than a circular mirror positioned on the Dharma seat – their idea of the full moon shape of Nāgārjuna’s manifesting body. Hundreds of years have since passed and no one has realized this mistake, only they marvel at the work. If we see the round moon shape manifested in the body as nothing more than a circle, then it may as well be a painted rice cake. To derive pleasure from such understanding is more than laughable.

No one, neither monk nor lay, in great Sung China really understood the words of Nāgārjuna or Kāṇadeva; much less could they touch their own real form. They, indifferent to practice and lacking drive in pursuing the Truth, could neither understand round or full moon. Buddhas, past and present, meet the manifesting body. Do not waste your time gawking at painted rice cakes.

A drawing of the actualization of the body in the form of a full moon must show the form of the manifesting body on the Dharma seat. There must be raised eyebrows and blinking eyes. The very skin, flesh, bone, and marrow of the Eye and Treasury of the True Law must sit – a strong, balanced Zazen sit. This is like the transmission of Shakyamuni and Kāśyapa because it becomes Buddha, it becomes a Patriarch. If the painting of the form of the moon is not round, there is no form, no proclaiming of the Dharma, no sound, no colour, and no function. Since the manifesting body is a round moon shape, those who seek it must draw a round moon. When you draw a round moon, draw a full moon, the actualization of the moon’s fullness. People fail to draw the actualization of the body, the round moon the full moon, the body of the Buddhas, or the proclaiming of the Dharma. Only they produce pictures of rice cakes – useless! Think about it and question, “Can anyone really accept such a situation?”

The moon has a round shape; the round shape is the body’s complete actualization. When you consider a round shape, do not think of a small coin or rice cake. The body’s form is that of a full moon, the shape is that of a full moon. With proper understanding of roundness, even a coin or rice cake can be studied.

In Autumn 1223, my pilgrimage through great Sung China took me to Kori Monastery on Mount Aikuō^{1-EN}. This was my first visit here. I recalled that on the walls of that monastery western corridor were painted images of the thirty-three Patriarchs of India and China. At that time I knew nothing about such paintings.

Later, during the summer training period of 1225, I visited there again. As I was walking along the [western] corridor with the guest master, Sokei of Seishoku, I asked him: “What kind of portraits are these?” He answered [standing before the image of Nāgārjuna], “This is the actualization of Nāgārjuna’s body in the form of a round moon.” But his words were shallow; he seemed unsure. I said, “Really, it resembles a painting of a rice cake, doesn’t it?” He smiled broadly, but his lack of understanding was evident. He had not grasped the meaning of a painted rice cake.

As we walked together to look at the reliquary and the other monastery sights, I raised the subject again, but he failed to see the problem. Other monks offered opinions, but they too had missed the point. “Let’s ask the abbot,” I said. The abbot at that time was Daiko. The guest master said, “He lacks the essence. He won’t know.” So I gave up this idea.

From the way the guest master spoke, you would think he had great understanding, but he like everyone else there had no words to offer. All past abbots of that temple had been unconcerned with the painting; they neither had doubts about it nor amended it.

A thing that cannot be painted is best left unpainted; or if we must, then at least do so correctly. The body in the form of a round moon is one such thing, that cannot be painted.

When they have failed to realize that Buddha-nature is not perceived by mental cognition, they cannot hope to grasp the meaning of “Buddha-nature” and “no Buddha-nature.” It is rare, in fact, that any even try to clarify these terms. Truly there is lack of earnest concentration on the Way.

There are many abbots of various Zen temples who do not even mention “Buddha-nature” throughout their entire life. Some say, “Those who study Buddhism talk about Buddha-nature, but those who practice don’t” These people are worse than beasts – just evil beings that defile the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Both study and practice [Zazen] is the Way of the Buddhas and Tathagatas, is it not? Realize that in Buddhism there is no distinction between study and practice.

National Teacher Saian of Enkan prefecture in Kosu was one of Baso Dōitsu’s foremost disciples. Once he said to an assembly of monks: “All sentient beings possess Buddha-nature.”

Consider these words carefully. What does he mean, “all sentient beings” – what is “a sentient being”? Firstly, there is no one kind of sentient being, each being differs according to circumstantial and personal karma. Thus, each has different views and perception. There are unenlightened, non-believers, the three vehicles, the five vehicles, and so forth. In Buddhism, a sentient is a being that possesses a mind. That is to say, mind means sentient being. In the sense that mind means sentient being, things without mind are sentient beings. Therefore, mind is sentient being. Sentient beings are Buddha-nature. Grass, trees, and lands are mind; thus they are sentient beings. Because they are sentient beings they are Buddha-nature. Sun, moon, and stars are mind; thus they are sentient beings; thus they are Buddha-nature.

The National Teacher’s words “possesses Buddha-nature” is like this. If this were not so it would not be Buddhism. The National Teacher’s statement simply means “all sentient beings possess Buddha-nature.” That is, no sentient being – no Buddha-nature. “Do all Buddhas possess Buddha-nature?” Think about this question and ask the National Teacher. Why is it said that “sentient beings possess Buddha-nature,” rather than “sentient beings equal Buddha-nature?” This question too deserves careful consideration. Drop off the possess in “possess Buddha-nature.” Here, “drop off” captures the essence; that is to say is ultimate freedom. Thus we have “all Buddha-natures possess sentient beings.” In this truism, both sentient beings and Buddha-nature are dropped off.

Although the National Teacher’s words were beyond his level of understanding, there will come a time when they will be equal.

“His words were beyond his level of understanding – do not take this to mean his words are unreliable, a misinterpretation of the truth. On the contrary, even though he himself does not understand the truth, he embodies it. That is to say, there is still the four elements, five skhandas, skin, flesh, bone, and marrow [of Buddha-nature]. Just like this, it may take a life time to understand the Truth and another lifetime to express it.

Zen Master Dai’e of Mount Daien said to the assembled monks: “All sentient beings have no Buddha-nature.” Among the men

1-EN Kuang-li ch’an temple on A-yu-wang shan. Mount Aikuō is located in present Chekiang. One of the “Five Mountains” of Chinese Zen.

and gods who heard this, some were overjoyed, others confused. Shakyamuni taught "All sentient beings have Buddha-nature," yet Dai'e said: "All sentient beings have no Buddha-nature." "Have" and "have no" are totally different; "which is correct?" is a question that has been asked by many. "Sentient beings have no Buddha-nature" is, however, the ultimate in the Buddhist Way. Reason would argue Enkan's "have Buddha-nature" supports Shakyamuni, but opposes Dai'e, yet the latter and the former words are not essentially different. Enkan was the first generation disciple of Baso and Dai'e the second. In this case the second generation surpasses the first and even the Old Master himself [Baso].

Dai'e's "all sentient beings have no Buddha-nature" is the ultimate truth. It is the boundless universe. Ask yourself, "How can sentient beings have Buddha-nature?" If sentient beings had Buddha-nature, they would be ranked as demons: a demon in the form of a sentient. Buddha-nature is Buddha-nature and sentient beings are sentient beings. Realize that sentient beings do not from the beginning have Buddha-nature; yet you also cannot endow yourself with it since it is not something that appears now for the first time."

Chang drinks, and Li gets drunk"--it is not like this. A sentient being that originally has Buddha-nature is not a sentient being. As there are sentient beings, then there is no Buddha-nature.

Hence Hyakujo's words: If we teach that sentient beings possess Buddha-nature, we slander the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. If we teach that sentient beings possess no Buddha-nature, we slander the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Even though both "have Buddha-nature" and "have not Buddha-nature" are slanderous to the Three Treasures, we cannot just remain silent [on the subject]. Ask Dai'e and Hyakujo: "you both taught about Buddha-nature, did you not? Was that not slanderous? Even given that you did, wouldn't such a teaching confuse more than clarify. Teaching and listening are contingent on each other: each must occur together." Turning to Dai'e: "You said 'all sentient beings have no Buddha nature,' but you did not say all Buddha-nature has no sentient beings,' or 'all Buddha-nature has no Buddha-nature,' much less could you realize, or even dream, that 'all Buddhas have no Buddha-nature.' What have you to say about this?"

Once Zen Master Daichi of Mount Hyakujo said to an assembly of monks: "Buddha is the highest vehicle, the supreme wisdom, and the one that is beyond the Buddhist Way. He is the Buddha possessing Buddha-nature, the master teacher, the one that moves in the world of non-attachment, and the one with unfettered knowledge. He utilizes causation and, freely using charitable knowledge, controls cause and effect. He faces life, but is not restricted by life. He faces death, but is not obstructed by death. He is of the five skandhas, yet is unimpeded by them. Staying, going, entering, and leaving are freely done at will. Superior or inferior, high or low have no meaning. All possess these qualities, even the smallest ant. Thus we live in a world that is unimaginably wondrous and pure."

These are the words of Hyakujo. The five skandhas are our unchanging body. The five skandhas do not obstruct the open gate. Utilizing life, do not cling to life. Utilizing death, do not be hindered by death. Do not love life and fear death; they are in the realm of Buddha-nature. Attachment to life and fear of death is not Buddhism. Life and death are simply the result of causation. When we know this, we are no longer obstructed or confused. This is the highest vehicle Buddha. Where there is this Buddha, there is a wondrous and pure land.

Obaku was sitting in Nansen's tea room. Nansen said: "[It says in the Nirvana-Sutra] if we practice samadhi and prajna equally, we will clearly see Buddha-nature. What is your understanding of this?" Obaku replied, "We gain essential understanding through being non attached at all times." Nansen replied, "You've realized this for yourself, haven't you?" Obaku replied, "Oh no, not really." Nansen said, "Money for drinking water may be set aside, but who can return the money used for straw sandals?" Obaku made no reply.

"Practice samadhi and prajna equally." Do not take this to mean Buddha-nature is clearly seen when neither practice takes precedence over the other. Rather, understand that when Buddha-nature is clearly seen, samadhi and prajna are practiced equally. Nansen said, "What is your understanding of this?" In other words, "Who is it that is clearly seeing Buddha-nature?" All of the expressions in this dialogue are sayings of the Way.

Obaku's words: "We gain essential understanding through being non-attached at all times." That is to say: "At all times, everywhere there is no clinging to anything. Not clinging to anything occurs at all times." Therefore we clearly see Buddha-nature. As for "time": when will "time" fail to be? In what land will it not exist? Think about "time." Does it mean "time" as we know it, "time" in some other world, or "time" in the Radiant Pure Land?^{1-EN} Whichever it might be, the point is "do not be attached to anything." This is a fundamental truth; it does not change according to circumstances.

"You've realized this for yourself, haven't you?" That is: "this is your own utterance, your own understanding isn't it?" Do not take this to mean this understanding is limited to Obaku. Obaku was the vessel from which the words came, but the essence of his words is a universal truth.

Obaku said: "Oh no, not really." In Sung China this was a more or less standard reply to questions asked about one's ability. Even if one had the ability [in question], this is the reply given [out of modesty]. Don't, therefore, take "Oh no, not really" to literally mean "Oh no, not really: the overall meaning transcends the words themselves. Obaku has his viewpoint, he is a master, he is Obaku, yet still he says "Oh no, not really." When a water buffalo emerges it says "moo." The two utterances are not dissimilar: the underlying spirit is the same. Our words should be like this.

Nansen said: "Money for drinking water may be set aside, but who can return the money used for straw sandals?" That is, money for water - Obaku's level of enlightenment - may be set aside, but the price of straw sandals - the value of practice - cannot be repaid. Seek to clarify this throughout life. Let's take the expression apart: "money for drinking water may be set aside." Think about this: Why is he unconcerned with the "money for drinking water"? "Who can return the money for straw sandals?": That is to say, during his years of pilgrimage he wore out many straw sandals. Thus he should say "If money for straw sandals cannot be returned, they should not be worn." or he should say, "Two or three pairs." This is the correct expression; it contains the essence.

"Obaku made no reply." This does not mean his answer was rejected or vice versa. With real Zen students this could not happen. Within silence there is real meaning, behind the smile as world. This is the meaning of seeing Buddha-nature in everyday practice.

Concerning this dialogue: Isan said to Gyozan, "Obaku didn't get Nansen, did he?" Gyozan replied, "Not so, Obaku had the ability to catch tigers." Isan replied, "Your vision lacks nothing." Isan said, "Obaku had the ability to catch tigers." With such ability he was able to pet tigers. Catching and petting tigers, moving among strangers and friends - different expression for

1-EN The Buddha land of Samantabhadra.

the same thing. Clearly seeing Buddha-nature – our eyes are open. Buddha-nature clearly seeing – our eyes are lost. Speak quickly, hurry, hurry! The Buddha's vision lack nothing. Therefore, any thing, even a half thing, is unattached. A billion things are all unattached. Hundreds of thousands of hours are unattached. Thus it is said, "One wicker basket throughout the day. Attached or unattached, vines inextricably bound together – all heavens everywhere come together; after that no words exist.

A monk asked Master Jōshū: "Does a dog have Buddha-nature or not?" Consider this very carefully. The point is not whether a dog does or does not have Buddha-nature. Rephrased the question reads: "Given that Buddha-nature exists in a dog – a thing that doesn't practice – why is there need to practice?" Jōshū may resent this question, but he may have discovered the kind of disciple he's been searching for these past thirty years.

Jōshū said "Mu." Mu is the way to practice. The self-named Mu of Buddha-nature, of the dog, of the observer is like this mu. Thus Mu is all powerful, rock melting Mu.

The monk asked: "All sentient beings have Buddha-nature, why doesn't the dog?" This is explained as: "If there are no sentient beings, there can be no sentient beings, and of course no dog. This is the meaning of "what lives?" Why is it necessary to ascribe Mu to the dog or Buddhanature?"

Jōshū said, "It [the dog] is bound by karma." That is, it is karma. There is karma, therefore there is a dog – no dog, no Buddha-nature. Karma has no "meeting" with the dog, so how can the dog encounter Buddha-nature? All such functions are bound with karma.

Another monk asked Jōshū "Does a dog have Buddha-nature or not?" Clearly this monk was familiar with Jōshū's thought. Questions about Buddha-nature are the every day occurrences of eating rice and taking tea of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Jōshū said: "It has." Here, "it has" is not the existence [u] of the Abhidharmists of Sarvāstivāda^{1-EN} school." It has should be understood in the context of Buddhism. Buddha's "it has" is Jōshū's "it has," is the same as the dog's "it has," which is the same as Buddha-nature's "it has."

A monk asked: "Given it has Buddha-nature, what is the purpose of the [physical] body?" What does he mean by "has?" Is it in the present, in the past, or already possessed? Although "has" seems to be related to all other forms of existence, this "has" alone shines brightly. Is "has" something that can be put somewhere or not? The practice of trying to put it somewhere is not entirely correct, but not totally useless.

Jōshū said, "Knowingly and deliberately it sinned." These words are Commonly and Widely used, but take on special significance as Jōshū's saying of the Way. The meaning of "knowingly it sinned" is doubted by many. The word "put" is difficult to comprehend here, and in fact is not necessary. There is a saying, "If you want to know the undying fellow in his heritage, don't separate yourself from your bag of skin. The undying man cannot be separated from this bag of skin. "Knowingly sinned" is not equal to "put into a skin bag" and vice versa. "Knowingly" is "deliberately sinning". Know that "deliberately sinning" is hidden within the daily activities of the liberated body. This, is the meaning of "put in." When the liberated body of practice is correctly hidden, self and others are truly concealed. Do not, then, say you are still confined with a bunch of louts. There's more: The High Patriarch Ummon said, "By learning everything about the Buddha-Dharma, you become confused," Even halfway through such study, there has been a long period of confusion and mistakes. Days and months on end nothing more than repeated failures to push something into the dog's bag of skin. "Knowingly and deliberately it sinned" is "has Buddha-nature."

At a discourse given by Priest Chosa Keishin, lay man Chiku Shosho said, "An earthworm that is cut in two continues to move in both parts. Which part contains the Buddha-nature?" Chosa said, "Don't be deluded." "But how do you explain the movement?" asked Shosho. Chosa replied, "The elements have not yet scattered."

"An earthworm that is cut in two" implies that originally there was one worm; is this Shosho's understanding. Everyday life of Buddhas and Patriarchs is not like this. Originally the worm was not one; it was could not be cut into two. Think deeply about one and two.

"Continues to move in both parts." This too implies that prior to being cut it was one. Does this mean that one part has transcended Buddhahood? Shosho spoke of "two parts," but don't accept this expression blindly. It is true to say that both parts were originally one, but is there only the one total existence. "Continues to move in both parts." Here "move" is the simultaneous action of samadhi and wisdom.

"Which part contains Buddha-nature." That is better rephrased as: "The Buddha-nature is cut in two; which part contains the worm?" Consider this very carefully.

"[It] continues to move in both parts" can mean one of two things: (1) Because there is movement there is no Buddha-nature; or (2) because there is movement there is Buddha-nature, but in which movement is it?

Chosa replied "Don't be deluded." Think about this: Is he saying "Don't be deluded about '[it] continues to move in both parts,' or 'there is no delusion in Buddha-nature' or is he simply saying "there is no delusion anywhere – irrespective of Buddha-nature or the two parts."

"How do you explain the movement." Are we to understand that because there is movement there are two Buddha-natures or because there is movement there is no Buddha-nature?

"The elements have not yet scattered." That is, Buddha-nature has emerged. Do we take movement to mean Buddha-nature or to mean wind and fire. Realize that Buddha-nature and wind and fire can neither emerge together nor independently, nor is wind and fire within itself Buddha-nature. Therefore, Chosa neither said the worm had nor did not have Buddha-nature. He said only: "Do not be deluded."

"Do not be deluded" and "The elements have not yet scattered." Chosa's words elucidate the function of Buddha-nature. The words "the elements have not yet scattered" deserve special consideration, clarify them in silence.

"Not yet scattered." What is the principle here? Does it mean that there is an amalgamation of wind and fire that has not yet scattered? – No, hardly. Wind and fire have not yet scattered means Buddha proclaiming the Dharma. Not yet scattered wind and fire means Dharma proclaiming Buddha. Put in an other way: At the right time, the Buddha proclaims the Dharma in one sound; one sound proclaiming the Dharma is the right time. The Dharma is one sound; it is the one sound of the Dharma.

1-EN One of the twenty schools of Hinayana, which held that the Dharma has real existence.

That Buddha-nature exists in life but not in death is a belief held only by those with the most superficial understanding. Buddha-nature and no Buddha-nature exist both in life and in death. In scattering and not scattering there is both Buddha-nature and no Buddha-nature. If we believe Buddha-nature is contingent on movement or non-movement, existence or non-existence, consciousness or non-consciousness, divine power or non-divine power, knowledge or non-knowledge, or nature or non-nature then we are truly a non-believer.

Since ancient times, foolish people have believed man's divine consciousness to be Buddha-nature – how ridiculous, how laughable! Do not try to define Buddha-nature, this just confuses. Rather, think of it as a wall, a tile, or a stone, or, better still, if you can, just accept that Buddha-nature is inconceivable to the rational mind.

This was written and delivered to the assembly of monks at Kannondōri, Kōshōhōrinji in October, 1241. It was recopied by Ejō on January 19, 1243.

4. SHINJINGAKUDO

身心學道

"Learning through the body and mind"

The Way of Buddha is the true Way; it does not contain anything false. If you use the explanations of non-believers you will stray from the Buddhist Way. Zen Master Nangaku Ejō^{1-EN} said: "We have both practice and enlightenment but they are difficult to harmonize. We must be careful not to misinterpret Buddha's Way; if practice is not harmonized with enlightenment it is easy to go astray. Every Buddha in each generation since Shakyamuni has harmonized practice with enlightenment."

There are two forms of Buddhist practice: 1) learning through the mind; and 2) learning through the body. When we first begin to learn through the mind, we must understand the various states of consciousness – e.g. citta, karita, irida^{2-EN}. After we comprehend these states, we must develop bodaishin, "the Buddha-seeking mind." If we earnestly seek the Buddha we will be able to feel his compassion on us and ultimately master practice and enlightenment.

The Buddha-seeking mind is difficult to acquire but we have the examples of the Patriarchs to guide us. If we study the lives and sayings of the Patriarchs seriously, our Buddha-seeking mind will be aroused. If our study is diligent we can master the various states of mind; kobusshin, "original Buddha-mind"; heijōshin, "everyday mind"; and sangai isshin, "universal mind." After we develop the mind of practice through enlightenment we will realize that the source of all these forms of mind is "no-mind." "No-mind" is the true Buddhist mind – undivided, beyond discrimination of opposites – and contains no analysis. To comprehend the true Way we need "thinking without thinking."

For example: [When Shakyamuni] bestowed the golden robe [to Mahākāśyapa]; [when Bodhidharma bestowed the seal of enlightenment to Eka and said,] "you possess my marrow," and [the filth Patriarch Kōnin's] transmission in the rice polishing hut. These are all learning through the mind^{3-EN}.

Shaving the head and wearing the black robe is the mark of one who wishes to learn through the mind. When you begin to study the Buddhist Way, your mind must undergo a conversion. We must seek the true Way with the same determination [as Siddharta] when he renounced his life in the palace and set forth to exchange his limited mind for the Buddha-mind.

Some people might think that renouncing the world is a sign of discrimination [dividing the world into monastic and non-monastic] but entering the priesthood should be a transcending of the mind of analysis. This is the stage of "non-thinking" beyond egocentric cognition. If you reach this state of "non-thinking" you will realize the true, luminous nature of mind – "non-thinking" must become the eye through which you view phenomenon. The activity of every Buddha is based on "non-thinking." If we continuously practice "non-thinking" enlightenment automatically increases.

Everyone possesses inherently the Buddha-mind but if they fail to practice the true Way it will remain dormant. We have, however, the example of Buddhist practice to follow and if we persevere, our Buddha-mind will manifest itself and we can receive the seal of transmission.

What do we learn when we confront the Buddha-mind? First, consider the various forms of mountains, water, and earth. There are many kinds of mountains; some are like great Mt. Sumeru, while others are small; some cover a vast expanse of land, but others are very high. Water also appears in numerous ways: celestial, terrestrial, great rivers, small streams, large and small ponds, oceans, lakes, etc. And who can describe the various shapes and forms that the earth takes?

Remember, however, that land is not always soil [that is, earth, although very great, is not always fruitful; similarly, everyone has the Buddha-nature but if not manifested through practice it will never bear fruit]. Symbolically, there is the land of the heart and the land of treasure. Yet all these lands are based on the experience of enlightenment. Mountains, water and earth have their origin in "emptiness" and are the manifestation of "Form is emptiness."

Everyone has a different conception regarding natural phenomenon – there are many interpretations of the sun, moon, stars and water. For example, people on earth look upon water as nothing special, but celestial beings think of it as a great treasure. Different perspective, different observation. To see things properly, we must accept them the way they are – we must combine the 'seer' and the 'seen' in one action. Our mind should be enlivened by the action of undivided mind.

[If we truly combine the 'seer' with the 'seen', everything will be understood in its true perspective. Usually, we think of natural objects – e.g., earth, rivers, sun, moon, stars – as things outside our mind; but actually these things are mind itself. Do not think that this means everything is only inside your mind]. Abandon notions of outside or inside, coming and going. Undivided mind is not outside or inside; it comes and goes freely without attachment. One thought: mountain, water, earth. Next thought, a new mountain, water, earth. Every thought is independent, newly created, vital and instantaneous.

Undivided mind is not concerned with big or small, far or near, being or non-being, gain or loss, recognition or non-recognition, enlightenment or non-enlightenment. Undivided mind transcends opposites. In Buddhist practice, study of the mind is the way to attain stable, undivided action beyond the world of relativity. We should accept things as they come – i.e., independent and momentary.

We must be very careful to distinguish between reality and ideas of reality. For example, the notion of what a house looks like is often very different from the actual appearance. Again, there is a great difference between simply leaving home and true renunciation of the world.

In Buddhism, there are various ways to attain true knowledge. The two principal means of transmission from master to disciple are the methods of tenji and toki^{4-EN}.

When we study Buddhism in either system, we must be careful not to let statements like "The three worlds are mind only" or "The dharma world is nothing but mind" become mere abstract notions. We use the expression "wall, tile, stones" [the basic

1-EN Nan-yüen Huai-jang, 677-744.

2-EN Various terms used to describe the mind.

3-EN This refers to the famous story of the silent transmission from Shakyamuni to Mahākāśyapa on Vulture Peak. Buddha held up a flower without speaking and only Mahākāśyapa smiled. See the chapter, Udonge. Eka (Hui-ko, 487-593), the second Chinese Patriarch. Kōnin (Hung-jen 643-716) bestowed the law of transmission to his famous disciple Daikan Enō (Hui-neng, 638-713).

4-EN Tenji makes use of koans and private interviews with a master. In toki, the master teaches his disciples by example, gives special advice and adjusts his teaching in accordance with his disciples' individual ability.

elements of a house] to emphasize the fact that "The three worlds are mind only', must become a living concept in everyday life.

[Zen Master Sōzan^{5-EN}] who lived during the T'ang Dynasty, began to show his understanding of Buddhism before the Kantsu period [860-873] but did not realize full enlightenment until after the period was over. When he was completely enlightened he could walk through mud and be splashed with dirty water without being upset – he simply accepted mud as mud, and dirty water as dirty water. He was a free man, unattached to ideas of like or dislike. Such power comes from non-attachment.

Physical things – for example, a pillar, a fence, a wall or a stone lantern – are objects of experience but each expresses itself independently and is self-generating. If our vision is true, activity will be seen to function naturally in physical objects and our understanding of phenomenon will be complete and cover the ten quarters of existence. The Buddha-mind covers the ten quarters and there is no gate to enter [to find it].

Hotsubodaishin is the mind of a true follower of Buddha's Way. Hotsubodaishin is the continual perception of the Buddha-mind. Questions concerning life and death, the desire for nirvana, and many other reasons cause one to seek the Buddha-mind. We must not wait for a certain time or place to seek enlightenment; enlightenment never depends on circumstances of time or place, or intellectual ability. Buddha-mind appears naturally by itself since Buddha-mind is the origin [of all real activity]. It cannot be defined by existence or non-existence, good or bad. It is not influenced by place, circumstance, or karma. Sometimes people think that because in Buddhist doctrine there is no beginning or end Buddha-mind does not have real existence; but remember Buddha-mind is self-generating and appears everywhere – it is the basis of reality.

When our practice has ripened we realize that the entire Dharma world is covered by hotsubodaishin – [this is true experience of mind]. People often try to change their circumstances, although of course, this is not possible. Abandon such fruitless activities and develop proper understanding of the Way. Objectivity and subjectivity should work together – object and subject should join hands. Two substances – one identity.

[Most people think hotsubodaishin is only found in Buddhas.] Hotsubodaishin is found even in hell, demons, animals, and shuras^{6-EN}. Hotsubodaishin is like the pure, lucid, undivided mind of an infant. Through this mind, everything becomes clear. Each particle of the phenomenal world is interrelated; but still each particle exists of itself. These units cannot be numbered one, two, or three [that is, they are not defined by time or space] because they are related to limitless experience. Physical forms – e.g. a round lotus leaf or the sharp edge of a diamond–have a unique shape but such shapes occur throughout the phenomenal world and cannot be numbered.

Concerning Buddha-mind, there is the following story: Long ago a monk approached Daishō Kokushi^{7-EN} and asked, "What is the original Buddha-mind?" He replied "Wall, fence, tiles, stones." Usually people do not consider those things as the Buddha-mind, yet actually they are rooted in original Buddha-mind and express the Buddha-nature. "Wall, fence, tiles, stones" symbolize "everyday mind." This mind is not concerned with the past or future worlds – it is continually working now, in the present, and concerns itself only with each new moment. "Everyday mind" is its own accomplishment, self-contained and self-fulfilling. Ancient times are cut off and past, present, and future exist together in each moment. Keep your mind in the present. If we always think about the past, our entire vision will revert to the past and it will be distorted.

"Everyday mind" opens its gates for each moment of existence – life and death, coming and going enter freely. Do not think of heaven and earth as this world or the next; know that they co-exist eternally in each passing moment. Generally, people never think about the nature of heaven or earth unless something unexpected occurs. For me, a sudden and unexpected sneeze is like an echo that symbolizes the instantaneous co-existence of life and death, heaven and earth in each moment. The entire content and meaning of heaven and earth and its relationship to the mind reduces itself to one eternal moment. If we fail to understand this we will never grasp the significance of a sneeze or any seemingly minor occurrence. '

All our activity is rooted in the eternal nature of "everyday mind." Most of the time we forget this but Buddhas are always aware of this fact. If we have hoshin – the resolve to attain supreme enlightenment – surely we will enter the Way of Buddha. This desire for enlightenment must be self-generating; it cannot come from others. Enlightenment is the natural activity of "everyday mind." This is the Way of learning through the mind.

Now let us consider learning through the body. Buddhist practice through the body is more difficult than

5-EN Tao-shang (839-901).

6-EN The world of carnage.

7-EN Nanyō Echū (Nan-yang Hui-Chang, 683-769).

practice through the mind. Intellectual comprehension in learning through the mind must be united to practice through our body. This unity is called shinjitsunintai – “the real body of man.” Shinjitsunintai is the perception of “everyday mind” throughout the phenomenal world. If we harmonize the practice of enlightenment with our body the entire World will be seen in its true form. If we realize shinjitsunintai, we will be separated from evil, and be able to keep the eight precepts along with the vow to protect the Three Treasures. Shinjitsunintai is the real goal of Buddhist practice. Everyone who seeks the Way should keep the notion of shinjitsunintai firmly in their minds and not be led astray by their own false views. Zen Master Hyakujō^{8-EN} once said, “Men originally possess the pure detachment body of Buddha and our body itself is Buddha.” If we accept his saying at face value we might think that we do not need practice or enlightenment to realize the Buddhist Way. Hyakujō’s statement is not merely a hermit’s enigmatic saying. Such a bold affirmation can only be uttered after years of merit, practice and enlightenment. If we attain Hyakujō’s level we also can experience the wonderful activity of enlightenment. This level is characterized by complete detachment, perfect serenity and the unity of subjectivity and objectivity. At this level, we can help others achieve salvation by proclaiming the Dharma to every seeker of the true Way.

The Dharma is proclaimed in three ways: 1) using your own experience and explanations; 2) using the lives and sayings of others; and 3) teaching by example. Expounding the Dharma is usually thought of as only benefiting others. However, explaining the Dharma is actually an extension of your practice and transcends self and others.

To proclaim the Dharma, we must forget our self. If we do this the power of our teaching will be like a loud noise that drowns out all smaller ones [i.e., the power of the Dharma drowns out all other false or limited teachings]. Learning through practice has existed from the earliest times and is the best way to approach the Buddhist truth. We should have the same determination as [the second Patriarch Eka] who cut off his arm to show his earnest desire [to Bodhidharma]. He finally received the marrow [of Bodhidharma’s teaching] and transmitted his legacy to future generations. [Eka proclaimed the Dharma both for himself and others.]

Our World is defined in relation to the ten quarters of direction. Each direction totally contains the basic existence of all other directions. That is, every point in space or time, front or back, vertical or horizontal – contains within itself all the elements of existence. This fact is essential for understanding shinjitsunintai. Shinjitsunintai is often thought to be attached to subjectivity and objectivity. This is not the case. Shinjitsunintai is nothing less than our real self rooted in Buddha and not opposed to any of the ten quarters of the world [that is, physical existence]. The ten quarters are contained in shinjitsunintai. Perhaps this is the first time you have heard such an explanation. Keep in mind that each direction [time] and each quarter [space] can be grasped together in one experience. They have the same identity and exist together in shinjitsunintai. This true body is composed of the four physical elements – earth, water, fire, wind – and the five skandhas. For ordinary people, this world of experience is very difficult to analyse and clear vision hard to attain; but a saint is always conscious of the world’s true nature. In fact, he sees the entire world in one tiny speck of dust.

People say, “It is impossible for a speck of dust to contain the entire world.” Their understanding is based on a superficial view. If we have true perception, a speck of dust – or any object no matter how small or large – can be seen to be an independent world and in itself contain all other worlds of experience. If we have right understanding even a Buddha Hall or monastery can be constructed in a speck of dust; every corner of existence contains the same limitless possibilities. Furthermore, our everyday buildings – house, Buddha Hall, Zendo, etc. – contain all possible worlds.

What we are concerned with is the physical and spiritual action of shinjitsunintai. When we use the

expression “the entire world is contained in each particle” we do not mean the physical world itself; [we are not talking about space but experience]. Experience is not concerned with large or small and contains everything; it is enlightenment now, covering everywhere. Shinjitsunintai is our real body and we must learn the Buddhist Way through unlimited, eternal action of our real Self. If we master this Way we gradually become aware of the profound meaning of everyday acts like bowing, painting, or polishing. Time passes but life is transformed. After renouncing the world your station resembles outwardly the poorest wood gatherer or farmer but when you sit in Zazen you are inwardly a Buddha and far more wealthy than the wealthiest king. This Way is beyond ideas of good or bad, enlightenment or illusion, and all opposite identities.

To ordinary people, life and death are transformations. To those saints who have transcended the profane and stepped into the sacred, notions of life and death are cast off. Clarify life and death and accept them for what they are. Then you will no longer be afraid. Life is contained in death and death is contained in life, yet life is life and death is death. That is, these two elements are independent in themselves and stand alone without requiring any outside existence or reference. Ordinarily people think of life as something like an oak tree [a thing that begins with a seed, grows, then dies] and death as something that no longer moves. However, just as one’s conception of an oak tree sometime differs from the actual tree, ideas about life often conflict with the actuality of life. In true understanding, life is never an obstacle. Life is not the first activity and death the second; life is not relative to death, nor death to life.

Zen Master Engo Kokugon^{9-EN} said: “Life is the total activity of life, and death is the total activity of death. Life and death are the activities of great emptiness.” Engo left many sayings about life and death but of course could never completely explain them verbally. To understand his sayings we must have the experience of hotsubodaishin.

Life and death are continually appearing and disappearing, coming and going, constantly changing – now head, now tail, now hands and feet, springing up throughout the entire world.

Shinjitsunintai is the clear observation of life and death through body and mind. Remember that life and death can be seen even in a speck of dust. We can never grasp this fact through discrimination.

There are always some cliffs or hills in fiat land and high mountains always have a few flat areas. Like this, enlightenment and illusion exist together. We can think of the Northern and Southern branches of the Zen sect as existing together in the same way.

Transcend discrimination of opposites, discover total reality, and achieve detachment. This is complete freedom.

This was delivered to the monks of Horinji on September 9, 1243

9-EN Yuan-wu (1063 – 1135).

5. SOKUSHINZEBUTSU

即心是佛

“Our mind is Buddha”

The central teaching of Buddhism is “Our mind is Buddha” which has been transmitted by all the Buddhas and Patriarchs up to the present day. However, in the scriptures first produced in India the idea of “Our mind is Buddha” was not promulgated. It was not until the Chinese Zen masters that this idea was fully developed. Many early followers and scholars misunderstood this central doctrine and went astray.

When foolish people hear the expression “Our mind is Buddha” they think there is no need to practice Buddhist training since their mind is already enlightened. This is a great error. Such people have never seen a true master and their enlightenment is nothing but an illusion.

The following story illustrates the form that such erroneous thinking takes: Once there was a non-believer in India called Sennika^{1-EN}. He explained that the Great Way existed in our body, and could be easily understood. Through this wisdom, he said, suffering and non-suffering, hot and cold, and pain and pleasure could be distinguished. It is not influenced by objects or circumstances even though things are always coming and going and circumstances appear and disappear. The Great Way exists everywhere and there is no distinction between ordinary people and saints: illusion appears and disappears in our experience.

Only this wisdom, Senika taught, exists – objectivity falls away. Even if our body is destroyed, wisdom does not perish; it comes out of the body just like people come out of a burning house. Like this, wisdom exists independently and is the real nature of enlightenment. Everyone possesses enlightenment. This original nature covers both illusion and enlightenment. Wisdom can never be reduced to only one thing and differs from physical objects. Furthermore, wisdom exists forever. He also said that wisdom exists in objectivity and possesses real existence; that is, it possesses real substance and cause and effect. However, wisdom is not the same as objectivity that continually appears and disappears. Wisdom is not concerned with light or dark. Through knowledge everything becomes clear. In other words, we will attain “real self,” “original enlightenment,” “real nature,” and “real body.”

If we comprehend this real nature we will return to eternal existence – “a great man returning to truth” – and no longer subject to re-incarnation. We will arrive at the great ocean of the Real Self in which life and death are no longer present. Because the Real Self is prevented from appearing everywhere the six worlds^{2-EN} of samsara arise. This was Senika’s teaching.

One day Zen Master Nanyō Echū^{3-EN} asked a monk, “Where are you from?” “From the south,” the monk replied. “What kind of Zen masters are teaching in the south?” the master questioned. “There are many good masters there,” the monk said. “What do they teach?” Echū asked. “The masters in the south teach that ‘Our mind is Buddha’. ‘Buddha’ means enlightenment. All the followers are taught that they possess the real nature of enlightenment. This nature works freely, utilizing the body. If it works in the head, the head functions properly; if it works in the feet, they function correctly. Therefore real nature means perfect knowledge. Buddha can only be found in this ‘perfect knowledge’. Our body is subject to creation and destruction but the real nature of mind is eternal. The creation and destruction of our body is similar to a dragon changing its bones, a snake shedding its skin or people moving from an old house to a new one – the dwellings are changing but the occupants are the same. Zen masters in the south teach like this.” Echū then said, “If what you say is true, then the teaching of your Zen masters is the same as Senika. He said that we have a mysterious real nature in our body and through this nature we feel pain and pleasure. When the body is destroyed the real nature comes out like people running from a burning house. The house is changing but the masters are still the same. If we consider the teaching of Senika carefully it is obvious that it is a false view. When I was a young pilgrim, visiting various masters, I found similar teachings but now such errors are even more prevalent. In front of several hundred followers Zen masters in the south explain their teaching, based on false views and misinterpretation of the Rokusodankyō^{4-EN}; consequently their explanation is very inadequate. The disciples are confused about the right path to follow – how can this be called an authentic transmission of Buddhist Law? This is a very terrible situation; their Buddha-nature will be completely lost. These masters are very good at teaching through seeing, hearing, and comprehending; but even if these things are done faithfully, as Vimalakirti^{5-EN} said, they do not constitute the real essence of the Buddhist Law.” (Dentōroku, Chapter twenty- eight.)

Zen Master Echū was the top disciple of the sixth Patriarch, and his understanding of Buddhism was unsurpassed in his time. The true standard of Buddhism is in his profound teaching; avoid any opinions that follow Senika.

The teaching “Our mind is Buddha” has been transmitted from Buddha to Buddha and Patriarch to Patriarch. It is the supreme Buddhist teaching and the followers of Senika or a Hinayanist cannot even dream of attaining this wisdom. “Our mind is Buddha” means the actualization of Buddha-mind through our field of experience. We realize that each and every aspect of existence is detached and forms a unique independent existence – i.e., Buddha-nature. This is called “Body and mind drop off.” This realization is dynamic, nothing like the static existence of a Buddhist statue. However, do not expect this truth to appear easily without effort; without effort the truth remains hidden. “Body and mind drop off” represents universal truth, real existence in the present, that neither reverts to the past, nor jumps ahead to the future. It is pure, the opposite of muddy water and not affected by external elements. No matter how we phrase it- “Our mind is Buddha,” “Buddha is mind” etc. – it is the basic doctrine of the right transmission that we must study.

“One mind is everything; everything is contained in one mind.” This is the mind that has been transmitted to the present day. Ancients said that if the mind is clear we can understand everything. The sky can collapse and the earth disintegrate but mind will remain. If we can master this mind truly all our actions will bear fruit. [Too much thinking and we overshoot the goal; too little and We fall short of truth.] Once Zen Master Gyōzan^{6-EN} was asked, “What is the transcendent, pure, and radiant mind?” He replied “Mountains, rivers, earth; sun, moon, stars.” Mountains, rivers, and earth are just mountains, rivers, and earth; there is no- thing extra; do not be concerned with externals like waves or clouds. “Sun, moon, stars” means the true, natural existence of sun, moon, stars; there is no fog or mist. The mind of life and death is only life and death, coming and going;

1-EN Senika here is a symbol of non-Buddhist religions or philosophies.

2-EN Heaven, human beings, hell, demons, the world of carnage, and animals.

3-EN Nan-yang Hui-zhong (675 – 775)

4-EN A collection of sermons and talks of Daikan Enō

5-EN Vimalakirti is the central figure in the Vimalakirti-nirdeśa-sūtra (J. Yuima-gyō). He was an astute lay follower of the Buddha who confounded the Buddha’s monastic disciples with his profound insight into the nature of śūnyatā.

6-EN Yang-shan. Also known as Kyōzan. The founder of the Igyō-zen sect (d. 916).

there is no illusion or enlightenment. The mind of wall, tile, stones is nothing but wall, tile, stones; there is no mud or water. In the mind of the four elements and five skandhas there are no horses or monkeys. In the mind of a chair and hossu^{7-EN} there is no wood or bamboo. To summarize, "Our mind is Buddha"; original purity is our mind, Buddha is Buddha. Remember, though, that real Buddha-mind is detached even from these statements.

"Our mind is Buddha" cannot be separated from the resolve to attain supreme enlightenment, religious practice, enlightenment, or nirvana. If we have not experienced these, we can never understand the significance of "Our mind is Buddha." Yet if we have true experience of those things, even for just an instant, we will be able to comprehend "Our mind is Buddha." If someone says that this expression can only be understood after years of study, this means he does not have clear understanding. He never had a correct view of the Law or met a true master. "Buddha" means Shakyamuni Buddha. He symbolizes all the past, present, and future Buddhas. Shakyamuni Buddha is "Our mind is Buddha."

This was delivered to the monks at Kannondōri-in, Kōshōhōrinji, on May 25, 1239, and transcribed by Ejō on July 12, 1246, at the chief disciple's quarters in Eihei-ji. Recopied in 1278 during the summer training period.

7-EN A fly whisk made from animal hair used by Zen priests.

6. GYŌBUTSU IIGI

行佛威儀

“The dignified activities of practising Buddha”

All the Buddhas always maintain dignified activity this is practising Buddha. Practising Buddha is not the reward body of Buddha and is not the transformation body of Buddha either. It is not the self-enlightened body of Buddha nor is it the enlightened body of other Buddhas. It is not acquired enlightenment not innate enlightenment, not the nature of enlightenment and not no-enlightenment. None of these Buddhas are equal to practising Buddha. We should know that all the Buddhas within the Buddhist Way never expect enlightenment. The continual development of Buddha occurs only through practising Buddha. Those who believe that Buddha is self-awakening, etc., cannot even dream [of practising Buddha].

In practising Buddha, dignity is actualized from start to finish; that dignity appears in the body and transforms lower passions by manifesting the Way – it covers all time, all eras, all Buddhas, and all practices. If there is no practising Buddha, there will be no casting off attachment to Buddha and the Dharma – we would be just Buddha demons and Dharma demons.

“Attachment to Buddha” means intellectual comprehension of enlightenment as “enlightenment”; it is rigid intellectualism and narrow-minded understanding. If we pass our time with such thoughts, the expected understanding will never occur and only mistaken views will result. To view enlightenment as “enlightenment” is to consider enlightenment as some kind of attribute or concept. Is not this an obviously false idea? It is a tangle of mistaken opinions, randomly bound together in a confused heap. It barely scratches the surface of Buddhism. People with such views cannot understand the “illness” present in the Dharma body of Buddha or the “perplexity” that is found in the reward-body^{1-EN} of Buddha. Scholars, of sūtras, precepts and Abhidharma who learn about the Buddhist Way from a distance often state, “When we view Dharma-nature as arising Dharma-nature it is called ignorance.” They want to emphasize that to view Dharma-nature as Dharma-nature is ignorance; they do not call it attachment. They are ignorant that there is attachment in Dharma-nature. Although it is a great pity, they discover that knowledge of ignorance and attachment is the seeds of the Buddha-seeking mind. Practising Buddha is not attached to these kind of attachments. Therefore we find this verse [in the Lotus Sūtra]: “The duration of my life since I began practising the Way of a Bodhisattva is even now not exhausted, and is of incalculable length.” Know that the duration of a Bodhisattva’s life is not bound to the present and not exhausted in the past. “Incalculable length” means “totally present.” “Even now” means “complete duration of life.” “Since I began practising” covers every point in time and space.

Therefore, that is why practice and enlightenment is neither “nothing” nor “something,” and is not “impure.” There are billions of places where there are no Buddhas and no human beings, but nowhere is practising Buddha defiled. Thus, the practice and enlightenment of practising Buddha is no impurity. Yet practice and enlightenment is not simply “no impurity.” This “no impurity” is “not nothing.”

Sōkei said, “No impurity” has been guarded and maintained by all the Buddhas. You do the same, I do the same, and all the Indian Patriarchs do the same.”

Therefore, that is why “you do the same” and “I do the same” becomes “all the Buddhas.” Truly there is no “I” or “you.” Within this “no impurity.” there is oneself as oneself, guarded and maintained by all the Buddhas – this is the dignity of practising Buddha. The you as yourself, guarded and maintained by all the Buddhas, is also the dignity of practising Buddha. “I” means that the teacher is excellent; “you” means that the disciple is determined. When the master is excellent and the disciple determined, it is the enlightenment, practice, and fulfilment of practising Buddha. Know that what all the Buddhas guard and maintain is “I do the same” and “you do the same.” If there is no “I” in this expression of Sōkei, the ancient Buddha, how can there be a “you”? The guarding and maintenance of practising Buddha is like this. Hence, practice and enlightenment has no fixed nature and form, no beginning, no end. The actions of practising Buddha are the effect of Buddha’s practice – Buddha itself is practice. Here we have “abandon the self to find the Dharma” and “abandon the Dharma to find the self.” Neither begrudge nor ignore the life of the body.

It is not just abandoning the Dharma for the sake of the Dharma; there is the dignified manner of abandoning the Dharma for the sake of the mind. Do not forget that abandonment cannot be measured. Even with the ability of Buddha, it is not possible to estimate the full measure of the Great Way. Even the power of Buddha is just a part of the whole, like a blooming flower as one event of spring. Our mind may be powerful but still we cannot fathom the complete dignity of Buddha. The power of mind is just one aspect like the physical world. The measure of a single blade of grass is the measure of the mind of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

This is one part of the certification of the whereabouts of practising Buddha. Although the unlimited ability of the Buddhas is thought to be penetrated with just one mind, the unrestricted activities of practising Buddha can not be readily discerned or easily seen. Because everyday practice of the Buddhas is unlimited, it is inexhaustible, unattainable, and unmeasurable. Regarding the dignity of practising Buddha, there is one point to clarify. Although “Buddha is the self” and “I do” and “you do” has the dignity of Buddha and is related to the expression “Only I know this form” i.e., “the Buddhas of the ten directions have total detachment,” there is more to it than this.

Therefore an ancient Buddha said, “When such things are experienced, it is continually practiced in everyday life.”

Once this is realized, all Dharmas, all bodies, all practices, all Buddhas become our closest acquaintances. Practice Dharmas, bodies, and Buddhas each experience absolute obstruction. “Experience absolute obstruction” means each one is totally dropped off. Do not be bewildered when viewing the myriad forms of existence or overlook single Dharmas and single objects. Each and every element is complete within itself. Coming and going, and exit and entering continually occur. Nothing is concealed in this world, so the secret words, secret enlightenment, secret practice, and secret transmission of the World-Honoured one become clear.

“Leaving the gate, there is grass; entering the gate, there is grass. Grass covers every inch of the ground.” “Leaving” or “entering” is irrelevant here, and it is neither possible to grasp nor abandon this statement because there is “dreams and fantasy, flowers of emptiness.” Is there anyone who mistakenly grasps “dreams and fantasy, flowers of emptiness” as a mistake? Progressing is a mistake, regressing is a mistake, one step is a mistake, two steps are a mistake because mistakes are mistakes. Because there is a deep gulf between heaven and earth, we can arrive on the Way without difficulty. The unrestrained function of dignified activity as the vast body of the Great Way must be experienced.

Know that birth is a coming out that blends with the Way and that death is an entering that flows into the Way. From head to

tail, dignified activity functions smoothly in total freedom. A single manifestation of Buddhas dignified activity covers the universe, and the great earth covers the coming and going of life and death within the world of dust and the world of the lotus [i.e., profane and sacred worlds]. These two worlds are each a single manifestation. Students think that the expression "the universe" is some area of the cosmos, a certain world or even a specific country like China or Japan; or else they think that great earth" contains thousands of worlds or is even just a single province or prefecture. In order to correctly study the phrases "universe" and "great earth," we must consider it over and over and not take them in a literal sense. Those expressions reveal the Great Ultimate in the tiniest particle and the tiniest particle as the Great Ultimate – that is, attainment of the Way transcends Buddhas and Patriarchs. It is not in the existence of great, not in the existence of small – it is the dignified activities of practising Buddha. All the Buddhas and each of the Patriarchs have declared that the universe and the great earth are each covered with dignified activity; we must study this actual world in which nothing is concealed. There is more than just "this actual world in which nothing is hidden"—it is the dignified activity within practising Buddha.

It is customary for Buddhists to discuss various kinds of birth, but birth from moisture, eggs, etc., are not mentioned much. Is it possible for some misguided people to even dream of other types of birth beside the four kinds [viviparous, oviparous, moisture-birth, metamorphic] described by Buddhist theory? Is it possible for them to even see, hear, or learn about other kinds of birth? In the Great Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, there are some types of birth that are not concealed and rightly transmitted, and other types that are secret and rightly transmitted. How shall we describe those who have never heard, learned, known, or searched for this expression? We have now heard about the four kinds of birth, but what about the different kinds of death? Are there also four kinds of death? Two or three? Five or six? One thousand, or ten thousand? If we have any doubt about this principle it must be minutely studied.

Let's consider the problem in detail. Among the four kinds of birth, is there a birth that has no death? Or is there a transmission of only death without a transmission of birth? We must clarify the existence or non-existence of the various kinds of birth and death. Do not focus exclusively on listening to and investigating the expression "no birth"; that is the approach of one who has stopped practising with the entire body and mind. This is exceedingly foolish, the behaviour of beasts who are merely concerned with superficial discussions of faith, gradual versus sudden, and so on. Thus, even though they hear the phrase "no birth," they cannot get its essence. They cannot clarify "no Buddha," "no Way," "no mind," "no destruction," "no birth," "no Dharma world," "no Dharma nature," and "no death." They are just like animals who care about nothing more than water and forage. Know that "life and death" is the everyday practice of the Buddhist Way; "life and death" is the central theme of Buddhist practitioners. It is a useful tool if we use it; if we clarify it, it will become clear. Therefore all the Buddhas clearly penetrate it and skilfully use it. If you remain in the dark regarding life and death, who will be able to call you by your true name, or say that you have mastered life and conquered death? Never think that you sink into or are already caught up in birth and death. Do not believe that birth and death is simply birth and death, or that it is unknowable and incomprehensible. Some have stated, "Buddhas only appear in the world of human beings and not in the other worlds [of gods, demons, etc.]" If you say this, do you mean that wherever Buddha is present it must be in the world of men? This is the expression uttered by the human Buddha: "I alone am the only honoured one." There is a Buddha in the world of the gods, and a Buddha in the world of Buddhas. The belief that all the Buddhas only appear in the world of human beings is not the inner teaching of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Truly we should know that the human Shakyamuni disappeared from this world, but the celestial Shakyamuni still lives instructing the gods. Students must learn that the countless transformations of Shakyamuni's speech, practice and proclamations are all single manifestations of his human glory and splendour; the activity of the celestial Shakyamuni is shown in unlimited forms. Go beyond the notion that the Great Way of the right transmission of Buddha to Buddha ceases and discover the principle that there is no beginning and no end; the Buddhist Way alone contains the right transmission. Those on other paths, with different styles, will never learn or hear about that great virtue. In the place where practising Buddha teaches, there are sentient beings free of the four births. This place is not in the worlds of gods, human beings, Dharmas, and so forth. When you view the dignified activities of practising Buddha, do not look at them with the eyes or try to evaluate them with the ordinary emotion of gods and men. Do not approach them with such limited faculties. Even the ten saints and three sages do not know about this; so how can mere human beings and ordinary gods handle it? Since the capacity of human beings is limited, their ability to attain knowledge is small. Their lives are of short duration, so their thoughts are brief. How can they truly gauge the dignified activities of practising Buddha? Therefore, that is why those who believe that the Buddhist Dharma is confined to the world of human beings, limit the extent of the Buddhist Law to the laws of human beings; such people can never be permitted to become disciples of Buddha – they are bound by the karma of sentient beings. They have yet to hear the Dharma with the body and mind, and lack a proper body and mind for practice of the Way. None of their actions – living, dying, seeing, hearing, going, staying, sitting, lying – are based on following the Law. They all lack merit of the Dharma. Practising Buddha does not cherish acquired or innate enlightenment, and is neither non-awakening nor awakening – this is the right principle. They way ordinary people evaluate thought, no thought, enlightenment, no enlightenment, acquired awakening, innate awakening, and so forth is very commonplace and not based on the transmission of all the Buddhas. The thought of ordinary people and that of all the Buddhas differ completely and cannot be compared. The understanding of ordinary people about innate enlightenment and the actual experience of innate enlightenment by all the Buddhas is as different as heaven and earth. Even the combined talents of the ten saints and three sages does not surpass the Way of all the Buddhas. How can ordinary people who make useless computations even begin to measure such things? Hence, the deep-rooted, mistaken views of ordinary people and non-believers cause many to incorrectly evaluate the environment of all the Buddhas.

All the Buddhas say, "Such people have a deep core of transgressions and must be greatly pitied." Although it is difficult to tell where this deep core of transgressions begins or ends, we are heavily burdened. Putting that heavy burden aside temporarily, we develop real insight. We may be attached to self and blocked by doubt, but still there is no origin [of sin]. The dignified activities of practising Buddha are never obstructed; when something tries to obstruct Buddha, Buddha freely adjusts to any circumstance, acts directly and thus is not obstructed. In heaven, Buddha teaches as a god; on earth, he teaches as a man. The virtue of the blooming flower is the virtue of the world of spring arising – there is not the slightest gap between them. Therefore, self and other is cast off and staying or going is unbound. This is dwelling in Tṣuita, coming to Tṣuita, being as it is in Tṣuita, dwelling in the Land of Bliss, coming to the Land of Bliss, and being as it is in the Land of Bliss. It is also casting off Tṣuita, casting off the Land of Bliss. No matter how hard we try to analyse Tṣuita and the Land of Bliss, they can neither be held on to nor let go – swallow them in one gulp.

The "Land of Bliss" and "Tṣuita" are the "Pure Land" and "Hall of Heaven", but even there we find samsara. If there is everyday practice of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, there is the same everyday practice in the Pure Land and the Hall of Heaven. If there is Great Enlightenment here, there is Great Enlightenment there. If there is Great Illusion here, there is Great Illusion there. This is the essence of practising Buddha. Sometimes it is the sound of breaking wind, the smell of

excrement – if you have nostrils you can smell, if you have ears, a body, and everyday practice, you can hear. When we attain our master's skin, flesh, bones, and marrow, we must get it ourselves, not from others.

In order to help us accomplish the Great Way of mastering life and conquering death, the ancients have left us this saying: "Great saints entrust life and death to the mind, entrust life and death to the body, entrust life and death to the Way, and entrust life and death to life and death." This saying is not related to past or present, but suddenly appears as the total practice of the dignified activities of practising Buddha. By covering our body and mind with this principle of life and death, immediately there is strong effort. Total practice is total illumination, but this cannot be forced. It resembles the story of the man who thought he lost his head until he saw his reflection in a mirror i.e., upon reflection, our true form is illumined. This continual process of illumination is the fullness of practising Buddha. It is entrusted to real practice. The principle of "entrusting" must be carefully clarified through the heart of practice. Once that study is perfected, we will realize that the constant flux of the world is illumined by that mind – the three worlds are aspects of mind only. Such profound realization covers all elements; through individual everyday practice and attainment, all functions can be completed and fulfilled.

Therefore, grasp the meaning within words, search for the things outside words, over and over; hold on to that which must be held on to; let go of that which must be let go of. The matters we must ponder are: What is life? What is death? What is body and mind? What is attachment? What is letting go? What is approval? What is rejection? Do these opposites function freely on the same plane without obstruction? Are things hidden or revealed? Is understanding attained through intensive thought? Or is it attained by the wisdom of old age? Is it one bright pearl? Is it the teaching of the entire Tripitaka? Is it a single staff? Is it one face? Will it be known thirty years from now? Is it "one thought covers ten thousand years"? Be careful about these matters, very careful. When we are careful, the eyes are full allowing us to hear the sound, and the ears are full allowing us to see the form [of the Law]; both eyes of a monk are fully opened everywhere, all the time – not just here and now. Mahākāśyapa's smile follows Shakyamuni's wink. That was a brief example of the dignified activity of practising Buddha. It neither influences nor is influenced. It does not arise or is created from causality. It is neither original nature nor Dharma nature. It does not settle on one level. It is not original nature. It is not the such of suchness. It is nothing other than the dignified activity of practising Buddha.

Therefore, that is why all matters regarding elements and the body should be entrusted to mind. The dignified activities of dropping off life and dropping off death should be entrusted to Buddha. Thus it is said, "all things are only mind" and "the three worlds are only mind." To express it further, we say "fence, wall, tile, stone." If there is no "only mind" there is no fence, wall, tile, or stone. This is the dignified activity of practising Buddha. It is the principle of entrusting the mind, entrusting the Dharma and entrusting the elements – then the body will be taken care of. Since the notions of acquired enlightenment, innate enlightenment, and so forth cannot be easily handled by Buddhas, how can non-believers, Hinayānists, the three sages, or the ten saints handle it? Such dignified activity cannot be understood face to face, or back to back. Forcefully projecting the vigour of life, each thing is unique. Is this state of affairs fixed or open? "Fixed" is not long or short. "Open" is not self or other. If we possess adequate strength to utilize these functions through practice, phenomena will be uncovered; this perception is unequalled. There is a totally unobstructed divine light that shines in the Practice Hall, the Buddha Hall, the monks' quarters, and the temple gate. There is also an unconditioned divine light that permeates the Practice Hall, the Buddha Hall, the monks' quarters, and the temple gate. It is the eye that pierces the ten directions and an eye that takes in the great earth. There is mind in front and mind behind. Like this, eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind function freely in the virtue of divine light; all the Buddhas of the three worlds are "unaware" of this, while raccoons and oxen "know" about it. Both this form and this enlightenment are present when the Dharma of practising Buddha makes the Dharma of practising Buddha.

Great Master Shinkaku of Mount Seppō told an assembly, "All the Buddhas of the three worlds turn the great Wheel of the Law within the midst of a raging fire."

Great Teacher Gensha Soitsu said, "The raging fire proclaims the Law for the sake of all the Buddhas of the three worlds; all the Buddhas of the three worlds stand and listen to it." Zen Master Engo said, "Both of them are deceitful scoundrels (a black monkey and a white monkey). They act evasively, according to circumstance. The raging fire consumes heaven while Buddha proclaims the Law. Heaven consumes the raging fire while the Law proclaims Buddha. The wind blows away the tangled vines, one word shatters Vimalakirti's silence."

"All the Buddhas of the three worlds" means each and every Buddha. "Practising Buddha" is "all the Buddhas of the three worlds." All the Buddhas of the ten directions are none other than those of the three worlds. That which is proclaimed as the three worlds in the Buddhist Way is perfectly explained in such a manner. Regardless if we realize this or not, surely all the Buddhas of the three worlds are practising Buddha. Therefore, the sayings of these three ancient Buddhas (Seppō, Gensha, and Engo) are the same as those of all the Buddhas of the three worlds. Let us take up the principle behind Seppō's "All the Buddhas of the three worlds turn the great Wheel of the Law in the midst of a raging fire." The dojo where all the Buddhas of the three worlds turn is surely in the midst of a raging fire. "In the midst of a raging fire" is without doubt the dojo of Buddha." Scholars of the sūtras and abhidharma never hear such things, and non-believers and Hinayānists know nothing about it. Know that the raging fire of all the Buddhas is not an ordinary type of fire. You must determine whether or not there are various kinds of fire. We must learn the real meaning of "all the Buddhas dwell in the midst of a raging fire." When they are in the midst of a raging fire, are all the Buddhas and the fire close together or far apart? In union or independent? The same or different? The turning of the great Wheel of the Law turns the self while functioning as turning. Active development is turning the Law – the Law turning. Even though we may say "turn the Wheel of the Law" and the entire great earth is covered with this raging fire, there is still a Wheel of the Law turned by a Wheel of fire and a wheel of the Law turned by all the Buddhas. Therefore that is why the raging fire is the great dojō where all the Buddhas turn the great Wheel of the Law. It is not possible to evaluate this with the customary standards, of area, time, human beings, ordinary people, and saints, etc. Because we cannot use such limited measurements, we have "All the Buddhas of the three worlds turn the great Wheel of the Law within the midst of a raging fire." To say "all the Buddhas of the three worlds," already transcends any kind of measurement. Because there is a dojo where all the Buddhas of the three worlds turn the Wheel of the Law there is a raging fire. Because there is a raging fire, there is a dojo of all the Buddhas.

Gensha said. "The raging fire proclaims the Law for all the Buddhas of the three worlds; all the Buddhas of the three worlds stand and listen to it." After hearing this expression, some may think it superior to that of Seppō, but this is not so. Know that Seppō's words are of different import than Gensha. That is, Seppō described the place where all the Buddhas of the three worlds turn the Wheel of the Law, while Gensha described how all the Buddhas of the three worlds listen to the Law. Seppō was concerned with the turning of the Law, not the place where it is turned or whether it is heard or not. Therefore, his "turning the Law" does not always coincide with "hearing the Law." Nor did he, did not say, "All the Buddhas of the three worlds proclaim the Law for the raging fire" or "all the Buddhas of the three worlds turn the great wheel of the Law for all the

Buddhas of the three worlds," or that "the raging fire turns the great Wheel of the Law for the sake of the raging fire," Are "turning the Wheel of the Law" and "turning the great Wheel of the Law" different? "Turning the Wheel of the Law" is not the same as "proclaiming the Law"; "proclaiming the Law" is not necessary for some people. Therefore Seppō's words leave nothing uncovered.

Seppō's "in the midst of a raging fire the great Wheel of the Law is turned" must be studied most carefully. Do not confuse his words with those of Gensha. Once Seppō's words are mastered, dignified activity becomes the dignified activity of Buddha. All the Buddhas of the three worlds within the raging fire are not contained in either the micro-or macroscopic worlds. Do not describe "Turning the great Wheel of the Law" as something large or small, or wide or narrow. The great wheel of the Law is not turned for self or for others, and is not proclaimed or listened to for the sake of anything.

Gensha said, "The raging fire proclaims the Law for the sake of all the Buddhas of the three worlds; all the Buddhas of the three worlds stand and listen to it." Although he said that the raging fire proclaims the Law for all the Buddhas of the three worlds, he said nothing about "turning the Wheel of the Law" or "turning the wheel of the Law of all the Buddhas of the three worlds." Even though all the Buddhas of the three worlds stand and listen to it, how can the Wheel of the Law of all the Buddhas of the three Worlds be turned by this raging fire? Can the raging fire that proclaims the Law for all the Buddhas of the three worlds also turn the great Wheel of the Law? Gensha did not say that the Wheel of the Law is turned at that time, nor did he say that it was not. However, do we venture to guess that Gensha foolishly thought that turning the Wheel of the Law is the same as proclaiming the Wheel of the Law? If this is so, he misunderstood Seppō's words. When the raging fire proclaims the Law for the sake of all sentient beings, all the Buddhas of the three worlds stand and listen to it. Gensha is "unaware" of the raging fire turning the Wheel of the Law so that the raging fire stands and listens to it. He did not say that where the raging fire turns the Wheel of the Law there is "the raging fire also turns the Wheel of the Law." The Law listened to by all the Buddhas of the three worlds is the Law of all the Buddhas – it is heard from no one else. Never think that the raging fire is the Law, or that it is Buddha, or even that it is a raging fire. Never believe that the words given by a master to his disciples are trivial. At any rate, the sayings of both masters are excellent despite the use of different expressions.

Gensha's words are quite good, certain points must be clarified further. Leaving aside the limited notions heard by sūtra and abhidharma scholars of both the Hinayāna and Mahāyāna, study the true form of the right transmission of Buddha to Buddha, Patriarch to Patriarch. "All the Buddhas of the three worlds" is found neither in the form of the Mahayana or Hinayana. Narrow minded people know that all the Buddhas proclaim the Law according to the style of good masters, but do not discuss all the Buddhas listening to the Law, all the Buddhas practising, or all the Buddhas becoming Buddha. Gensha's expression "all the Buddhas of the three worlds stand and listen to it" is the real form of all the Buddhas listening to the Law. Never say that those who proclaim the Law are inherently superior to those who listen to it. Both proclaimers and listeners must be respected.

Shakyamuni Buddha said, "Anyone who proclaims the Lotus Sūtra will see me; it is difficult to proclaim this for just one person." Therefore, those who proclaim the Law will see Shakyamuni Buddha, because "see me" means Shakyamuni Buddha. Again he said, "After I am gone, it will be difficult to hear, receive, and understand the meaning of this sutra".

Know that, those who hear this sutra too have trouble – neither proclamation or hearing is better than the other. Even the most highly honoured ones of the Buddhas have occasion to stand and listen to the Law. They stand and listen to the Law because they are all the Buddhas of the three worlds. Usually, because Buddhas are enlightened they are not thought to be among those who listen to the Law – they are already the Buddhas of the three worlds. Know that all the Buddhas of the three worlds that stand and hear the Law proclaimed by the raging fire are all Buddhas. A single path of behaviour should not be followed; when many are followed it is like arrows piling up in the centre of a target. The raging fire without doubt proclaims the Law for all the Buddhas. Each pure mind is manifested as the fragrance of the blooming flowers of an iron tree filling the world. In other words, the raging fire proclaims the Law standing and listening. How is this actualized? The disciple surpasses his master, the disciple equals his master; study the deep relationship between master and disciple – herein we find all the Buddhas of the three worlds.

Engo said, "Both of them are deceitful scoundrals (a black and a white monkey). They act evasively, according to circumstance." Although this means that Gensha and Seppo are on nearly the same level, is "the raging fire of all the Buddhas" equal to "all the Buddhas are raging fire"? Black and white interchange and Gensha remains elusive, but Seppō's voice and form do not merge. Since this is so, know that Gensha has words that are words, and words that are not; Seppō holds words and also throws words away.

What Engo has said is not the same as Gensha, and is not the same as Seppo either. "The raging fire consumes the raging fire while the Law proclaims Buddha." This expression is the divine light of all true descendants. Even though the intensity of the fire can not be seen, it covers the heavens, ourselves, and all others. That which covers heaven is this raging fire. No matter how we feel, this cannot be avoided.

Be glad that our even though no-accounts like us have been born far from the time and place of the land of the saints, still we have the opportunity to hear the Law given to all the gods. It is not so unusual to hear Buddha proclaim the Law, but it is rare to hear the Law proclaim Buddha. How long have people been ignorant of this fact?

Therefore, that is why all the Buddhas of the three worlds proclaim the Law in the three worlds; the entire Law of the three worlds proclaims Buddha in the three worlds. All tangled vines are blown away throughout the world. In a word, this expression shatters everything, everywhere – even Vimalakirti's or anyone else's silence. Therefore, that is why the Law proclaims Buddha, the Law practices Buddha, the Law enlightens Buddha, Buddha proclaims the Law, Buddha practices Buddha, Buddha becomes Buddha. All these are the dignified activities of practising Buddha – covering heaven and earth, past and present. Those who attain this are great; those who illumine it are complete.

Recorded during mid-October, 1242, at Kannondōri, Kōshōhōrinji by Shamon Dōgen.

7. IKKAMYŌJU

顥明珠

“One bright pearl”

Great Master Sōichi of Mt. Gensha^{1-EN} lived during the great Sung Dynasty. His religious name was Shibi and his secular name was Sha. Before he became a monk he was fond of fishing and took his boat to the Nandai River where he learned fishing from various people. Surely, however, he did not expect to catch the “golden fish” [enlightenment] that catches itself.

When he was thirty years of age – at the beginning of the Kantsū period [860-873] of the T'ang Dynasty – he recognized the pre-eminence of the Buddhist Way and suddenly decided to renounce this transient world. He left his boat and retired to the mountains, finally settling on Mt. Seppō where he became the disciple of Great Master Shinkaku^{2-EN}. He practiced the Way day and night. One day he decided to visit some other masters so he could further perfect his practice. He prepared his travelling bag and started out on his journey. Just as he was leaving the mountain he stubbed his toe on a rock. It began to bleed and was extremely painful; but then, quite unexpectedly, he had a sudden self realization: “This body does not exist,” he cried. “Where is the pain coming from?” After he said this he immediately returned to his master Seppō.

Seppō asked him, “Did you go on a pilgrimage just to cut your foot and have a hard time?” Gensha said, “Please don't kid me!” Seppō was greatly pleased with that answer and told him, “What you have just said should be spoken by everyone but they lack your sincerity. Why don't you continue to visit other masters?” Gensha replied, “Bodhidharma didn't come to China and the second Patriarch didn't go to India.” Seppō praised this answer.

Gensha was a fisherman for many years and had seen none of the voluminous sūtras or commentaries, even in his dreams. But he put his earnest resolve above all else, and by his strong determination excelled all the other monks. Seppō considered him to be his best disciple. Gensha always wore a simple cloth robe, full of patches; beneath that he wore paper or mugwort cloth underwear. His only master was Seppo and he never deviated from his master's Dharma. After he attained the Way he used this saying to explain the Buddhist teaching: “The entire universe is one bright pearl.”

Once a monk asked him, “I've heard you teach that the entire universe is one bright pearl. How should we interpret that?” Gensha told him, “The entire universe is one bright pearl. What is there to interpret or understand?” The following day the master himself questioned the monk. “The entire universe is one bright pearl. What is your understanding of that?” The monk replied, “The entire universe is one bright pearl. What is there to understand?” “You now know,” said Gensha, “that even in the Black Mountain Cave of Demons^{3-EN} complete freedom is working.”

The statement “The entire universe is one bright pearl” first originated with Gensha. It means that the universe is not bound by ideas of vast or minute, large or small; it is not square or round, not the centre, not liveliness, not brightness – when we transcend those forms the universe emerges. There is no independent life and death, coming and going; those changes are the very life of the Buddhas and the actualization of truth. That is why the past has gone and the present actualizes itself. As for its ultimate significance, who can limit it to only the continual movement of life and death on the one hand or immovability on the other?

When the monk asked about “The entire universe” there seemed to be an idea of subjectivity and objectivity; but actually they are one endless continuum. A monk once asked his master about the statement “When sensations arise one is separated from wisdom”; the master told him, “Leave that separation!” i.e., transcend discrimination. A turning of the head or a changing of expression on a face can reveal things to us and help us realize enlightenment^{4-EN}. Objectivity and subjectivity are one and through them we can find the unlimited universe. This interpretation goes beyond superficial understanding and its essence cannot be grasped superficially.

“One bright pearl” expresses reality without actually naming it – it is the name of the universe. It contains the inexhaustible past, existing throughout time and arriving in the present. Presently there is a body and mind; they are the one bright pearl. A stalk of grass, a tree, the mountains and rivers of this world are not only themselves – they are the bright pearl.

Although the monk seemed to be still bound by karmic consciousness when he asked, “How are we to interpret that?” actually even that state is manifesting the great function, which is the great Dharma. In order to have a one-foot wave it is necessary to have one foot of water. Then a ten foot pearl can become a ten foot brightness.^{5-EN}

Gensha's saying “The entire universe is one bright pearl. What is there to understand?” is the occasion when Buddha succeeds Buddha, Patriarch follows Patriarch, and Gensha becomes Gensha. Even if we try to break away from this, there is no place to go.

We can never escape from the universe which is nothing but the one bright pearl. Even if it seems to you that you have escaped it for a little while you are still in time and all time is covered by the bright pearl.

The following day Gensha tested the monk by repeating the monk's original question. He first used the affirmative and this time the negative. This time he used a different method but he was still smiling and nodding.

The monk simply mimicked Gensha when he replied, “What is there to understand?” The monk's answer was based on ordinary consciousness – his answer was like using the robber's horse to chase the robber – while Gensha's original answer was based on the experience of Buddha. In order to understand this, we must turn our light inward and reflect, “What can we gain through our understanding?” We realize that there are various kinds of provisional expressions such as seven rice cakes made with grasses or five made with milk but those expressions are like the teaching that fills the land from the Southern Shoko and Northern Tan.^{6-EN}

Gensha said, “You now know that even in the Black Mountain Cave of Demons complete freedom is working.” You must realize that this is like the relationship of sun and moon: neither has changed or replaced the other at any time. Sun always arises as sun, moon arises as moon. In another expression, it is said that although the sixth month is the hot season, our original

1-EN Tsung-i Ta-shih (835-908) usually known as Gensha (Hsüan-sha).

2-EN Hsin-chüeh Ta-shih, (822-908); he is usually called Scppō (Hsüeh).

3-EN The lowest state of non-enlightenment.

4-EN Tenji and Tōki. See Shinjingakudō, note 4.

5-EN This probably means it is necessary to actualize one's enlightenment through practice and then it will be clearly manifest.

6-EN That is, the Buddhist teaching exists everywhere and we can use only provisional terms to describe it.

nature is not hot [or cold, etc.].

Therefore, the beginning or end of the bright pearl is beyond comprehension. The only thing we can say is all the universe is one bright pearl – not two or three. The bright pearl is the Eye of the True Law and the body of Truth. It is revealed in this one expression. The entire body is Divine Light and universal Mind. One bright pearl is the entire body; there are no obstacles in it – round and turning endlessly it is everywhere. The virtue of the bright pearl is manifested like this and enables Kannon [Avālokiteśvara] and Miroku [Maitreya] to hear the sounds of the world and see its actual forms; therefore ancient and present day Buddhas have been bodily manifested to proclaim the true teaching.

When the right time comes [the essence of the bright pearl can be grasped]; it is suspended in emptiness, hidden in the lining of clothes, found under the chin of dragons, and in the headdresses of kings. This pearl is always inside our clothing [that is, inside of us, our real nature]. Do not think about putting it on the surface; it should be kept in headdresses and under jaws. Never attempt to wear it on the surface. When you are drunk [in a state of illusion] there will be a close friend who will give a pearl to you [give you the Buddhist teaching] and you must, without fail, give the same pearl to your close friend. When the pearl is placed around the neck, the person is always drunk [even in one's present deluded state he is still in the universe of one bright pearl].

That is why, although situations seem to change, everything is always the one bright pearl. Knowing that the pearl is exactly like this is the experience of one bright pearl. In this manner we can encounter the pearl's sounds and forms. This is the pearl's nature, and we should not have any doubts about it. Even if doubts arise, or if we affirm, negate, or are puzzled by its existence these are only passing, incomplete observations.

Do we not cherish the infinite brilliance of the bright pearl? Who can surpass the virtue of this brilliant, radiant pearl that covers the universe? [Like this] no one can throw even a tile away in a market place. So do not worry about falling into the six realms of existence.

The essence of causality never ceases and the pearl is always bright; it is our original face and enlightened eye. Heretofore, there have been many notions of what the pearl is or is not but now Gensha's words have clarified the pearl's true nature, which is actually our body and mind itself. How is it possible to doubt that life and death are also the bright pearl? Even if we are perplexed or troubled it is nothing but the bright pearl. There cannot be any action or thought existing separately from the bright pearl. Consequently, even coming and going in the Black Mountain's Cave of Demons is nothing but the one bright pearl.

This was delivered at Kannondōri, Kōshōhōrinji, Uji, Yamashiro fiefdom, on April 18, 1238. Transcribed by the chief disciple Ejō at his quarters in Kippōji on July 23, 1243.

8. SHINFUKATOKU

心不可得

“Mind cannot be grasped”

Shakyamuni once said, “Mind in the past, Mind in the present, Mind in the future, cannot be grasped^{1-EN}” This teaching has been handed down by all the Buddhas and Patriarchs. The only way to understand past, present, and future is by using our own “undefinable mind” [that is, the mind that cannot be grasped]. Use “undefinable mind” to think and analyse. Everything in our daily life should be a function of “undefinable mind” – i.e., the mind that cannot be grasped by definition of time or space, substance or non-substance.

Every Buddha since Shakyamuni has sought the principle of “undefinable mind” through Zazen. If the Buddhas and Patriarchs had not attained this mind we would have nothing to guide us in our search. To perceive “undefinable mind” we need a high standard; so high that even Buddhist scholars are unable to conceive it. However, this standard is not far away but very close. [Let us consider the following story:]

Zen Master Zenkan Tokusan^{2-EN} once said, “I have mastered the Diamond Sūtra. My understanding of Seiryuji’s commentary is without equal. I am the Supreme Master of interpreting this sūtra.” Tokusan also wrote twelve volumes of commentary on the Diamond Sūtra and the profundity of his lectures was unsurpassed. He was the greatest scholar of his era, and the last Zen priest who advocated the supremacy of the scriptures.

Once he heard that there was a famous master in the south who transmitted the True Law. Tokusan became jealous and decided to go and test this master’s knowledge on the scriptures. He took along his many volumes of commentary and notes. On the way he heard that there was going to be a Zen sesshin held by the famous master Sōshin Ryūtan^{3-EN}. He headed towards the temple, but before he reached it he sat down for a brief rest. Soon, a very old woman came along and stopped to rest beside him.

Tokusan asked her, “Who are you?”

“I am a rice cake seller,” she answered.

“Good, I’d like to buy some,” he said.

“What for?” she asked.

“I’m hungry and would like a small meal,” he replied.

Then the old woman said, “Tell me, Honourable Priest, what’s in your bag?”

Tokusan told her, “Have you ever heard of the Master of Masters of the Diamond Sūtra? I am the world’s greatest scholar on that sūtra. I know everything there is to know about it. In this bag I have my commentaries.”

Hearing this the old woman said, “I have a question. Will you permit me to ask it?”

He replied, “All right, ask me whatever you want.”

She then said, “A long time ago I heard someone chanting the Diamond Sūtra. I especially remember the verse, ‘Mind cannot be grasped in the past, present, or future.’ If you buy a rice cake with what mind do you eat it with? If you can answer I will sell you one; if not, you must go hungry.”^{4-EN}

Tokusan was too surprised to say anything. Consequently, the old woman brushed herself off and went her way leaving Tokusan empty handed.

It is truly regrettable that such a great Buddhist scholar, who studied thousands of volumes of commentary and for many years explained their theories, could not answer an old woman’s simple question. There is a big difference between acquiring knowledge through books and acquiring knowledge through experience. For the first time Tokusan learned, much to his chagrin, that a painting of a rice cake cannot satisfy hunger. Later on, Tokusan became a disciple of Zen master Ryūtan and transmitted the True Law, but even then he probably thought about the old woman with dread. Anyway, after years of study Tokusan had failed to accomplish the true Buddhist Wisdom – he was far from enlightened.

However, we should not simply laugh at Tokusan and praise the old woman. Even though she made Tokusan look foolish, we cannot be sure she herself was enlightened. Since Tokusan was not yet the real Tokusan [i.e., enlightened] he had no ability to evaluate her understanding. Furthermore, she did not answer her own question; if she had we could be certain that she was enlightened. Perhaps she thought those lines from the Diamond Sūtra meant that if Mind cannot be grasped it does not exist. “Unless a person speaks the truth, he is not enlightened,” is a saying that can be applied to the old woman. On the other hand, Tokusan was guilty of bragging about his own knowledge.

Let us reconstruct this story putting ourselves in Tokusan’s place. When the old woman asked her question Tokusan should have said, “Then don’t sell it to me!” or something like that. If he had it would have been clear that he was enlightened or at least possessed a very good understanding.

Conversely, if Tokusan said, “I don’t know. What mind do we use to eat a rice cake?” the old woman should answer, “Your mind is too preoccupied with the rice cake; you don’t know that your mind contains the rice cake. The mind itself doesn’t know what to take for a small meal.” If Tokusan did not understand, and surely he would not, the old woman should offer him three rice cakes and say, “Our Mind cannot be grasped in the past, present, or future!” When Tokusan reached for the cakes she should pick one up and hit him with it and shout: “You stupid priest! Stop being an idiot!” If Tokusan gave a good reply she could have been satisfied that he learned his lesson. If not, she should have tried to explain further. In the original story, however, she left him there and showed no intention of guiding him to the truth. Also, Tokusan did not say, “I cannot answer, old woman; please tell me what to say.” Neither Tokusan nor the old woman showed any real understanding in the original dialogue. This is a very sorry situation.

1-EN The Diamond Sūtra, chapter 18.

2-EN Teshan (779-865).

3-EN Lung-t’an Ch’ung-hsin (982-865).

4-EN This story is from Mumonkan 28 (Tokusan visit Isan)

Tokusan's situation continued long afterwards. He studied more and more under Ryūtan, coming in contact for the first time with true Buddhist teaching, but did not attain great enlightenment until one evening when he was walking down a dark corridor and Ryūtan suddenly blew out his candle. Preparation for enlightenment is long, but it finally comes suddenly, as if by chance. But do not think that such an insignificant event is merely an accident.

To transmit the Law, you must be diligent, earnest, and humble in your study of the Buddhist Way. Do not be lazy! Do not avoid hardship. Hardship is necessary for advancement. This is true for all Buddhist study. Do not seek to define your mind. Trying to grasp the mind is like trying to eat a painting of a rice cake.

This was delivered to the monks of Kannondōri-in, Kōshōhōrinji in Uji, Yamashiro fiefdom, in 1242., during the summer training period.

9. KOBUSSHIN

古佛心

“The original, unchanging Buddha-mind”

The transmission of the Buddhist Way is reckoned like this: There were six Buddhas prior to Shakyamuni and forty Patriarchs who preceded Sōkei [the sixth Chinese Patriarch, Daikan Enō].

There was a direct transmission of virtue from Patriarch to Patriarch, but this transmission does not only mean a transmission in time – the essential virtue is unchanging even though there is a difference in each Patriarch. During the time of Shakyamuni there were many Buddhas everywhere. In the time of Seigen [the seventh Patriarch] there was another priest called Nangaku who was his equal; Sekitō Kisen [the eighth Patriarch] also had a “Dharma rival” Kōsei [Baso] when he was teaching.^{1-EN} In every era there are various Patriarchs but they do not avoid each other. [What they all have in common is the original Buddha-mind.]

To study this mind we must define the functions and virtues of the original Buddha-mind. All the Buddhas and Patriarchs who have followed Shakyamuni are the same as the ancient Buddhas. Every Buddha contains the original Buddha-mind, the original Buddha-form, the original Divine Light, and the original Buddha-nature of the eternal past – all these are the virtues of the ancient Buddhas. The study of the Buddhist Way is the study of the enlightenment of the ancient Buddhas. The term “ancient Buddha” transcends old or new, and past or present; yet it is related in time to the past and present. All the ancient Buddhas are permeated by this original and unchanging Buddha-mind – in the eternal present the original Buddha-mind is clearly manifest.

My late master said, “I met an ancient Buddha called Wanshi on this mountain.” I realized through intuition that there was ancient Buddha on Mt. Tendō and Mt. Tendō is in original Buddha-mind.

Zen master Engo^{2-EN} said, “I once made a prostration before the ancient Buddha of Mt. Sōkei.” Enō was the thirty-third Patriarch from Shakyamuni. We should all make a prostration before the ancient Buddha Enō. Zen master Engo had a look at the radiant original Buddha-mind of Enō and they had a true meeting of minds. Engo prostrated himself before Enō and it can be said that they both came to possess the same total attainment of original Buddha-mind. Engo realized the true image of the original and unchanging Buddha-mind.

Priest Sōzan^{3-EN} said, “There is an ancient Buddha at the peak of Mt. Daisōrei and the light of his noble image shines everywhere in this area.” Sozan perceived original Buddha-mind everywhere even though his teacher stayed on Mt. Daisōrei. If we do not have a true meeting of minds with original Buddha-mind we can never attain the highest understanding. Only an ancient Buddha knows where the ancient Buddhas are.

Seppō said, “Jōshū^{4-EN} is an ancient Buddha.” If Seppō lacked real insight he would not have realized that Jōshū is an ancient Buddha. If we consider our daily life we will see that we gradually begin to become aware of original Buddha-mind without realizing it; that is, original Buddha-mind is always trying to manifest itself and help us. Only such great masters as Seppō know the method of inner realization without depending on words. The characteristics and pre-eminence of original Buddha-mind are accomplished by the acts of the ancient Buddhas. We should have as our standard Jōshū attainment which is true and perfect resolve, practice, and enlightenment; it is also the perfect accomplishment of the beginning, middle, and end of practice and enlightenment which leads to the eternal state of original Buddha-mind.

National Teacher Daishō of Kōtakuji^{5-EN} received the transmission from the sixth Patriarch Enō. Daishō was highly respected by everyone and was truly a unique Zen priest. He was not only the teacher of the Fourth Emperor but the Emperor Sukushu himself pulled Daishō’s wagon to the court. Furthermore, he was asked by Brahma to come and preach to the celestial beings. One day a monk asked him, “What is the original Buddha-mind?” He replied, “Wall, tile, stones.” The monk’s question implies that he already mastered the significance of original Buddha-mind and realized that original Buddha-mind exists everywhere. “Wall, tile, stones” are the wall, tile and stones of original Buddha-mind. The monk’s question reveals his level of enlightenment. Everything – blooming flowers, wild grasses, mountains, oceans, land, rivers – are the body and spirit of original Buddha-mind; they are the ancient sun-faced and moon-faced Buddhas and the skin, flesh, bones and marrow of the ancient Buddhas. Original Buddha-mind is the practice, enlightenment, accomplishment and heart of the Buddhas. It is the original Mind, the mind of ordinary people that transcends ancient or modern – it is everlasting mind. This original, eternal mind is a chair, a bamboo, or a tree. Yet it cannot be named or be found by using words. And even if you meet one who has accomplished the Buddhist Way you cannot grasp his understanding. O monks, what shall we do? You should know that karma and emptiness are nothing but original Buddha-mind. In the present there is the original mind and the Buddha-mind. In these two minds we can find detachment. This is why Daishō answered “wall, tile, stones.” The meaning is that original Buddha-mind is wall, tile, stones. At this level of understanding there is true detachment. The total attainment of original Buddha-mind contains the maximum and minimum of wall, tile, and stones.

We may ask: What is the form of the wall? Does the wall have a definite shape or not? Does it have a mind or not? Does it appear or not? We must study all these aspects of ancient Buddha-mind. No matter where it appears – heaven earth, this world, the next world – it is nothing but wall, tiles, and stones. [And we should know that] it cannot be polluted by even a speck of dust.

Once a monk asked Great Master Zengenchūkō, “What is the original Buddha-mind?” He replied, “It is the destruction of the world.” Then the monk said, “What do you mean by that?” The master answered, “My body is destroyed, isn’t it?” “Destruction of the world” means that the entire world is covered by original Buddha-mind; “my body is destroyed” means that nothing exists apart from it. Do not think you should destroy yourself – at the moment of your “destruction” original Buddha-mind gradually begins to cover the entire world – each and every existence is seen as original Buddha-mind. If we own ourselves [i.e., have self-control] at that time we ourselves become original Buddha-mind.

Surely original Buddha-mind existed before and after the seven Buddhas. Before and after the Buddhas the flower of original

1-EN 1 During the period from about 700 to 800. Seigen (Ch'ing-yüan d. 740); Nangaku (Nan yüen, 677-744); Sekitō (Shih t'ou, 700-790); and Baso (Ma-tsu 707-786).

2-EN Yuan-Wu (1063-1135).

3-EN Tao-shang (839-901).

4-EN Chao-chou (778-897).

5-EN Nan-yang (683-769).

Buddha-mind blooms and bears much fruit. Because original Buddha-mind transcends past and present it existed before time and is eternally detached.

This was delivered to the monks at Rokuharamitsuji on April 29, 1243, and transcribed by Ejō at the chief disciple's quarters on May 12., 1244.

10. DAIGO

大悟

“Great Enlightenment”

Right transmission of the Great Way is handed down through the experience and practice of enlightenment; it passes from Patriarch to Patriarch without alteration and through them Great Enlightenment manifests itself and never ceases. But do not become attached to the idea of Great Enlightenment; if you do, your practice will stagnate. You must be completely detached from the notion of Great Enlightenment and never seek or crave it. Such expressions as “without enlightenment we will reach our final destination,” “think twice about enlightenment,” or “abandon enlightenment and walk freely” reveal that to attain freedom we must transcend the concept of Great Enlightenment. Great Enlightenment is the daily activity of the Buddhas, and Patriarchs but they never think about it. Their enlightenment controls time, includes time, and is controlled by time. This is the purpose of Great Enlightenment. Ordinary people cannot grasp this point because they are attached to many things, but Buddhas can open the gate to enlightenment with the key of complete freedom.

All the Buddhas have learned through Great Enlightenment to actualize the true meaning of enlightenment in everyday life. Nevertheless, Buddhas are detached from the idea of Great Enlightenment and Great Enlightenment itself is not conscious of who is, or is not, a Buddha.

However, human beings have many different ways of realizing enlightenment. Some realize the meaning of life from birth and are detached in every stage of their life – beginning, middle, and end. Others achieve detachment by mastering the true meaning of study – that is, “self-study,” the study of one’s own skin, flesh, bones, and marrow. Some others learn as a Buddha; they do not possess understanding from birth or from self-study but gain it by transcending the world of opposites. Still others gain self-knowledge without resorting to masters, sūtras or other means; their true nature manifests itself. Different types of people have different means of realization, and everyone possesses the ability to understand the true function and meaning of their own nature.

If everyone possesses the innate ability to have true knowledge of themselves then we can say that they are already enlightened, have received the seal of enlightenment, and practice the Buddhist Way. Therefore, when Buddhas and Patriarchs are enlightened they are simply returning to their original home: [the original Buddha-nature].

To become a Buddha is to have the enlightenment of Buddha: dynamic, living enlightenment. This enlightenment exists innately; it is the original enlightenment that covers the three worlds, the hundred grasses, the four elements, the Buddhas and Patriarchs, koans. It is constantly growing and manifesting itself. So we can see that right now is the time for our own Great Enlightenment.

Great Master Rinzi In Esho^{1-EN} said: “In the great Tang Dynasty you could not find any unenlightened people no matter how hard you tried.” Since Rinzi transmitted the true Buddhist Way there is no reason to doubt his statement. If we examine his saying closely we will see that “Tang Dynasty” does not refer to any particular era or place. It is the country of our own body and mind so do not think that enlightenment is found in just one place. That is why he said it was so difficult to find an unenlightened person in the Tang Dynasty. He meant that our real self, both in the past and present, is the enlightened self.

“Throughout history all the woodcutters in the mountains and fisherman in the seas have had enlightenment.” If students study Rinzi’s words they will not be wasting their time. However, we should also study the teachings of other Patriarchs. Let us question Rinzi: “If you only think that it is difficult to find unenlightened people that is not good enough. You should also realize that it is just as difficult to find enlightened people. In addition, you should know that there are half-enlightened people with wonderful and bright appearances. You have never seen such a man, have you?”

Even though it may be true that it was difficult to find unenlightened people in the Tang Dynasty do not make it the standard of your study. Rather, seek to find several great dynasties within just one half-enlightened person. Is this easy or difficult to understand? If you are able to comprehend this point you can be said to be a Buddha or Patriarch with real practice.

One day a monk asked Great Master Hōchi of Kegonji^{2-EN} (his priestly name was Kyūjō, and he was the Dharma heir of Tōzan), “What happens if a man of Great Enlightenment has illusion?” Kegon answered, “A broken mirror never reflects again, flowers cannot re-bloom on the branch.” Although this is a dialogue it still reveals the truth to the monk. Such a conversation is only heard inside of Kegon’s monastery or from someone who is a disciple of Tōzan. That is why his monastery can be called a real monastery of the Buddha and Patriarchs.

When we say “a man of Great Enlightenment” it refers to someone who does not possess enlightenment from the beginning, or attains it from some other place and keeps it hidden. This enlightenment exists openly in the Buddha and Dharma Halls but cannot be gained by an old novice. Nor can it be cultivated by oneself. Yet Great Enlightenment always exists. Great Enlightenment should not be thought of as merely an absence of illusion; also, do not think that because there is Great Enlightenment there is Great Illusion. Not only does a man of Great Enlightenment increase his enlightenment but even a man of Great Illusion increases his enlightenment.

“What happens if a man of Great Enlightenment has illusion” raises the central question, and Kegon’s answer is the one we should use – they are the meritorious words of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Is a man of Great Enlightenment who has illusion the same as an unenlightened person? Is it possible for a man of Great Enlightenment to have illusion? Can they change their illusion to enlightenment? Can they change their illusion to enlightenment or does illusion cover their enlightenment? Or if they change illusion to enlightenment is it still called illusion? These are the questions we must clarify.

Kegon’s reply went right to the heart of these questions. He meant that enlightenment and illusion are like two hands on one body. The ultimate goal of our practice is to determine if it is possible for a man of Great Enlightenment to have illusion. We may say that increased Great Illusion is like a thief not being able to recognize his own son and vice-versa. However, Great Enlightenment recognizes a thief as a thief, and the son as the son. Furthermore, if a small quantity is added to or removed from a large amount no change can be seen by anyone regardless if they are enlightened or not. Consequently, we should examine increased Great Illusion and find its true meaning. Then we will meet the man of Great Enlightenment. We must examine ourselves in order to find if we have such illusion.

Kegon’s reply, “A broken mirror never reflects again,” concerns the actual moment the mirror is broken. Do not be concerned

1-EN Linchi, (d. 867), founder of the Rinzi Zen School. This comes from the Kosonjoku Goroku, chapter five.

2-EN Pao-chih Hua-yen’ssu, dates unknown.

with the mirror's condition before then. Kego's answer can be taken to mean that a man of Great Enlightenment never falls into illusion. However, this is not true. If you think like that you miss the point. Kego's answer is directed towards the actual moment an enlightened person falls into "illusion." When the flower falls it is just that, nothing else. No matter how high it is placed it still falls. When the mirror is broken it is the time of detachment. Regardless of what thoughts may exist it never reflects. It is the state of detachment. To question the real meaning of the broken mirror and the fallen flower is to have great understanding of an enlightened person's illusion.

Do not think, as most people do, that if one has Great Enlightenment and becomes a Buddha he is different from ordinary people, or that Great Enlightenment causes Bodhisattvas to return to the world and try to save others. In our present study we are not concerned with the difference between enlightenment or illusion, or Buddhas and ordinary people. Here, Great Enlightenment is even different from the Great Awakening of a Bodhisattva. Great Enlightenment is without beginning or end, and so is illusion. Great Enlightenment is not external and there is no illusion to obstruct it. Great Enlightenment contains illusion and is not concerned with large or small. Great Enlightenment is its own Great Enlightenment; it is snow-covered mountains, rocks, and trees. The Great Enlightenment of Buddhas is for sentient beings and the Great Enlightenment of sentient beings illuminates the Great Enlightenment of the Buddhas. There is no distinction between them. Great Enlightenment is not just the function of ourselves or others. It fills everywhere, it is the centre of existence in both the form of enlightenment and illusion. Illusion can only seek Great Enlightenment and we can never find Great Enlightenment outside of illusion.

Priest Meiu of Kyōcho sent a monk to ask Gyōzan^{3-EN}, "Do people living nowadays need enlightenment?" Gyōzan replied, "Enlightenment exists but it is easy to misunderstand." The monk returned to Meiu and reported Gyōzan's answer. "What a wonderful answer! Only a very great Zen master could give such an answer." Meiu praised Gyōzan highly. "People living nowadays" is the eternal present. Thousands of years exist in the present and our life, in the present, is the focal point of our study. Understanding must be attained through the body and mind and not based on others' interpretation. We must reflect upon the fact that all things are contained in our original self. We must search for this principle with a clear mind.

Recently in the Sung Dynasty there were monks who did not shave their heads and did not understand Buddhism even though they studied it for many years. They were constantly striving to become a Buddha and continually waiting for enlightenment, which for them, was the basic purpose of Buddhism. What vulgar people they were! They had never touched real Buddhist teaching so they thought enlightenment came as a result of their Zazen. Trying to enlightenment stagnated their practice. Because they were attached to the idea of enlightenment they lost the "chance to meet a real Zen master – they were lazy and slothful, wasted time, and misunderstood Buddhism.

Priests of the present day are evasive about the question, "Do people living now need enlightenment?" If we say there is enlightenment, they will deny it. If we say enlightenment emerges they ask, "Where is enlightenment in everyday life? Is it really enlightenment? Do we actually need enlightenment?"

Priests of the present day think that there are two distinct states: non-enlightenment and enlightenment. They think that non-enlightenment becomes enlightenment and it is attained from somewhere or someone else. But even that idea is nothing but Great Enlightenment. Non-enlightenment is, and always has been, a form of enlightenment. For example, yesterday I was non-enlightenment; but today I am enlightenment. We possess in the present enlightenment the enlightenment of yesterday – enlightenment does not begin with the moment of perception. Consequently, everything, right now, in the eternal present is Great Enlightenment. That is Great Enlightenment, this is Great Enlightenment.

This was delivered to the monks at Kannondōri, Kōshōhōrinji, on January 20, 1243, and then transcribed for all monks, earthly and heavenly, on January 27, 1244, at Kippōji in Echizen. Recopied by Ejō, sitting deep inside Kippōji on March 20, 1244.

3-EN Mi-hu, dates unknown; Yang-shan Hui-chi. (807-883)

11. ZAZENGI

坐禪儀

“The rule for Zazen”

The study of Zen means the practice of Zazen. To practice Zazen choose a quiet place that is neither drafty or damp, and use a thick mat. [Since we are using the same sitting posture as Shakyamuni when he received enlightenment] think of the place where you sit as the “Diamond Seat.” Some monks practice on large stones while others follow [the seven Buddhas] by practising Zazen on a mat of wild grasses.

The place for Zazen should not be too dark but kept moderately bright day and night. It should be kept warm in winter and cool in summer. Keep the body and mind at rest – cut off all mental activity. Do not think about time or circumstances, nor cling to good or bad thoughts. Zazen is not self-consciousness or self-contemplation. Never try to become a Buddha. Detach yourself from notions of lying or sitting. Eat and drink moderately. Do not waste time. Pay attention to your own practice of Zazen.

Learn from the example of the fifth Patriarch Konin of Mt. Ōbai^{1-EN} All of his actions, everyday, were the practice of Zazen.

When you practice Zazen wear a kesa and use a small round cushion. Do not sit on the middle of the cushion but place the front part under your buttocks. Cross your legs and put them on the mat. The cushion should be touching the base of your spine. This is the basic posture that has been handed down from Buddha to Buddha, Patriarch to Patriarch.

Use either the full or half lotus posture. In the full lotus, the right foot is placed the left thigh and the left foot on the right thigh. Keep your legs horizontal, and your back perfectly straight. In the half lotus the left foot is placed on the right thigh and the right foot is tucked underneath the left thigh.

Loosen your robe and straighten up. Right hand on left foot, left hand on right foot. The thumbs should be straight and touching lightly. Both hands should be against your abdomen. The top of your thumbs should be kept even with your navel. Remember to keep your back straight at all times. Do not lean to the right or left, or front or back. Keep your ears even with your shoulders. Likewise the nose and the navel should be in the same plane. Place the tongue against the roof of your mouth. Breathe through your nose and keep your teeth and lips together. The eyes should be kept open in their natural Way. When you begin, adjust your body and mind by taking a deep breath.

The form of your Zazen should be stable like a mountain. Think “not-thinking.” How? By using “non-thinking.”

This is the splendid way of Zazen. Zazen is not the means to enlightenment, Zazen itself is the completed action of the Buddha. Zazen itself is pure, natural enlightenment.

This was delivered to the monks of Kippōji in November of 1243.

1-EN Hung-jen (601-675).

12. ZAZENSHIN

坐禪箴

“Admonitions for Zazen”

After Great Master Yakusan Kodo had finished a period of Zazen a monk asked, “What do you think about as you sit so intensely?” The Master said, “I think not-thinking.” The monk asked, “How can you think not-thinking?” The master replied, “Non-thinking.”

By experiencing these kind of words by the Great Master we must study and correctly transmit intense sitting. This is the proper method of clarifying the Buddhist way of intense sitting, While this thought of intense sitting is not limited to one practitioner, Yakusan’s expression, “I think not-thinking”, is paramount. It becomes the skin, flesh, bones, and marrow of thinking and the skin, flesh, bones and marrow of not-thinking.

The monk asked, “How can you think not-thinking?” This is certainly not an original question, but still all practitioners must be concerned with the problem of “how to think.” Is there in fact “thought” in intense sitting? If you make progress in intense sitting, you cannot fail to understand it. Any one who is not ridiculously short-sighted can question, evaluate, and think about intense sitting.

The Great Master said, “Non-thinking.” Although the use of the expression “non-thinking” is clear, to think not-thinking one must always use “non-thinking.” There is a “who” in non-thinking; a “who” that maintains the self. Even though “I” sit intensely, there is not just thinking, but total involvement in intense sitting. Intense sitting may be just intense sitting; so, how can intense sitting think of intense sitting?

Therefore, that is why intense sitting cannot be measured by Buddhas, by dharmas, by enlightenment, or by understanding. What Yakusan has transmitted individually has been handed down directly for thirty-six generations from Shakyamuni Buddha; it is thirty-six generations back from Yakusan to Shakyamuni Buddha. Like this, the correct transmission has occurred within “think not-thinking.”

Nonetheless, in recent years foolish people say “The practice of Zazen is to keep our minds free of thoughts; once that is accomplished we have attained the highest state.” This opinion is inferior to even those held by Hinayana scholars and the ordinary teaching of gods and men. How can we call such people students of the Buddhist Dharma? In present day Sung China many can be seen practising like that; it is tragic that the Way of the Patriarchs is collapsing. There is another group that maintains that the physical practice of Zazen is the key for both novices and senior monks, and that everyday practice of the Buddhas and Patriarchs is not necessary; moving is zen, sitting is zen, speaking, silence, activity, calm, body action, and body stillness are all zen; we should limit ourselves to just sitting zen. Many in the Rinzaï stream of Zen think like this. They say such things because they have not taken the real life of the Buddha Dharma seriously. What is beginner’s mind? Why is there a distinction between those with beginner’s mind and those without? We should know that for true study of the Way of Buddhism, we must concentrate exclusively on seated meditation. The essential point is to practice Buddha without trying to become Buddha. Practising Buddha is not becoming Buddha; thus it becomes the actualization of enlightenment. The body is Buddha, it does not become Buddha. Breaking free of attachment to sitting, Buddha means to become Buddha. At the proper time, aeons are transcended and both Buddhas and demons are left behind. Progressing or retreating, the power to fulfil all things exists.

Zen Master Daijaku Kōsei (Baso), who was studying under Zen Master Nangaku Dai’e, continued to regularly do Zazen, even after receiving the inner transmission of the Mind-seal. Once, Nangaku visited Daijaku and asked, “What is the purpose of doing Zazen?”

We must quietly ponder and clarify this question. Was Nangaku asking: “Do you expect to make progress from doing Zazen?” or “Is there some other intention beside Zazen?” or “Do you have any intention at all? or is he asking, “When you do Zazen what is the intention? What is being actualized?” Such points must be considered in great detail. It is important to cherish real dragons more than imitation dragons; yet know that both a real and an imitation dragon can cause clouds to form and rain to fall. Do not think that the imitation is near and the real one is distant or vice versa – both near and far must be properly evaluated. Our vision must neither be too light nor too heavy; our hearing must not be too solid or too light. Both our eyes and ears must be sharp and clear.

Kōsei said, “In order to become a Buddha.”

This expression must be mastered. How can one “become a Buddha”? Does he mean Buddha is made into a Buddha? Or does Buddha’s face appear in one form or another when one becomes Buddha? or does “become a Buddha” signify dropping off, a dropping off that becomes Buddha? There are many possibilities of becoming Buddha so does such involvement create the phrase “in order to become a Buddha”?

We must know that Kōsei’s expression means that Zazen is done in order to become Buddha, Zazen is the intention of becoming Buddha. “In order to” occurs both before and after becoming Buddha. “Become a Buddha” appears at exactly the right time. Question: “What part does intention play in becoming Buddha?” Answer: “It is continually involved right from the start.” At this time, each thing completely becomes Buddha, involvement directly exhausts becoming Buddha, and all things have this intention. Do not reject a single intention. When we reject even one intention, our life is lost. Yet, when our life is lost, we are involved with that intention.

Nangaku then picked up a broken piece of tile and began polishing it with a stone. When Kōsei saw that he said, “Master, what are you doing?”

Who actually saw him polish the tile and who didn’t? At any rate, Kōsei inquired about polishing the tile; “What are you doing?” means “why are you polishing the tile?” Although there are different shades of meaning here “polishing the tile” remains essential. Never take your own viewpoint to be definitive; alternate interpretations must be studied to develop unified understanding.

We must know that there are cases when we see Buddha without realizing that he is Buddha, see water without realizing that it is water, and see mountains without realizing that they are mountains. What exists is not just those things that appear directly before our eyes; so it is not proper to make hasty evaluations. That is not the way to study Buddhism.

Nangaku said, “To polish it into a mirror.”

We must clarify the essence of this expression. There is surely a principle within "To polish it into a mirror." that actualizes enlightenment—it is not a false statement. Even if the tile is merely a tile, and the mirror simply a mirror, still there are many aspects of the principle of polishing that must be studied. Both a dark mirror and a bright mirror can be made by polishing a tile. If we do not know that all mirrors are made by polishing a tile, there will be no words of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, no talks and no proclamations.

Kōsei said, "How can you make a mirror by polishing a tile?"

This shows that Kōsei was truly a man of iron who understood the action of polishing the tile and did not need the assistance of others; nonetheless, polishing a tile cannot turn it into a mirror. If it does become a mirror, it must do so immediately.

Nangaku said, "How can you become a Buddha by doing Zazen?"

Know, without a doubt, the principle that one does not become Buddha by doing Zazen and the point that becoming Buddha has no relationship to Zazen. Kōsei said, "Why is that?" Although this expression seems at first to be only directed at the problem of Zazen, it is also related to the question of becoming Buddha; it is like two close friends meeting each other – the fact that he is my close friend makes him my close friend. "Why is that?" includes both aspects of the problem.

Nangaku said, "It's like riding in a cart. If the cart does not move, you can whip either the cart or the ox."

"If the cart does not move": what does "the cart moves" and "the cart does not move" signify? Is a moving cart like flowing water? Or is stagnant water like a moving cart. "Flow" sometimes means "not moving," and "water moves" sometimes does not mean "flow." Therefore when we investigate "If the cart does not move," we must study both "not move" and "not not move." It depends on the occasion. "If it does not move" should not be considered exclusively in terms of not moving.

"You can either whip the cart or whip the ox." Does this mean we should whip both the cart and the ox? Are the two actions of same or different value? We must know that while there is no custom of whipping the cart among ordinary people, there is such a custom in the Way of Buddha. This is core the of our study. Even if we have studied the custom of whipping the cart, we should not think it is the same as whipping the ox. Clarify this in detail. Even if we are aware of the custom of whipping the ox, we must study the meaning of whipping the ox in the Buddhist Way. Is the ox we whip a water buffalo? An iron ox? or a mud ox? Do we use a whip? Do we strike it with the entire world? Do we hit it with our entire mind? Do we hit it with our marrow? Do we hit it with our fist? The fist must hit the fist, the ox must hit the ox. Kōsei remained silent but that cannot be held against him – he threw away a tile to pick up a gem, and shook his head to create a new face. His silence cannot be helped.

Nangaku explained, "Your study of Zazen is the study of sitting Buddha."

When studying this expression, we must grasp the essential points of the Patriarchs' teaching. If we do not understand the "study of Zazen," can we know about the study of sitting Buddha? If we are not heirs of the correct transmission, how can we discuss that the study of Zazen is the study of sitting Buddha? We should truly know that beginners' Zazen is initial Zazen and that the initial Zazen is the initial sitting Buddha. We have this expression: "If you want to study Zazen, know that zen is not sitting or lying. Zazen is Zazen; it is not sitting or lying. The single transmission originated independent of sitting or lying; unlimited sitting or lying is the real self. So why inquire about the degree of intimacy, discuss illusion and enlightenment, and search for wisdom and detachment?"

Nangaku said, "If you study sitting Buddha, Buddha must be without fixed form."

This is best way to express it. Since sitting Buddha has many shapes, "without fixed form" is the most suitable way to put it. The phrase "Buddha must be without fixed form" is the way to express Buddha's form. Because Buddha is without fixed form, it is not separate from sitting Buddha. Therefore, that is why the expression "Buddha must be without fixed form" means that if we want to study Zazen, we must study sitting Buddha. Due to the law of non-abiding, we cannot definitely state that "this is Buddha" or "this is not Buddha." Sitting Buddha exists prior to any expression, before any detachment.

Nangaku said, "If you want to study sitting Buddha, you must kill Buddha."

Clarifying sitting Buddha is the virtue of killing Buddha. The proper occasion of sitting Buddha is to kill Buddha. When we seek the divine light of the form to kill Buddha, it surely becomes sitting Buddha. "Kill" is used by ordinary people, but its meaning here is different from the common one. We must clarify the shape and context of "sitting Buddha is killing Buddha." The virtue of Buddha reveals killing Buddha; we must study our acts of "killing" or "not killing."

"If you are attached to the form of sitting, you will not master this principle."

"Attachment to the form of sitting" means trying to abandon the form of sitting while still touching that form. This principle means that sitting Buddha has not attained non-attachment to sitting form. Since non-attachment to sitting form has not been attained, even if that attachment is clear still we have "you will not master this principle." This practice is called "dropping off body and mind." Anyone who has not sat like this cannot possess this principle. This principle forcefully occurs in the time of sitting, in the person who sits, in sitting Buddha, and in the study of sitting Buddha. The sitting of ordinary sitting and lying is not the forceful action of sitting Buddha. Even though the sitting of ordinary individuals resembles that of sitting Buddha and Buddha sitting, it is like one person becoming Buddha or a person made into Buddha. A few become Buddha, though not all. Buddha is not all people. Because all Buddhas are not all people, human beings are not always Buddhas, and Buddhas are not always human beings. Sitting Buddha is also like this.

Both Nangaku the master and Kōsei the disciple were excellent. Kōsei was enlightened that sitting Buddha is becoming Buddha; Nangaku pointed out that sitting Buddha seems to be for becoming Buddha. There was such kind of practice in Nangaku's community and similar expressions in Yakusan's group. We should know that the essential function of the transmission from Buddha to Buddha and Patriarch to Patriarch is this "sitting Buddha." In every transmission of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, this essential function has been utilized. If they had not utilized it, they would not be able to ever dream of knowing about it. In the transmission of the Buddhist Dharma in India and China, sitting Buddha was always passed from [one Buddha to another]. This essential function is the basis of the transmission. If the Buddhist Dharma had not been transmitted, Zazen would not have been transmitted either. That which is carried from master to disciple is this essential point of Zazen. If this essential point had not been directly transmitted, there would be no Buddhas and Patriarchs. If this single Dharma is not clarified it will be impossible to clarify all the other ten thousand elements and activities. If each element cannot be clarified, how can we say that we have enlightened vision, that there is attainment of the Way, or that there have been Buddhas and Patriarchs in the past and present? Hence, we must determine that the Buddhas and Patriarchs surely

directly transmit Zazen. Because this illuminates the divine light of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, it must be earnestly studied and practiced. Foolish people mistakenly believe that the divine light of the Buddha is like the light radiated by the sun and moon, or the beams reflected by bright gems. Sun and moon light are nothing more than pale beams of the six worlds of samsara and cannot be compared to the brilliant divine light of the Buddha. "The divine light of the Buddha" is an expression we must receive and listen to, a Dharma we must maintain and protect – it is the direct transmission of Zazen. If that divine light does not shine on us, we can not preserve the tradition or keep the faith.

Therefore, that is why from ancient times to the present, few have understood true Zazen. Among the abbots of the great temples in Sung China, hardly any understand Zazen or even study it properly.' Only a handful have clarified and comprehended it. Although every temple has set periods for Zazen, obligatory for all monastery officials, monks, and other interested seekers, very few abbots really know what they are doing.

Consequently, from the past right up to the present, noted priests have authored such manuals as Notes on Zazen, Fundamentals of Zazen, Admonitions for Zazen, and so on. Nonetheless, many points contained in such works are dubious and the authors' lack of adequate training is evident. Obviously they have not grasped Zazen or directly received the true principles of Zazen.

(Admonitions for Zazen is found in the Keitoku-Dentō-roku; Notes on Zazen is in the Katai-Futoroku)

It is tragic that many pass their entire lives in various monasteries without once practising true Zazen. Their Zazen is not really their own nor does their practice enable them to see their true natures. This type of Zazen does not mean that they dislike their own bodies and minds, and it does not mean they have no intention of practising Zazen – they are simply in a stupor. The writings of such practitioners merely repeat the mechanics of Zazen; that is quiet the breath and calm the mind. Their method remains at the lowest level of observation, repetition, absorption, and practice; their understanding is quite rudimentary. How, then, is it possible for them to directly transmit the Zazen of all the Buddhas and Patriarchs. The scribes of great Sung China recorded many false statements; do not pay their collections any attention. Admonitions for Zazen by Zen Master Wanshi Shōkaku Osho of Keitokuji on Mount Tendō in Keigenfu, great Sung China contains the words and teaching of a real Buddha and Patriarch on Zazen. His work is the only one that illuminates all sides of the universe, and he is a Buddha and Patriarch among all the Buddhas and Patriarchs of the past and present. Both Buddhas of the past and Buddhas of the future have given similar admonitions. Patriarchs of the past and present are actualized from these admonitions. His Admonitions for Zazen are as follows:

Admonition for Zazen, compiled at the request of the Emperor by Zen Master Wanshi Shokaku.

"The essential function transmitted from Buddha to Buddha is the dynamic element passed from Patriarch to Patriarch. It is knowledge attained free of sensation and illumination independent of causality. Since it is free of sensation, it is subtly self-known; because it is independent of causality, it is marvellously self-illuminated. This subtle self-knowledge has no dualistic thought; this marvellous self-illumination has not the slightest trace of light or dark. No dualistic thought means that this knowledge is fulfilled; not the slightest trace means this illumination is perfect. It is like fish sporting on the bottom of a pure stream and birds floating serenely across the vast sky."

The needle of Admonitions for Zazen appears as this great function. Its dignity cannot be expressed and its suitability is eternally valid. Never slander the favourite things of the Buddhas and Patriarchs; that will cause one's life to be lost – a weak neck cannot support a swollen head.

"The essential function transmitted from Buddha to Buddha." All the Buddha surely transmit this essential function from one to another; this essential function is actualized as Zazen.

"The dynamic element passed from Patriarch to Patriarch." None of our predecessors ever surpassed these words. This principle is within the transmission of all the Patriarchs, the transmission of the law and kesa. When the head is turned, the direction of the face changes – this is the essential function transmitted from Buddha to Buddha; when the face turns, the head changes direction – this is the dynamic element passed from Patriarch to Patriarch. "It is knowledge attained free of sensation." "Knowledge" is not memory; memory is an inferior kind of knowledge. Nor is it comprehension, because comprehension is created knowledge. Therefore, "knowledge" is free of sensation; "free of sensation" is true knowledge. Neither universal nor individual knowledge can be measured. "Free of sensation" means "if you come with light, I'll smash your light; if you come with darkness, I'll smash your darkness" and "shatter all obstacles of body and mind."

"Illumination independent of causality." This illumination is neither intellectual illumination nor spiritual illumination—it is illumination independent of cause and effect. This illumination does not alter causality, because causality itself is illumination. "Independent of" manifests the entire world without anything being concealed; the universe is shattered and nothing sticks out. It is subtle, it is miraculous, it is harmonious, and it is interrelated.

"This subtle self-knowledge has no dualistic thought." "Thought-knowledge" is not dependent on the various processes of thinking. This knowledge has form; that form is mountains and rivers. These mountains and rivers are subtle; that subtleness is marvellous. It's function is extraordinarily vigorous and its manifestations totally unrestrained.

Even if we utilize just a small portion of this knowledge, the entire world and all its mountains and rivers are revealed, and we have the power to know everything. If we lack intimate knowledge of mountains, we can not understand even half of one portion of this knowledge. Do not be concerned with the late appearance of intellectual understanding. The thought we already possess manifests the transmission of all the Buddhas. Not past is right here; right here is actualized. Therefore, that is why "no dualism" is "not meeting a single person."

"This marvellous self-illumination has not the slightest trace of light or dark." "Trace" covers the entire world. Therefore, it is of itself subtle, is of itself illumined. Thus it does not belong to the future. Do not doubt what you see, or disbelieve what you hear about this. Illuminate directly all aspects of the problem without relying exclusively on words and phrases. Then we will have fulfilment and perfection. Even if we can grasp and maintain the essence, our "doubt" remains.

"Fish sport on the bottom of a pure stream." "Pure water" is purer than the water that falls from heaven, not to mention the water that wells from earth. Pure water is not bound by banks or shores. When fish swim in this kind of pure water, they go nowhere – that is even if they move ten thousand miles it cannot be measured, cannot be defined, cannot be bound, and cannot be contained, it is bottomless; it cannot be fathomed. If we attempt to fathom it, we find nothing but pure water. The virtue of Zazen is like the movement of the fish. Who can evaluate a thousand or ten thousand miles progress? Pure movement resembles the traceless flight of a bird.

"Birds float serenely across the vast sky. "Vast sky" is not the space above, and the space above is not "vast sky;" so how can this be an ordinary vast sky? When nothing is hidden or revealed and there is no front and back, we have vast sky. When a bird flies in this sky, flying and sky are one. The act of flying in the sky cannot be measured. Flying in the sky covers the world because the entire world is flying in the sky. "Flying" is ineffable and is best put as "flying serenely" – it vanishes without a trace." When the sky flies, the bird also flies; when the birds flies, the sky, too, flies. The study of "flying" is said to exist right here and now. This is intense, immovable Zazen. Regardless of how much we talk, it is nothing but "it exists right here now."

Thus runs the Admonitions for Zazen of Zen Master Wanshi. None of the many elders of past and present generations can compose such a treatise. Even if all those stinking bags of skin tried to compose this kind of Admonitions for Zazen they would never have the ability to complete it over several lifetimes. We do not have to waste time looking in every direction, Wanshi's Admonitions is all we need to see.

Whenever my late master give a formal Dharma talk, he described Wanshi as an ancient Buddha. He never referred to anyone else like that. Once one possesses the ability to evaluate others, Buddhas and Patriarchs can be readily discerned. Know that it is possible to find such Buddhas and Patriarchs in the stream of Tōzan. After reviewing Wanshi's Admonitions for Zazen, I've decided to compose my own version. Today is March 18, 1242, about eighty-five years after Wanshi's death on Nov. 8, 1157. Here is my version:

"The essential function transmitted from Buddha to Buddha is the dynamic element passed from Patriarch to Patriarch. It is actualized in not-thinking and appears in equanimity. Actualized as not-thinking is actualized as self-awareness. Appearing as equanimity appears as self- enlightenment. Actualized as self-awareness is undefiled; appearing as self-enlightenment is beyond absolute and relative. Undefiled is awareness, awareness that relies on nothing, and is thus liberation. Beyond absolute and relative is enlightenment, enlightenment that has no definitions, and is thus real practice. The water is pure to the bottom and fish swim like fish; the vast sky extends to heaven, and birds fly like birds." I do not want to insinuate that Zen Master Wanshi's Admonitions are incomplete; I merely wish to add these few points. The descendants of the Buddhas and Patriarchs must study Zazen as the one great matter. This is the true seal of the direct transmission.

Written on March 18, 1242, at Kōshōhōrinji. Delivered to an assembly of monks at Kippō Monastery, Yoshida Prefecture, Echizen, in November.

13. KAIINZAMMAI

海印三昧

“Sāgara mudrā sarnādhī”

All the Buddhas and Patriarchs without doubt experience kaiinsammai^{1-EN} There is a time for clarification, a time for experience, and a time for practice in kaiinsammai; they function together freely, with no obstacles. It is unsurpassed meditation and its virtue cannot be measured.

Both the Buddha-mind and practice based on the vow to save all sentient beings wandering through the realm of birth and death are nothing but kaiinsammai. The Buddhas and Patriarchs, who possess supreme detachment, break the dualistic View of illusion and enlightenment and work to awaken both themselves and others. Their practice and vows are based on the original form of Buddha, which ultimately goes back to kaiinsammai. All things eventually return to the great ocean of kaiinsammai. kaiinsammai is the original element of Zen practice and enlightenment and the basis of the Buddhist Way of Life.

Shakyamuni said, “When body and mind emerge the various elements appear and when body and mind disappear, the elements also disappear. Although the various elements arise, ‘there is no ‘substance’ to be grasped in either emergence or destruction. There is no opposition between the mind of past and future and their elements. This is called kaiinsammai.”

We must study the Buddhist Way earnestly. It is not necessary to listen to many teachings or prolific words in order to have enlightenment or Buddhist learning. It is not limited to the person who has mastered various teachings. [For example Śāriputtra] attained enlightenment from studying a single four line verse. Shakyamuni’s teaching is not based on some general, vague idea of what our original Buddha-nature is, nor is it based on any attachment to realization of Buddha-nature through practice. We should avoid any methods or attachments like this that arise in our practice. We innately possess the original practice of enlightenment and should not expect anything.

When kaiinsammai emerges, all elements emerge. It is the elements experiencing their own existence with nothing extra. One form is composed of all elements and is body and mind. Body and mind are not independent, they are composed of all elements. This body and mind with all its passions is itself the body of detachment. All compounded existence – all dharmas – are the emptiness of non-substance. “When body and mind emerge all elements come into existence” means that everything appears completely with no residue left. This appearance cannot be perceived or distinguished separately, nor can we say “self emerges.” If you transcend those discriminations and find unity, you will have a high level of detachment and possess your true form. When it emerges the proper time has come: it is “existence,” nothing else. “Existence” is time itself. Our real form, in its totality, clarifies the relationship of existence and time. The skin, flesh, bones and marrow which make up our body and mind are related with and emerge through time and causality. Here, self-existence and the existence of others are not opposed. This is the state of detachment – it is the time for phenomena to arise. The emergence of our own body and mind is the appearance of all the elements in a unified whole. We must view things both objectively and subjectively or we can never understand this. It is beyond words, a wordless word, an echo of the absolute independence of saying or not-saying. When body and mind emerge the elements are unified and time and existence function together. This is the true conception of time. Time is completed and actualized by this underlying unity which exists everywhere. Concerning this an ancient Buddha said, “Suddenly a fire starts” to express the idea that all things appear without any opposition to each other.

[Once the monk Razan asked Zen Master Gentō^{2-EN},] “What is time – its appearance, disappearance, permanence – like?” Gentō answered with a thunderous roar, “Why does it appear or disappear?!” To us appearance and disappearance is ceaseless. “Ceaseless” means the acceptance of ceaseless appearance and disappearance as the life of Buddha. We must clarify and accept this principle of the Buddhist Way. Life and death are the essence of Buddha – appearance and disappearance are the continual coming and going of the thread of life in the Buddhist Way. Each and every form of existence is earnestly seeking the salvation of all sentient beings and proclaiming the truth through their ceaseless coming and going. The mind of the past cannot grasp this. Some people possess the bones, some possess the marrow of this teaching. Yet even here there is no discrimination.

“When the elements disappear we cannot say we disappear.” This means that the form is destroyed but actually the elements remain. They are independent of creation and destruction. All things arise through the unity of the elements. They are not tainted by anything so it is called “pure mind” or kaiinsammai. This is where Buddha is manifest. All sentient beings have the potential to be Buddha if they dwell in “pure mind.” On this level there is true equanimity – no difference between the mind of the past and the mind of the future.

“Destruction” (or “disappearance”) has several profound meanings. First, it represents supreme, unsurpassed nirvana – the annihilation of self, the joy of entering total rest, detachment, and a life of peace and harmony. Second, it means death, the passing away of life. Third, the belief that death is the final and complete end of our body and nothing remains or survives in any form. Fourth, the state of total rest and harmony as taught by the two vehicles [Hinayana and Mahayana].

“Destruction” is interpreted in such diverse ways, yet each explanation is concerned with the merit of nirvana. “Destruction” is nirvana; past and future existence is destroyed, only nirvana remains. All things have their own appearance and disappearance, back and front; they transcend relativity and are absolute in themselves. Here, no opposition means the emergence of existence; “no opposition” covers 80 or 90 percent of the accomplishment of the Way. The destruction of the four elements and five skandhas is the function of detachment – it is complete freedom. If we perceive this we can make real progress, and no longer see ourselves as existing separately from “destruction.” “Destruction” means total destruction of the body, not just hands and eyes but all our egocentricities. This is the virtue of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Students must know about the concepts of “no opposition” and “no difference.” Beginning, middle, and end emerge but “destruction” transcends those oppositions – things emerge, but they are not “destruction” only existence. They co-exist in the beginning, middle or end. They are continual processes with no opposition – it is called kaiinsammai. There is only practice and enlightenment; it is called original purity. This samādhī is actualization and attainment of the Way. When we are sleeping at night and grope for the pillow there is no thought of discrimination. [Kaiinsammai is like this.] The actualization of detachment is carried out in the eternal world, in the great ocean of liberation, and in the profound teaching of the Lotus

1-EN Sāgara mudrā sarnādhī. Literally this means “ocean imprint” sarnādhī. This supposedly is the meditation Shakyamuni entered before delivering the Avatamsaka (Kegon) Sūtra. All truth is at once reflected in that state, just as all images are reflected in a quiet sea. It is the highest form of insight. We have decided to leave it untranslated as there is no English equivalent.

2-EN Razan (Loshan, dates unknown) was Gentō’s (Yentou 828-887), disciple.

Sūtra. Whether we actualize it or not, it transcends relativity since we are in the sea of kaiinsammai.

In the ocean in front of us one wave causes countless waves. Behind us is the world of the Lotus Sūtra that expounds the truth behind the generation of of countless waves. The teaching of this sūtra is like a very long thread that can be wound or stretched, or become vertical like a fishing line depending on the circumstances. Front and back exist together and contain the whole.

Living in the great ocean of liberation is not the place where either worldly people or saints like to live, but is our own ocean of liberation – it is a direct, absolute state, it is the absolute ocean of the Lotus Sūtra: kaiinsammai. The great ocean of liberation is not located between the Buddhist Way and the worldly life, nor is it inside or outside. It proclaims the teaching of the one vehicle. It does not remain in any of the four directions. [When Senu Tokujō^{3-EN} was returning from fishing he said,] “My boat is filled with nothing but moonlight.” By returning he meant returning to his original nature. It is not an act of attachment since this returning can only emerge in the final stages of the Buddhist Way. It is called the imprint of truth reflected in the water. This reflection has no shadow. It is a “print-less print” revealed in the ocean; it is kaiinsammai. This is the imprint of the ocean, water, mud and mind. It is reflected in water, mud, and emptiness.

Once a monk asked Great Master Sōzan Honjaku^{4-EN}, “According to the sūtras, the great ocean never contains any corpses. What is the ocean like?” The master answered, “It involves the entire universe.” “Why doesn’t it contain any corpses then?” the monk asked again. “Stop breathing” the master said, “and you are no longer contained in the great ocean.” “You already said that the great ocean contains the entire universe; why then if I stop breathing doesn’t the ocean contain my corpse?” the monk said. The master told him, “The entire universe is detached from itself and stops breathing^{5-EN}.”

Sōzan was the brother disciple of Unko, and here transmitted correctly the teaching of his master Tōzan. “According to the sūtras” represents the right teaching of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. This teaching is not related to sacred or worldly or based on the Hinayana. “Great ocean” does not signify inland seas, or open seas, nor the eight oceans of Mt. Sumeru. Students must have practical knowledge about this, and must not have any doubt. The monk did not recognize the ocean that is not an ocean, but he did come to realize the real ocean of the Buddhist Way. This is the only real ocean. This ocean does not require a deep pool with the eight virtues of salt water; it is kaiinsammai. The monk’s question was a sensible one since no one knows exactly what the great ocean is; he knew that we have to cut off attachment to everyday ideas about the ocean. “Does not contain any corpses” means that if light appears, accept it as it is; if darkness comes, receive it naturally. A corpse changes to ashes, but the mind never changes no matter how many springs pass. No one can know the actual situation of the corpse.

Sōzan’s answer, “It involves the entire universe” does not mean that a small part contains the whole but rather that the whole contains everything and nothing exists independently – the great ocean does not contain the entire world but the world is inseparable from any of its parts. The relationship between the great ocean and kaiinsammai describes this truth. The enlightenment of kaiinsammai, which is the essence of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, is the enlightenment of the entire world. “World” is not limited to the area between the deepest ocean or highest mountain. The ocean of Buddha-nature and the ocean of Divine Light are the same as the entire world. Even though we cannot see the surface of the ocean we do not doubt its free, complete activity.

Zen Master Tafuku^{5-EN} once said concerning a bamboo grove, “One or two bamboos are bent, three or four are slanted.” This is real insight into the nature of the world, but why didn’t he say 1000 bamboos are bent, 10000 are slanted? Or use 1000 or 10000 bamboo groves? [You must realize that the principle is the same for one bamboo grove or 1000.] When Sozan said, “It contains the entire universe” the monk, who was seeking the truth and had doubts, asked “Why aren’t there any corpses?” A corpse, someone who has stopped breathing, is no longer contained in the ocean because the ocean cannot be involved with any corpses. [The ocean symbolizes Buddha-nature and corpses represent illusion.] Nothing is “contained” or “involved.” The universe is detached from itself, and whether or not something stops breathing, it clings to nothing. This is what Sozan meant by his answer. Even if a corpse is a corpse, when it functions harmoniously with the universe it is contained there. The past and future have their own functions and nothing can be said to stop breathing. All things are contained in one thing, one thing contains one thing, all things contain all things^{7-EN}. When this occurs the meaning of “involves the entire universe” emerges. This is kaiinsammai.

This was Written on April 20, 1242, at Kannondōri, Kōshōrinji. Recopied by Ejō during 1243.

3-EN Chuantsu, dates unknown
4-EN Tao-shang, (d. 901).
5-EN Keitoku Dentōroku, chapter seventeen.
5-EN To-fu, dates unknown.
7-EN The text actually says, “one blind man leads another, etc.”

14. KUGE

空華

“The flower of emptiness”

Great Master Bodhidharma, the founder of the Zen transmission, composed this verse: “When one flower blooms, five leaves begin to grow. This is true, natural time.” If you want to comprehend the real meaning of this verse you must seek the moment when the flower blooms. The time of the flower is the time of the five leaves. The principle of “one flower and five leaves” is derived from Bodhidharma’s statement, “I came to China to transmit the Buddhist Way in order to save all people suffering in illusion.”

“Bear fruit” means to bear fruit in other people – this should be our natural activity. Practice (cause) is universal and bearing fruit (effect) is also universal. “Natural” equals “self”; “myself” equals “yourself.” That is, when our “self” is the true Self then our self is not ours and not others’ – it is the four elements and the five skandhas. It is *mui no shinjin*, “the true Self that transcends name and form and goes beyond all duality.” This is the “natural” of “natural time,” and is the time of transmission and the time to save all sentient beings.

For example, it is like a blue lotus flower blooming in the tropical heat. If there is no place for this flower to bloom there could not have been a morning star to lead Shakyamuni to enlightenment. The important point is that there are countless blue lotuses in the light of one star that shines throughout the universe, in both past and present. If you experience tropical heat surely you will experience the blue lotus.

There is another saying of an ancient Patriarch: “A blue lotus blooms in a fire.” You must learn where and how this lotus blooms. In order to do this, cut off your cognition, consciousness, and private judgements. If you doubt the existence of this blue lotus, you will also doubt the existence of a lotus in the water, or a flower on the branch, or even land, mountains, or rivers.

If you do not attain the level of the Patriarchs you will not realize that when a flower blooms spring comes – it covers the entire world. When the flower blooms not just one petal blooms but the entire flower; and when one flower blooms countless flowers bloom simultaneously. If you comprehend this principle you can understand how autumn comes. However, we must not only clarify the meaning of spring and autumn and their flowers and fruit but we must also study our own flowers and fruit.

Flowers and fruit possess their own unique world of time and, conversely, the world of time possesses its own fruit and flowers. Every kind of grass has its own flower, every tree has its own special flowers and fruit. And if we think of human beings as trees, each tree has its own special flower.

These are *kuge* (the flower of emptiness)^{1-EN}. If you look at this flower using your cognition you will never be able to perceive its true colour because your perception is only of the outer form, not the essence, of the flower’s emptiness. This is a very limited view.

Such an interpretation of *kuge* is only found in Buddhism and not in the doctrines of non-believers. There is no possibility for non-believers to experience *kuge*. Only Buddhas and Patriarchs perceive and experience the blooming and fading of *kuge* throughout the universe. This is the standard we must adhere to in the Buddhist Way – universal *kuge*.

Once Shakyamuni said, “If people have eye disease, their vision is faulty and they see a flower in the sky. This flower is *kuge*.” One interpretation of this is that “eye disease” here means an upside down viewpoint; consequently, the flower appears misshapen. If this is not clarified a flower may be seen where none exists. If eye disease is cured *kuge* can no longer be seen.

It is truly regrettable that many people do not know the meaning and circumstances of *kuge*. It cannot be grasped by ordinary people or non-believers but Buddhas always strive to clarify *kuge*. Shakyamuni’s holding up of a flower without speaking and Mahākāśyapa’s smile was a communication from mind to mind. It was actualized by seeing *kuge* with restored vision. *Kuge* exists in the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and the Serene Mind of Nirvana; it never ceases from Patriarch to Patriarch. Enlightenment, nirvana, reality, our true nature – all are petals of *kuge*.

Shakyamuni also said, “Understanding these relationships [between nirvana, reality, existence etc.] is like having one’s eye disease cured. *Kuge* disappears.” Jinrikisha’s The majority of priests do not know the real meaning of *kuge* and are unable to recognize who or what has eye disease.

After we observe the true meaning of *kuge* the flower in the sky disappears. Hinayānists think that once the flower disappears nothing exists in the sky. What exists if *kuge* cannot be seen? They think *kuge* should be abandoned; they fail to realize its deep meaning. Just as Buddhas sow the seed of the Buddhist Way among the people and enlightenment together with practice brings it to fruition i.e., liberation, so does *kuge* sow the seed of universal emptiness. However, most students think that where there is space there is only sky. They think of *kuge* as a floating cloud in the clear sky blown east and west, up and down, by the wind. They never realize that the four elements, land, mountains and rivers, indeed everything in the world is *kuge*. Unfortunately, most students cannot look behind the phenomenal world. In their view *kuge* exists because of eye disease and do not realize it is the other way around.

In true Buddhism “one who has eye disease” is an awakened person, one with perfect enlightenment, a Buddha, one who has gone beyond enlightenment. Some people think that there are other forms of truth beside this. This is not correct. Nevertheless, there are occasions when someone sees a flower because of eye disease. This is caused by actually seeking enlightenment without realizing that the disease itself is the root of enlightenment.

If we understand the condition of “eye disease” we can comprehend *kuge* and be detached from both. We can see them as functions of reality, as absolute conditions. Moreover, every condition throughout the entire universe expresses its own truth – it has nothing useless or superfluous and is harmonious and complete. Eye disease and *kuge* are like this. They are not concerned with past, present, and future or with beginning, middle, or end. They are independent of generation and destruction, even though birth and death appear everywhere in the universe.

1-EN *Kuge* “flowers in the sky” is generally used in Buddhism as a symbol of those who have “eye disease” i.e., illusion and cannot see things in their true light. However, Dogen characteristically develops the idea in this chapter that even those illusions are enlightenment and the basis of reality.

There are a number of methods to study kuge: From the standpoint of eye disease; observation through the Mind's eye; through Buddha's vision; through the Patriarch's vision; through the eye of the Way; through the eye of enlightenment; through 3,000 year vision; through 800 year vision; through eternal vision; and through unlimited vision. The "flower" is the manifold forms of existence while emptiness is the essence pervading each form. Every individual form of emptiness can be seen in a single stemmed flower. Universal emptiness blooms as a flower.

We should know the sky is none other than a single blade of grass; its flower blooms in space. It is like the flowers of a hundred blooming grasses. "Originally there were no flowers in the sky." In the Way of the Tathāgata there were no flowers originally but now there are flowers such as peach, plum and willow. We have the saying, "Yesterday no plum blossoms; they must wait for spring." When spring comes surely the trees bloom. It is the time of the flower, its fulfilment. We must realize that everything has its own time for fruition. This time cannot be altered. Always plum will bloom, peach will bloom, willow will bloom, without confusion. Similarly, the flower of emptiness can never be confused or altered.

After you observe the different colours of kuge you realize that emptiness bears unlimited kinds of fruit. Study the spring and autumn of kuge after you see the flowers bloom and fade. Just as kuge has myriad forms, so spring has countless aspects, and both spring and autumn have a past and present. If you think, however, that kuge is not a real flower then your understanding of Buddhism is limited. If you hear Shakyamuni's words and think there is a lag: now that did not exist originally then you lack knowledge and must go further into its meaning.

A Patriarch once said, "A flower has never grown until now." This means there is no birth or destruction and consequently no flower, i.e., abiding essence. Do not waste time in useless argument or become attached to the relationship of time to the flower. Flowers have different shades but colours alone cannot adequately describe their forms. Not only flowers but each and every moment has colours such as blue, yellow, red, or white. Spring brings flowers, flowers bring spring. There is no opposition between them.

Chōkutsu, famous for his brilliant mind, was a lay disciple of Sekisō^{2-EN}. He composed the following verses about his enlightenment:

"The Divine and profound Light permeates everywhere." This light is in the monastery, the Buddha Hall, the administration building, and in the main gates. Divine Light is limitless, continually actualizing itself everywhere.

"Both ordinary people and saints live in their own house." This does not mean that there is no difference between ordinary people and saints; it means that you should not condemn different types of people. If your innermost resolve is based on the Buddha-mind you will be able to reach enlightenment. Every religious intention must be part of the Buddha-mind; then it will lead to the realization of Truth as it is. Our religious intentions must be based on our innermost consciousness, at the deepest level. If the consciousness is activated, clouds [of delusion] will appear.

"If there is a misperception in the six sense organs, reality is not clearly seen." The six sense organs are the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind. They are not separate functions but work together harmoniously. They are like drifting rain clouds surrounding Mt. Sumeru [i.e., the harmonious relationship of the immovable and changeless with the temporal and fluid].

"Even if the passions are cut off we still suffer from disease." This disease differs from the usual kind of disease; it is the disease of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. When all passions are cut off this disease increases. Like this, detachment and delusions exist together; and delusions possess the means of ultimately cutting off their own activity.

"It is wrong to deny or affirm the Truth." Turning one's back or opposing Truth is malicious. However, Truth can even be found in those actions. Who can fathom the relationship between maliciousness and Truth?

"Among all relations there is detachment." Interrelationships produce other harmonious relationships continually. This is detachment. Attachment and detachment must function together freely throughout your life.

"Nirvana and samsara are the flowers of emptiness." Nirvana must be attained by all the Buddhas, Patriarchs, and disciples. Life and death are the true body of man. The roots, stem, branches, leaves, flowers, fruit, and form of each flower are all kuge. Kuge produces its fruit from emptiness and plants its seed in the sky [of universal emptiness]. Since the three worlds are a petal of the blooming kuge they are not different. Kuge is the true form of all phenomena; the real form of a plum, willow, or peach flower.

The first time Zen master Reikun of Mt. Fuyo in Fukushū (he lived during the Sung Dynasty) visited Zen master Shishin of Kishuji he asked him^{3-EN}, "What is Buddha like?" "I'll give you an answer but will you believe it?" said Shishin. "Why wouldn't I believe your answer?" asked Reikun. "It's you," the master replied. "What shall I do?" Reikun questioned. "If your vision is bad you lose the true form of kuge," Shishin told him.

Shishin is telling us to make Buddha's level of attainment our own. This is the actualization of Buddha's vision. It is understood by all the Buddhas – it is the Eye and Treasury of the True Law. Kuge actualizes itself in our eyes and vice-versa. If our vision is through kuge we can see things the way they really are. We can see (mg: throughout the entire world—in the sky, in flowers, in our eyes and body).

The expression "flower in the sky" must be clarified. Great Master Kōshō of Mt. Rōya^{4-EN} said: "It is deep and mysterious yet all the Buddhas of the world observe the flower in the sky. In order to see this flower you must have the same understanding as the Buddhas. If you do this you will perceive the Buddhas of the past. If not, Hinayānists and pratyekabuddhas will be overjoyed." Be careful not to think that the Buddhas are real – actually they are "flowers in the sky." All the Buddhas live here; there is no other place to live. Kuge is neither being or non-being, emptiness or form; it is the manifestation of all the Buddhas. However, you must not be attached to either (rage or the manifestations of Buddha. You must know that whether you understand this or not, kuge exists. Scholars of the sūtras or the abhidharma may hear the expression "kuge" but only Buddhas and Patriarchs have the proper relationship with it: the essence of Buddhism is revealed in both kuge and a flower growing in the earth.

Zen Master Etetsu of Mt. Sekimon^{5-EN} lived during the Sung Dynasty and belonged to the transmission of Ryozan. He was an excellent master. Once a monk asked him, "What is like a treasure hidden in a mountain? (That is, "What is Buddha like?" or

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- 2-EN Chōkutsu (Chang-cho, 824); Sekisō (Shishuang d. 888).
3-EN Ling-hsün and Chih-chén, dates unknown.
4-EN Kuang-chao, dates unknown.
5-EN Shih-men, dates also unknown.

"What is the Way like?") Sekimon replied, "Kuge arose from the earth. Everyone in the country wants to get it but there is no gate to enter." His answer is beyond compare. The usual interpretation is that kuge grows only in emptiness. And if no one knows how it grows in emptiness is there anyone who knows how it grows in the earth? Perhaps only Sekimon knows. "From the earth" includes all stages of growth – beginning, middle, and end. Kuge grows and blooms throughout the world. But if you try to get it there is nowhere to go. There is a kuge that arises from the earth and an earth in which kuge blooms. The most important point is: kuge bears fruit within both the earth and the sky.

Delivered to the monks at Kannondōri, Kōshōji on May 10, 1243. Recopied by Ejō on January 27, 1244, at the chief disciple's quarters in Kippōji; again recopied on August 28, 1318, at the Enjudō of Eihei-ji.

15. KŌMYŌ

光明

“Divine Light”

Great Master Chosa Shōken^{1-EN} in Konan of the Sung Dynasty, once told his followers, “The entire world is reflected by the eye of a monk, the entire world is contained in everyday conversation, the entire world is throughout your body, the entire world is your own Divine Light, the entire world is within your Divine Light and the entire world is inseparable from yourself.”

Everyone who is seeking the Buddhist Way should study this teaching diligently and never become slack. If they do there will be very few Zen students with the Divine Light of enlightenment. Chinese Emperor Kōmyō of Gokan was the fourth child of Emperor Kobu and his era was called the tenth Eihei [c. A.D. 51]. During his reign Buddhism was first transmitted to China by Matogya and Jikuhoran. This Emperor held many discussions with the Taoists, often sitting in front of a table stacked with a huge amount of Indian scriptures, and finally converted them by his superior arguments.

Later on, in the reign of Butei during the Futsu era, the first Chinese Patriarch Bodhidharma came, alone, from India to Kōshū, in the southern part of China [c. 520]. He was the twenty-eighth Dharma heir of Shakyamuni, and [brought the right transmission of Buddha’s Law]. He stayed at Shoshitsuho Shorinji monastery on Mt. Sōzan. Later on he transmitted the Dharma to the second Zen Patriarch [Taiso Eka].

The Divine Light of Buddha’s teaching has been handed down continuously by each successive Patriarch. Before Bodhidharma’s time the Divine Light of Buddha was not seen or heard in China; no one was able to perceive his own Divine Light. Even though everyone inherently possesses Divine Light no one can discover it by only using their own judgements. Therefore, no one in China was able to clarify the form and original nature of Divine Light or experience its virtues until Bodhidharma. They did not understand that Divine Light is their very essence. They thought that the Divine Light is completely separate from themselves. Their mind was clouded by this false idea of separation and they could not perceive that everything is Divine Light.

People who think that they are separate from Divine Light also believe that Divine Light is red, white, blue or yellow, similar to the light from a fire, or the reflected light of water, or the sparkle of gems or jewels, or the light of a dragon or like sun and moon light.

Do not study under masters who teach only letters. Many teachers are like Chōsa who taught that Divine Light is like the light of a firefly and did not emphasize that Divine Light should be studied through enlightenment. From the Han, Sui, T’ang, and Sung Dynasties to the present time most people have thought like this. Even though you may study under a master with a famous name you should not accept any distorted explanations.

The Divine Light of Buddha fills the entire universe; everything is Buddha, everything is the Patriarchs. This is the transmission from Buddha to Buddha. The Buddhas and Patriarchs constitute Divine Light. Through the practice and enlightenment of Divine Light we can become a Buddha and do Zazen as he did; then we will be able to discover the actualization of enlightenment. [There is a koan,] “Divine Light illuminates the Eastern World of 18,000 Buddhas.” Here, “East” means the centre of the universe; that is, ourselves. It does not mean direction as most people think. There is an “East” in this world, in other worlds, even an “East” in east. 18,000 means that which in ourselves is beyond number; in other words, unlimited mind. It is not the 18,000 of mathematics and has nothing to do with numbers like 20,000 or 80,000. The “World of Buddhas” means the land of enlightenment; it is within ourselves – there is no light beam that travels to the Eastern world.

If you comprehend “The entire world is the East itself; the East itself is the entire world” you will have some idea how to understand the world. It is nothing but the Divine Light of Buddha. The ten quarters of the world are the same as the Buddha Land of 18,000.

Emperor Kenshū of the Tang Dynasty was the father of two future emperors, Bokushū and Senshū, and the grandfather of the future emperors Keishū, Bunshū and Bushū. Once, after he had finished building a pagoda in his palace he had a dedication service performed. During the evening ceremony he suddenly saw a brilliant light shining in the hall. He was overjoyed at the vision and early next morning he told his high officials about it. They all thought it was a sign of a prosperous reign and congratulated him. They said it occurred because of the emperor’s virtue and noble spirit. However, there was one official, Yūbunkō of Kan, a disciple who studied the Buddhist Way, who did not congratulate the emperor. The emperor asked him, “All the officials except you gave me congratulations. What is the reason for this?” Yūbunkō replied, “Once I read in the sūtras that the light of Buddha was not red, blue, yellow, white or any natural colour. The light you saw was not the light of the Buddha, it was only the light of the dragon which protects you.” Then the emperor asked him, “Well, what is the light of the Buddha?” Yūbunkō remained silent.

Although Yūbunkō was a layman he had the right-minded attitude for practice. We can imagine that he was a man of great power. Following his example we should study the Buddhist Way; if you do not study like this, your study will be in vain. Even though Emperor Butei explained the [Hōkōhannya] sūtra and was able to call down flowers from Heaven, he did not have a proper mind for study and his efforts were useless. When ten sages and three wise men make Yūbunkō’s understanding their own, the real nature of resolve, practice, and enlightenment manifests itself for the first time.

However, Yūbunkō did not have a complete understanding of the sūtras. He said that the Divine Light of Buddha was not blue, yellow, red or white. What did he mean by that? It is not a natural light, of course, but what is it? Emperor Kenshū, if he had been like a real Buddha and Patriarch, would have insisted that Yūbunkō answer his question.

Divine Light is found even in countless grasses [i.e., it is found everywhere]. The harmonization of all the different functions of a plant – roots, stalk, branches, leaves, flowers, fruit, colour – are expressed as Divine Light. Not only this world, but also in the other worlds of [celestial beings, human beings, hell, demons, animals, and ashuras] can Divine Light be seen. If we understand Divine Light then mountains rivers and land are secondary [i.e., Divine Light is the most important thing]. Study Chōsa’s saying in the sense that the entire world is suffused with our own Divine Light. The changing of life and death is the changing of Divine Light. The change from ordinary man to saint is like the changing of different colours in Divine Light. To become a Buddha or Patriarch is like the colours of black and yellow.

Practice and enlightenment are one form of Divine Light. Grasses, trees, a mud-fence, skin, flesh, bones and marrow are

1-EN Chang-sha, dates unknown.

colours of Divine Light. Smoke, mist, water, stones, sky, flying birds, the Way of enlightenment – all these are the changing form of Divine Light. To understand our Divine Light is to meet and experience the real Buddha. The entire world is ourselves; we ourselves are the entire world. We cannot escape from this fact. Even if there is a place to escape, it can only be enlightenment. Our body is in the form of the entire world. Indeed, the Way of enlightenment and practice of Buddhism can only be grasped by the realization that our skin, flesh, bones, and marrow contain the entire world.

Great Master Daijiun Kyoshin of Mt. Ummon was the 39th Patriarch from Buddha; he received the Buddhist Way from Great Master Seppō Shingaku^{2-EN} Although he began to study Buddhism when already quite old, he studied earnestly and we can see that he was truly one of the great men of Buddhism. He was the one who transmitted the Mt. Ummon school of teaching and was a shining example of their doctrine. Such a Patriarch had never been seen before or since.

One day, at the Dharma Hall, he asked the monks, "Divine Light shines in everyone but if we try to look for it we cannot find it. Where is the Divine Light?" No one answered. Then Ummon said, "In the monastery, in the Buddha Hall, in the administration building, and in the main gates."

Ummon did not mean that Divine Light will come in the future, or was in the past, or can be produced by others; he meant that we ourselves possess Divine Light. Ummon taught that the entire world is Ummon. Ummon did not explain Divine Light; rather each one's Divine Light explains itself. Divine Light shines in everyone, the entire body of man is Divine Light. Divine Light means people; Divine Light is both inside and outside of human beings. Divine Light is people, people are people, Divine Light is Divine Light, Being is Being.

We can see now that Divine Light possesses everyone; everyone possesses Divine Light within themselves. Everything about Divine Light is everything about ourselves. What did Ummon mean by "people" and "Divine Light"? He asked, "Where is the Divine Light?" This question surpasses any questions about Divine Light. He meant that "people" and "Divine Light" are inseparable, they form one body. The monks did not answer; but sometimes no answer is the correct answer. No answer is the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and the Serene Mind of Nirvana transmitted from the correct teaching of Buddhas.

Ummon answered his own question, "In the monastery, in the Buddha Hall, in the administration building, and in the main gates." Why did he answer like this? What he meant by these was very different from what monks and laymen think about them. Did he mean himself or the six Buddhas who preceded Shakyamuni or the twenty-eight Indian Patriarchs or the six Chinese Patriarchs, or all the Zen Masters of all ages and countries? Whatever he meant it is nothing other than Divine Light. His expression not only means people but also Divine Light. After Ummon's explanation of Divine Light many different teachings arose: "No Buddha in the Buddha Hall", "No Buddha Hall, No Buddha", "There is Buddha in Divine Light," "Buddha does not have Divine Light," "Divine Light surpasses 'Buddha'," "Buddha is Divine Light itself" and so on.

Great Master Shingaku of Mt. Seppō once told his monks, "I met you in front of the monastery." This was the expression of his enlightenment and the true expression of himself. He wanted to teach the monks the real meaning of the word "monastery." Once Seppō's disciple Hofuku asked Gako, another disciple, "Our master insists on only using the expression 'I met you in front of the monastery' to explain his teaching but never mentions Bōshūtei or Usekirei^{3-EN}." Then Gako quickly returned to the master's quarters and Hofuku to the monastery. They understood the meaning and purpose of their master's teaching. By returning to their respective dwellings they showed that enlightenment is to meet our real selves. This is the real meaning of meeting in front of the monastery. Similarly, great Master Shim' of Jizō-in^{4-EN} said, "The monk in charge of the kitchen enters the kitchen." This expression surpasses the meaning of time.

This was delivered to the monks on the evening of June 2., 1243, at Kannondōri, Kōshōhōrinji during the rainy season as rain dropped from the eaves. Where can we find Divine Light? Surely Ummon will discover any monk who does not grasp Divine Light.

2-EN Yunmen (d. 949) and Hsüeh (908).

3-EN These are place names. The gist of this dialogue seems to be we should not limit ourselves to any one place, i.e., our real nature permeates everywhere

4-EN Ti-tsang (d. 928)

16. GYŌJI

行持

"Ceaseless practice"

PART ONE

In the Great Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs surely there is supreme ceaseless practice that continues endlessly. There is not the slightest gap between awakening the mind, practice, enlightenment, and nirvana; ceaseless practice continuously revolves. Therefore, it does not depend on individual powerful acts nor on the spirit of others. It is undefiled ceaseless practice. The virtue of ceaseless practice maintains self and others. Essentially, our ceaseless practice fills heaven and earth and influences everything with its virtue. Although we may be unaware of it, it still occurs.

Hence, from the ceaseless practice of all the Buddhas and Patriarchs our own ceaseless practice emerges, and we can attain the Great Way. From our own ceaseless practice, the ceaseless practice of all the Buddhas emerges, and all Buddhas attain the Great Way. From our own ceaseless practice, there is endless virtue. Accordingly, all the Buddhas and Patriarchs endlessly live as Buddha, transcend Buddha, have the mind of Buddha, and become Buddha. Through ceaseless practice, the sun, moon, and stars move, and the great earth and vast space, the right body and mind, and the four great elements and five skandhas exist. Ceaseless practice is not in the places worldly people seek, yet all must return to it. Through the ceaseless practice of all the Buddhas of the past, present, and future, all the Buddhas of the past, present, and future emerge. The virtue of ceaseless practice is never hidden; therefore the mind is aroused and practice begins. Its virtue, however, is not immediately revealed, and thus it cannot be seen, heard, or comprehended. Although it is not revealed, do not study it as something hidden. Causation is ceaseless practice; ceaseless practice is not causation—we must study this in detail. Ceaseless practice which manifests ceaseless practice is nothing other than ceaseless practice of the present.

Ceaseless practice of the present is not the ceaseless practice of the original self, nor does it come and go, exit and enter. "In the present" does not mean "existing prior to ceaseless practice." It refers to the time ceaseless practice emerges. Therefore, that is why the ceaseless practice of one day is the seed of all the Buddhas. Through ceaseless practice, all Buddhas are manifest and their ceaseless practice occurs. No ceaseless practice emerges when we despise the Buddhas, do not respect them, detest ceaseless practice, do not identify life and death with Buddha, and do not study and practice. The present world of "blooming flowers and falling leaves" is actualization of ceaseless practice. Polishing and then smashing a mirror is not different from ceaseless practice. Therefore, anyone who tries to escape from ceaseless practice because of a malicious heart cannot do so; even that action is within ceaseless practice. Trying to ignore ceaseless practice is like the son of the rich man who lost his patrimony and wandered through other lands as a beggar. He managed to survive the harsh elements and eventually regained his patrimony. We should not forget ceaseless practice for even a minute.

Our compassionate father, the great teacher Shakyamuni Buddha, began his Buddha life when he was nineteen; he did ceaseless practice deep in the mountains, and at the age of thirty had ceaseless practice and simultaneously attained the Way with all sentient beings of heaven and earth. Until the age of eighty, the Buddha did ceaseless practice in the mountains, forests, and monasteries and did not return to his father's palace nor pay attention to the affairs of state. He always wore the same monk's robe and used the same bowl throughout his life. He never spent even one hour alone. He did not reject proper veneration of heaven and earth and was patient with the criticisms of non-believers. His entire life was ceaseless practice. The dignity of Buddha, with his pure robe and begging bowl, is nothing but ceaseless practice.

Throughout his life, the Patriarch Mahākāśyapa, Shakyamuni's Dharma heir, performed twelve kinds of ceaseless practice. They were:

- 1) Never accepting invitations for meals; he begged for his food every day and did not accept money for extra food.
- 2) Always staying in the mountains, never in cities, villages, or private homes.
- 3) Never requesting a new robe and not accepting one as a present. He only wore rags picked up from cemeteries and sewn together.
- 4) Sleeping in fields under a tree.
- 5) Eating only once a day.
- 6) Never lying down to rest. He slept sitting in Zazen or walked to stay awake.
- 7) Only keeping three kesas. He never sat on a cushion.
- 8) Living in garbage dumps, never in a temple or with others. He did Zazen near the crematorium.
- 9) Always living alone. He never wished to be with others or sleep together with anyone.
- 10) Always eating fruits and wild vegetables first and then rice.
- 11) Always sleeping outdoors. He never slept in a hut.
- 12) Never eating meat, ghee, seasoning or oil.

These are the twelve deeds. Mahākāśyapa continued to practice these throughout his life. Even after receiving the Eye and Treasure of the True Law from the Tathāgata, he never stopped.

Since Mahakasyapa followed these practices he became very thin. It appeared that he was being neglected by the other monks. The Tathāgata called Mahākāśyapa over and had him sit next to him on the dais. We must know that Mahākāśyapa was the elder of Shakyamuni's community. It is impossible to adequately describe the ceaseless practice of his entire life. The Buddha once said to him, "You are already one who is old in years, so you should eat what regular monk's food." The venerable Mahākāśyapa replied, "If I had not met the Tathāgata in this world, I would have remained a self-centred ascetic and passed my entire life in the mountains. Fortunately I met the Tathāgata and attained the Dharma. I am not entitled to regular monk's food." Shakyamuni praised this attitude.

The Tenth Patriarch Barishiba neither slept nor lay down to rest for three years. He accomplished that in his eighties and was designated transmitter of the Great Dharma. Since he never wasted his time during this period, he attained the highest enlightenment of True Eye. Barishiba, said to have spent sixty years in his mother's womb, was born with white hair. He

vowed never to lie down on his side, and thus was known as the "never-resting-saint." At night light radiated from his hands, enabling him to study the sutras. This was part of his innate miraculous powers, "This "never-resting-saint" renounced his home and worldly robes at the age of eighty. A young lad in the town criticized him saying, "You foolish old man. Why are you so shallow? When one renounces the world, he must do two kinds of practice: Zazen and sutra reading. You are too old and weak to do those things. Your joining the Sangha will make trouble; you only renounced the world to enjoy the Sangha's free food" After listening to such harsh abuse Barishiba bowed and said to himself, "I vow never to lie down until I master the Tripitaka, cut off attachment to the three worlds, develop the six spiritual powers, and attain the eight kinds of liberation." After that, day and night for three years he did sitting and walking Zazen, studied the sutras, and trained his mind without rest. He mastered the Tripitaka, cut off all desires for the three worlds, attained true wisdom, and became widely venerated. He was thereafter known as the "never-resting-saint"

The never-resting-saint was in the womb for sixty years before his birth. Did he practice in the womb? Long after birth when he was eighty years old, he renounced the world and began to study the Way. Thus, it occurred 140 years after his conception. This is extraordinary, no one can be that old; he was already an old man in his mother's womb and an old man following his birth. People of that time criticized him, yet he never went back on his vow. Within three short years he actualized practice of the Way. Do not forget [maxim of Confucius] "Observe the wise and act accordingly." Do not begrudge old people. That kind of birth is difficult to understand. Was it birth or not? Was he old or not? The four viewpoints [of gods, men, beasts, and devils] differ; respective observations rarely concur. The essential element is resolve to practice the Way diligently. Study that within practice life and death can be seen, not that within life and death there is practice.

People of the present age think that when one becomes thirty, sixty, seventy, or eighty years old they will abandon their practice. That is foolish. Counting the years and months since birth is only a measurement based on the conventions of human beings. It is not related to the Buddhist Way. Do not be concerned with young or old; only search for the study of the Way. Act like the never-resting-saint. Our life is nothing more than a handful of dirt from a grave yard; we should not over value or be attached to it. If we have no resolve, who will have pity on us? If you see an abandoned corpse in a field, look at it closely and develop correct vision

The sixth Patriarch was a woodcutter in Shinshu. He had no formal education, lost his father when he was young, and was raised by his aged mother. He supported her by gathering firewood. After hearing a verse chanted from a sutra as he was on the way to the centre of town, he bid farewell to his mother and set out to find the great Dharma. He was a great man, an incomparable seeker of the Way. The Second Patriarch probably had an easier time cutting off his arm than the Sixth Patriarch did leaving his mother. Breaking the bond between mother and child is most grave.

He studied as a layman in the community of Ōbai; day and night for eight months he polished rice. The right transmission of the bowl and kesa was carried out at midnight. After attaining the Law he kept the mortar on his back and continued to polish rice for eight months. Even when he was teaching in temples as a Patriarch, he never left his stone mortar. This is unusual ceaseless practice.

Baso of Kōsei did Zazen for more than twenty years. He received the seal of transmission from Nangaku. He instructed his Dharma heirs never to neglect Zazen. Those who came to study Zazen, were surely given the mind seal at Zazen practice. Whenever there was temple work to be done, Baso was always the first to begin. Even when old he did not slack off. The spirit of Baso is strongly felt in the present day Rinzaï school.

Ungan and Dōyō both studied under Yakusan. They made a vow never to lie down and kept it for forty years. They were single minded. Ungan transmitted the Law to Great Master Gohen of Tōzan. Tōzan said, "To cut off passions, I have been practising Zazen for more than twenty years." Now the influence of Ungan's Law is felt everywhere.

Great Master Kōgaku of Mt. Ungo (Dōyō) once stayed in a hermitage on Mt. Sampō. He received his food from the gods. Once he visited Tōzan and was able to clarify the Great Way; after returning to his hut, the gods again brought him food, but Ungo did not appear for three days. Ungo no longer needed the gods' help since he was now on the Great Way of Buddhism. We should reflect on such strong resolve.

Zen Master Daichi of Mt. Hyakujō, from his days as Baso's attendant to his entering into parinirvana, worked everyday without exception for the community. He left the venerable saying, "A day of no work is a day of no eating" He was already an old man when he said this; he always worked as hard as the young monks. People felt sorry for him and thought it was a pity, but he refused to stop working. The monks once hid his tools and would not let the master have them. Then Hyakujō would not eat because he did not participate in the community work. This is the origin of the saying "A day without work is a day without food." In the Sung Dynasty, Hyakujō, s style of Rinzaï teaching, based on ceaseless practice, is popular throughout the country.

When Kyōshin was chief priest of a temple, the god of the temple grounds never saw his face: Kyōshin was so intent on his practice.

Zen Master Gichū of Mt. Sanpei received food from the gods. However, after meeting Master Daiten (Hōtsu), the gods could no longer see Gichū.

Priest Godaii said, "I have been on Isan for twenty years. All the food I have eaten on Isan has returned to its earth. I have never studied Buddhism here; all I have done is care for water buffaloes all these years."

We should know that "water buffalo" symbolizes his twenty years of ceaseless practice as a cow-herd. Godaii once studied in the community of Hyakujō. Reflecting quietly on those twenty years, we should not forget his legacy. Perhaps some others have practiced on Isan, but very few have the ceaseless practice of Isan.

Priest Jūshin, the Great Master Shinsai of Kannon-in in Jōshu, began his practice and search for the Way when he was sixty-one years old. Taking up a water jar and staff he made pilgrimages all over. He said at that time, "If I meet a child of seven and he is more knowledgeable than I, I will ask him about the Way; if I meet a hundred year-old-man who is less knowledgeable than I, I will teach him the Way."

In this manner he practiced the Way under Nansen for more than twenty years. When he was eighty years old he become priest of Kannon-in in Jōshu and instructed men and gods for forty years. During that time, he never sent any letters to the

temple members asking for money. His monastery was small with no front or back hall. Once one of the legs of the platform was broken, and he repaired it with a charred piece of wood. He continued to use that platform for years. The temple officers wanted him to fix the broken leg, but he refused. We must study the manner of this ancient Buddha.

Jūshin lived in Jōshu when he was more than eighty years old. He received the Dharma from his master and then correctly transmitted it to others. Everyone called him an ancient Buddha. Those who had not received the right transmission of the True Law are much inferior to him. Those less than eighty years of age are far stronger physically than he is. Yet, they are still immature and cannot be compared to such a wise old man. We must concentrate on efforts of ceaseless practice. For forty years he was never attached to worldly treasures, even when he lacked food. At those times, he would gather chestnuts, acorns, and other wild food or eat every other day. This is truly the proper manner of a real monk. We should follow in his footsteps.

Once he said to the monks, "If you never leave the monastery all your life and do not speak a word for five or ten years, no one calls you deaf and dumb. What else can the Buddhas do for you?" These are the golden words of ceaseless practice. We should know that even if we do not speak for five or ten years and we appear to be fools, continual practice without leaving the monastery keeps us from being called deaf and dumb.

The Buddhist Way is like this. If we do not hear the voice of the Buddhist Way, then there is no principle of "not speaking does not mean deaf and dumb." However, the essence of ceaseless practice is not leaving the monastery; not leaving the monastery is to be liberated from words. Very foolish people do not know and cannot indicate not being deaf and dumb. Even if nothing hampers them, they cannot show deaf-and-dumbness.

It is a pity that we are not taught that not speaking does not mean deaf and dumb. Quietly do ceaseless practice without leaving the monastery. Do not be blown about by the wind, east or west. If we pass five or ten years in the monastery, we find the Way beyond voice and form. We can completely know and understand such expressions. Study that ceaseless practice is contained in the briefest instant. Do not think that "not speaking is useless." In the monastery, out of the monastery, in a trackless monastery, and in the world monastery just practice like this.

Mount Daibai is in Keigenfu. On that mountain there is a monastery called Goshōji which was founded by Zen Master Hōjō. This Zen Master was from Jōyō district and practiced in Baso's community. He once asked Baso, "What is Buddha?" Baso answered, "Our mind is Buddha." When Hōjō heard these words he was immediately enlightened. He lived on the peak of Mt. Daibai and never said a word to others. He stayed by himself in a grass hut, eating pine cones, and wore lotus leaves taken from a little pond on the mountain. He practiced the Way of Zazen for more than thirty years. He never heard of worldly affairs and completely forgot about days and months—his only guide was the change of seasons in the mountains. Many thought his life was extraordinarily miserable. When he did Zazen he kept an eight-inch iron pillar over his head, much like a crown; he could not let it fall down, and thus it prevented him from falling asleep. That pillar still exists on the mountain and has been kept in the storehouse. Like this, he practiced ceaselessly right up to his death. Once a monk from the community of Enkan (Saian) came to the mountain searching for wood for a staff; he lost his way and accidentally discovered the master's hermitage.

He asked him, "How long have you been living on this mountain?" Hōjō answered, "I only know the changing colours of the mountains." Then the monk said, "Where is the road out from the mountain?" The master said, "Follow the flow of the stream." The monk, confused by all this, returned and related the story to Enkan. Enkan said, "When I was in Kōsei I once met a monk; I have not heard of him since then, but he must be the monk you saw. Then Enkan sent the monk back to the mountain to ask Hōjō to come down, but he refused. In answer, he made this gāthā:

"In the cold forest, there are old uncut trees.

I have met many springs, but my heart remains unmoved.

Even the woodcutter is not interested in the wood.

So how could a carpenter ask for it?"

He sent this reply back to Enkan. Hōjō then went deeper into the mountains and made another gāthā:

"The lotuses in the pond provide limitless clothes.

The pine cones to eat cannot be counted.

Yet, worldly people discovered my dwelling.

Hence, I must move my hut deeper in the mountains"

Another time, Baso sent a monk to Hōjō to test Hōjō's level of attainment. "O priest, you studied under Baso before. Why do you live deep in the mountains?" Hōjō answered, "Baso once told me, 'Our mind is Buddha.' That's why I'm living here." The monk said, "Recently the Buddha Law is different." Hōjō asked, "How is it different?" The monk said, "Baso told us, 'No mind, No Buddha.'" Hōjō said, "This old man confuses me! Even if he says, 'No mind, No Buddha.' I know 'our mind is Buddha.'" The monk took this answer to Baso, and Baso said, "The plum is now mature (great plum)."

This story is well known among men and gods. Tenryū was the one distinguished disciple of Hōjō and Gutei was another outstanding descendant. Kyachi of Korea transmitted Hōjō's Dharma and became the first Patriarch of Korea.

All the masters and Patriarchs of Korea are descended from Kyachi. Before he died, a tiger and an elephant served him in perfect harmony. After he entered nirvana, the tiger and elephant gathered stones and mud to build a stupa for him. That stupa still stands at Goshōji temple. This master's ceaseless practice has been highly praised in the past and present by leaders of the Buddhist teaching. Those with inferior knowledge do not know enough even to praise him. Anyone who believes that the Buddhist Dharma can exist in the world of desire, fame, and wealth is a small-minded fool.

Zen Master Hōen of Mount Goso said, "When my master (Hōe) became the chief priest of Mount Yōgi, the temple was extremely dilapidated; rain leaked through the roof and wind blew through the cracks. In winter the temple nearly collapsed; in the monks' quarters snow and hailstones covered the floor. It was very difficult to live there – the white-haired priests' hair was made more white by snow; their long eyebrows revealed their hardship. All the monks could barely sit in Zazen. One monk pleaded with the master to repair the monastery; however, Zen Master Yōgi refused saying, "Buddha taught us that all things are impermanent. The high banks and deep valleys constantly change. How can we wish to gain something? I'm satisfied with what I have. All the saints of the past practiced under trees and on the dewy earth. This is an excellent custom

of the past and the essence of emptiness.

"Although you have renounced the world and practice the Way, your behaviour is shallow. We have no more than forty or fifty years of practice; who has the time to put up a magnificent building?" This is how the master replied.

The next day he ascended the lecture platform and told the assembly of monks, "When I first became the chief priest of Mount Yōgi, the roof and walls were in great disrepair; snow was all over the floor. The bitter cold made everyone hunch their shoulders and pull in their chins and sigh. They asked me to fix the building, but I recalled the severity of our predecessors who lived outdoors. I refused." In spite of this, monks throughout the land asked to join his community. We should be glad that there were so many who truly sought the Way. Always keep in mind the words of this master.

Priest Hōen once stated, "Practice cannot go beyond thought; thought cannot exceed practice." This expression is important. Think about it day and night; practice it morning and evening. Do not be blown about in all directions by the wind. Moreover, here in Japan even the emperor's palace and ministers' residences are not so splendid – just white pine buildings. How then can those who renounce the world and study the Way live in magnificent buildings? If there are fine buildings the monks will go astray, and it will be difficult to find even one living a pure life. If the building is already there it is all right to use it, but never seek a newer one. All the saints of the past lived in grass huts or wooden buildings and loved such places. All the descendants should follow their example and not misunderstand it.

The statesmen Kō, Gyō, and Shun of China were laymen, but they lived in grass huts; they established a precedent for the rest of us.

Prime Minister Shishi of the Shin Dynasty said, "If you want to see the practice of Emperor Kō look at his palace. If you want to see the practice of Gyō and Shun, look at their dwellings. The roof of Emperor Kō's palace is thatch. Shun's house also had a thatch roof."

We must know that the dwellings of those sages had thatch roofs. If we compare ourselves with Kō, Gyō, and Shun, they rank above us more than heaven ranks above earth. The roofs of their dwellings were thatch; if laymen live in grass huts, how can monks justify living in a splendid building? That is a shameful idea. The ancients lived under trees and passed their time in the forest. Both laymen and monks loved to live in such places. The Emperor Kō was the disciple of Kōsei, seeker of the Way on Mount Kōdō. Kōsei lived in a cave there. Kings and ministers of Great Sung China transmitted this original teaching.

Therefore, that is why such people living in the world of dust are able to live nobly and monks are inferior to them. Monks are even more worldly than lay people. Among the Buddhas and Patriarchs many are venerated by the gods. Further, after they attain the Way, gods and demons cannot equal them. We must clearly understand this point. If gods and demons practice in the manner of Buddhas and Patriarchs, they draw close to the Buddhas and Patriarchs. If Buddhas and Patriarchs certify themselves as Buddhas and Patriarchs, they transcend gods and demons; the gap between them is tremendous.

Nansen said, "My practice was weak, and the gods and demons noticed it." If you are noticed by the gods and demons who do not practice, it means your own practice is weak.

In the community of Zen Master Wanshi Shōgaku of Mount Tendō, the local deity who protects the temple said, "I heard that a Zen Master has lived for more than ten years on this mountain, and most of the time he stays in his private quarters. I have neither seen him nor heard how he is. Truly he is a man of the Way."

Originally, the number of buildings on Mount Tendō were few. Wanshi renovated the Taoist temples, nunneries, and academies there and turned them into Keitokuji monastery. After he passed away, Ohakushō, a high ranking government official, wrote a biography of him. Someone said, "You should write that Wanshi renovated old Taoist temples, nunneries, and academies there and established Mount Tendō. Ohakushō said, "It is not necessary. It has no relation to his priestly virtue." People praised Ohakushō.

We should know that such things as establishing temples and monuments are worldly and not virtuous for a priest. Generally when we enter the Buddhist Way, we transcend the three worlds, of men and gods. We should study this carefully. Rectify body, speech, and mind and practice diligently.

The merit of the ceaseless practice of the Buddhas and Patriarchs has the ability to save men and gods; however, men and gods do not realize that they are helped by the ceaseless practice of Buddhas and Patriarchs. If we have ceaseless practice of the Great Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, we should not discuss things like superior or inferior virtue, stupidity or intelligence, sharpness or dullness, and so on. We should always be careful to shy away from fame and fortune and not be attached to worldly things. Do not waste time; only concentrate on practice.

Do not expect great enlightenment; great enlightenment is daily action, drinking tea and eating rice. Do not ask for enlightenment or illusion; this is the jewel in the hairpiece [i.e., something we already possess]. Separate yourself from everything – your native village, the bonds of gratitude, fame, fortune, property, and from your family; separate yourself from the desire for these things. Possessing or not possessing – it is clear that we must be separated from both. Ceaseless practice means not to be attached to anything. Abandon fame and fortune. Practice one thing ceaselessly, and the ceaseless practice of your Buddhist life will increase. Thus ceaseless practice enhances ceaseless practice by more ceaseless practice. Venerate and respect the body and mind that possesses such ceaseless practice.

Zen Master Daizu Kanchū said, "Instead of explaining about one yard practice one foot; instead of explaining one foot, practice one inch." Although this seems to be a warning to those who ignore ceaseless practice and forget how to conduct the Buddhist Way, it says nothing negative about explaining one yard. The point is that to practice one foot is more effective than to explain one yard. It is beyond measurement. Even though there is a difference in size between a speck of dust and huge Mount Sumeru, each has its own measurement. Each is complete. Ceaseless practice is the same. This expression is not merely Kanchū's own opinion, but a universal truth.

Great Master Tozan Gohon said, "Explain what you cannot do, do what you cannot explain." These are the words of the high Patriarch. The point is that practice is equal to explanation, and explanation is equal to practice. Therefore, if you explain all day, it means you are practising all day. Hence we do what we cannot do; we explain what we cannot explain.

Great Master Kokaku of Mt. Ungo interpreted this expression as, "When we explain we do not practice; when we practice, there is no way to explain."

This expression does not mean that there is neither practice nor explanation; the time of explanation is never leaving the

monastery all our life. Practice is washing the head and standing before Seppo. "When we explain, there is no need to practice; when we practice, there is no way to explain" – study this carefully.

There is a saying handed down from the ancient Buddhas and Patriarchs: "If we live to be a hundred but do not have the understanding of Buddha, we are inferior to one who has attained awakening but lives only one day."

This has not been said by only one or two Buddhas but by all the Buddhas. It is the spirit of true practice – Buddha's practice. Within a hundred thousand kalpas of continuous revolution of life and death, one day of ceaseless practice is the true jewel in the hairpiece, the original mirror [of enlightenment]. It is a day to rejoice in. The power of ceaseless practice itself rejoices. When the power of ceaseless practice is insufficient, the bones and marrow of the Buddhas and Patriarchs are not received, the body and mind of Buddhas and Patriarchs cannot be venerated, and the original face of the Buddhas and Patriarchs cannot be seen. The original face, bones and marrow of the Buddhas and Patriarchs does not go, appear to go, appear to come, or appear to not come. We must inherit the ceaseless practice of a single day.

Therefore each day is precious. If one lives vainly until a hundred, he begrudges the days and months. It is sad waste of the body. Even a hundred years of slavery to the senses is redeemed by just one day spent in ceaseless practice. A bodily life of one day is the most valuable possession of all. Therefore, if we live a day and possess the function of all the Buddhas, one day is more useful than being reborn through countless aeons.

Hence, if the problem of life and death has not been decisively solved, do not waste even one day. One day is a great treasure to be highly valued – much better than a chunk of jade, or the jewels of a dragon.

Sages of the past valued each day more than their body and life. We should reflect quietly on this. We will discover something more precious than the wish-granting jewel of a dragon or a chunk of jade. Even one day in a life of a hundred years cannot be returned or given back. Is there any action or method that allows us to regain a single day? Such a thing has never been recorded in the past. If we do not waste time foolishly, the days and months wrap around our body like skin. Again, saints and sages of the past, valued each day and month more than their own eyesight and country. If time is wasted, we will be captivated by the fame and fortune of the floating world. If we avoid that, we will live in the Way. If we have determination we will not pass one day uselessly. Practice and proclaim only the Way.

Therefore, keep in mind that the Buddhas and Patriarchs did not spend even one day in worthless practice. During the peaceful days of spring, sit near a bright window and reflect on this. On autumn nights of gentle rain, stay in a simple wood hut and concentrate on practice. We resent such treasures because we do not have practice.

How can the virtue of practice in time be stolen from us? One day is not stolen [but if we waste a single moment] the virtue of many kalpas is stolen. What causes harm between time and ourselves? Resentment that occurs because our practice is insufficient. Do not be too intimate with yourself: that causes self-resentment. Buddhas and Patriarchs also have bonds of gratitude and love; they, however, abandon them. They have many relations but abandon them. Even if we have regret, we can not begrudge the relationship between self and others. If we do not cut off the bonds of gratitude and love, the bonds of gratitude and love should cut us off. If we begrudge gratitude and love we must do this. To begrudge them is to cast them off.

Zen Master Nangaku Ejo, who practiced under Sokei for more than fifteen years, received the transmission; it was like water passing from one bowl to another. The practice of our predecessors should be followed by everyone. In that practice of fifteen years Nangaku had many difficulties, but he kept his practice pure.

This is a mirror for his descendants. There was no charcoal in the hearth, and he slept alone in an empty hall. There was no candle light during the cool nights, so he sat in Zazen near the moonlit window. Although he did not have any intellectual understanding, his practice surpasses all other study. This is real ceaseless practice. Generally, if one abandons craving for fame, fortune, and profit, then one can concentrate on increasing, daily, the virtue of ceaseless practice. This should never be forgotten. If you try to explain essential matters through words, it is very difficult; this was Nangaku's experience after eight years of ceaseless practice. Such practice is rare in the past and present; both sages and fools should seek out ceaseless practice.

Senshu was emperor during the Tang Dynasty. He was the second son of Emperor Kenshū. Even as a child he was very brilliant and he loved to sit in the full lotus position and do meditation. He did Zazen in the palace all the time.

Bokushū was Senshū's elder brother, and on one occasion while Bokushū was emperor, Senshū pretended that he was emperor and gave the morning greeting to the ministers, just for fun. But when they saw this, the ministers thought he was insane and told Bokushū so. Bokushū, however, praised Senshu saying, "My brother is the most intelligent person in our family." At that time, Senshu was only thirteen years old.

In 824 Bokushū died leaving three children, Keishū, Bunshū, and Bushū. Keishū succeeded his father, but died three years later. Bunshū followed him, but was overthrown after one year, so Bushū, the youngest, acceded to the throne.

Bushū reigned from 841 to 846, and always discriminated against Buddhism. During this time, Senshū was living in the country. Bushū thought his uncle was mad and one day decided to punish him for once having pretended to be emperor when Bushū's father had been in power. He struck Senshū, killing him, and then took the body to the Koka garden, where he defecated.

Senshū returned to life, left his homeland and became a disciple of Zen Master Kyōgen Chikan. He shaved his head and became a novice monk. Senshu, however, did not take the precepts to become a priest and moved from place to place with Kyōgen as a mendicant.

They arrived at Mt. Ro and Zen Master Chikan wrote a short poem about a waterfall:

Water falls over the cliff,

Wearing down the rock on the sides and at the bottom,

But it does not hesitate.

From a distance we can see that

The mouth of the waterfall is very high.

Chikan tested Senshū's understanding by showing him this poem. Senshu added the following:

Shall we stop the flow of water through the valley?

Finally it reaches the ocean where it becomes a large wave.

Reading these two lines, Chikan realized that Senshu was not an ordinary person.

Later, Senshū attended the assembly led by the National Teacher, Enkan Saian, where he was appointed Shoki [a position in a Zen temple equivalent to chief secretary].

Zen Master Ōbaku was serving at this time as chief priest under Enkan, so Ōbakū and Senshu worked together in the monastery.

Once, when Ōbaku went to the Buddha Hall and prostrated, Senshū asked him:

It is said that the original Buddhist Dharma is unattainable (fukatoku) and that one should not seek Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Then why do you prostrate yourself before the Buddha?

Ōbaku immediately slapped Senshū's face, saying:

"I do not try to seek Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, that is why I make prostrations."

Again he slapped Senshū. Senshū said, "Do not be so rough."

Ōbaku [who knew that Senshū was attached to the idea of non-attachment to the Three Treasures] said:

"I am not attached to the Three Treasures, so why do you say I am rough or kind?"

He slapped Senshū a third time. At this, Senshū became enlightened, thus ending their dialogue.

Senshū eventually returned to his homeland and became emperor after Bushū died. Bushū had attacked Buddhism but Senshū was supportive and helped promote it. While emperor, he continued to practice Zazen and to maintain the concentrated and pure practice he had begun in Rozan Valley.

Though Senshū later died, his intention to practice Buddhism shone through. His intent was as solid as a diamond and unparalleled in history: it was truly ceaseless practice.

The priest Seppō Gisōn was given the title Great Teacher Shingaku by the emperor. After he awoke the Buddha-seeking mind, he stayed and practiced at many monasteries, always working as the kitchen master. He always held a water ladle and looked after the monks. Even though he was always busy, he never failed to do Zazen day and night. He continued this until he opened his own dōjō^{1-EN} on Mount Seppo. His life and death were in Zazen.

While he was a wandering monk, he visited Tōzan Ryokai nine times and Tōsu Gisei three times. He was a rare seeker after truth. When talking of strict and serene ceaseless practice many people mention Seppō's high level of training. Seppō's starting point when seeking the Way was the same as that of other people, but his sharp and keen will and wisdom, plus his ceaseless practice, helped him to go further than others.

Students, at that time, were taught to study Seppō's practice: if we look back at it and remind ourselves of Seppō's study in many places, and of his effort and courage, we can understand that his keen practice, as pure as snow, comes from his former lives.

When students study with enlightened masters, they try to ask real questions, but it is difficult to give true answers. When we say "students" we may mean twenty, thirty, or hundreds of thousands of seekers. A student who seeks the truth with the guidance of a master must practice day and night. If the master explains the truth but the students do not possess enough understanding and a large gap remains between them, the master should stop his teaching.

If there are any among the students who are old and consider themselves to be of high virtue and so begin to become frivolous and cease their practice, their behaviour will prevent new students from joining the disciples. Among the students, some will be able to deeply follow the master's truth and attain the Buddha Way, others will not.

Time flies faster than an arrow, and our bodies fade faster than a dewdrop. It is regretful that even when there is a Zen master, some will not study. And sometimes a student may want to learn the truth but may not be able to find a true master. Such sad situations exist. I [Dogen] have seen many in my lifetime.

Usually, a very great religious man will possess the ability to observe and know his students, but it has happened that it has been the fate of some students engaged in serious practice to have difficulty in meeting such great religious men. Long ago, Seppō visited Tōzan nine times and Tōsu three times. We can see by this example how difficult it can be to meet the right master. We should be thankful for the opportunity to be serene in the Dharma of ceaseless practice and we should feel sorry if we do not practice honestly when we have the opportunity.

Written January 18, 1240. Revised and recopied March 8, 1240 by Ejō.

PART TWO

Bodhidharma was the first Patriarch to go to China. He did so under instruction from his master, Hannyatara. The voyage took three years by boat. It was a difficult voyage, due to fog, wind, frost, and snow. Wind and fog obstructed navigation and visibility. Ordinary people, who are concerned with their body and life, cannot even imagine what courage it took to go to an unknown country.

All this occurred because of Bodhidharma's great compassionate wish to transmit the Dharma and rescue people from delusion. This was part of his ceaseless practice, and was possible because he lived constantly in the Way of Buddha. He possessed the eternal world of transmission and lived in the entire world of ten directions in the one way of truth. All the world of ten directions is ourself, and the entire world of ten directions is the ten directions of the world.

All our living karma is related to the palace of Bodhidharma because his enlightenment enabled him to see that even the palace can be seen as a dōjō. So he went, without fear or doubt, from India to China to save people who were living in delusion.

1-EN Dōjō: a place for worship of the Buddha, and for learning and practice.

When Bodhidharma left his homeland, he spent some time in preparation. He crossed the South Sea in a large ship and arrived at Kōshū (China). Among the people on board the ship there must have been many priests, although historians do not record this. When, on September 21st in 520 A.D. they reached harbour, they, did not know anyone [in China]. Governor Shoku, of Kōshū, sent an envoy to welcome them and sent a special letter to the Emperor Butei. When he received this letter, the emperor was very happy and sent a messenger with a letter of welcome to Bodhidharma. This was on November 1st. Thus Bodhidharma, the first Patriarch in China, went to Kinko to meet Emperor Butei of Ryo.

Butei asked him:

"Since I became emperor, I have built many temples, copied the sūtras and taken care of priests. I have always supported Buddhism and cannot enumerate the things I have done. What will I gain from such deeds?"

Bodhidharma said: "Nothing."

The Emperor asked: "Why nothing?"

Bodhidharma replied:

What you have done has little merit. All of those things you mentioned eventually will produce nothing but delusion because it is done for personal gain. It is shadow rather than form. It seems as if there is some merit but in reality there is none."

The Emperor asked again:

"What are the true merits of pious acts and religious practice?"

Bodhidharma said:

"We must be in the following state: pure wisdom, pure freedom from the bonds of illusion and suffering and free from attachment to personal desires."

The Emperor asked again:

"What is the most important point of enlightenment?"

Bodhidharma replied:

"Vast emptiness, nothing holy."

Then the Emperor asked:

"Then who are you, who stands in before me?"

Bodhidharma said:

"I do not know."

The Emperor did not understand the answer and Bodhidharma saw that their minds did not harmonize. So, on November 19th he secretly left and went north, crossing the Yangtze river.

On November 23rd he arrived at Lo-yang. He stayed at Shōrinji Temple on Mount Sū where, quietly facing a wall, he did Zazen day and night.

The Northern Emperor, Butei, did not know the true worth of Bodhidharma, nor did he know enough to feel shame for not knowing that face.

Bodhidharma, who came from southern India, was of royal caste, being the third prince of Kōshi. China was a large and ancient country, well established and developed. Sometimes people from small countries are embarrassed and ashamed before large and developed societies, but the First Patriarch, Bodhidharma, did not have such a feeling: he did not discriminate against nor abandon any country or people.

Sometimes Bodhiruci [a Northern Indian who arrived in China in 508 A.D., and who was devoted to translating the scriptures] and Koto Risshi [a precept master] attacked Bodhidharma, but he did not mind. From this we can see that Bodhidharma was not an ordinary scholar, although the Chinese thought he was simply an ordinary teacher of the sutras and the abhidharma. They were foolish and shallow in so thinking, and moreover thought that his teaching proclaimed one sect whose teaching was the same as other abhidharma teachings. In this they were narrow minded and deluded.

Bodhidharma, the first Patriarch in China, was the twenty-eighth Patriarch in line from Shakyamuni. He left his homeland and went to save the people of China. Who else can be compared to him? If he had not come from the west [India], how would the people in the east have learned the true Buddha Dharma? The people may have become involved in foolish views, far from that of enlightenment and Buddhism.

Bodhidharma transmitted the True Law far and wide and, as a result, we can learn the True Law even in rural areas. Nowadays, farmers, old and young, can learn the True Law. All this is because of Bodhidharma's ceaseless practice and due to his crossing the sea from India to China.

India and China differ widely in their traditions, manners, Customs and morals. To be a great teacher [in such circumstances], a man should possess great patience, compassion, and holiness. Only such a person can be a teacher.

Bodhidharma did not have a place to call his dōjō, nor did he even have a place to live, nor did he know anyone. He continued to stay at Shōrinji Temple on Mount Sū for nine years, doing Zazen. And that is why people called him "the Brahman who faces the wall."

Historians thought that Bodhidharma was of the shūzen^{2-EN} lineage, but this was not so. The Eye and Treasure of the True Law which was transmitted from Buddha to Patriarch was passed only through Patriarchs such as Bodhidharma.

The Rinkan Roku [written by Eko Kakuhan] states that Bodhidharma went to Rye and then to Gi where he stayed at Shōrinji Temple on Mount Sū. He just continued doing Zazen, facing the wall. This was different from [Zazen for the purpose of enlightenment]. Most people could not understand why he simply concentrated on Zazen, and thought his Zazen was only

2-EN Shūzan: stage by stage meditation practice, moving from one level of understanding to the next.

one part of practising Buddhism. So they asked, why did this saint only concentrate on Zazen? Thus some historians wrote that Bodhidharma practiced shūzen, and thought that his Zen, which was the living Buddhist Dharma, was like ashes [useless].

However, Patriarchs who transmit the right Buddhist Dharma do not attach themselves to what historians say. They concentrate on pure meditation, never veering from Zazen. It is like the yin and yang of geomancy [i.e, the science of the I-ching].

When Emperor Butei of Ryō saw Bodhidharma for the first time, he asked:

“What is the most important point of enlightenment?”

Bodhidharma said:

“Vast emptiness, nothing holy.”

The Emperor then asked:

“Then who are you, who stands before me?”

and Bodhidharma replied:

“I do not know.”

Bodhidharma realized that they did not understand each other and wondered why this was so. As a result he left Ryo and went to Shorinji Temple where he concentrated on facing the wall. This was not Shūzen. He did not bring even one sūtra to China. However, he did bring the right transmission of the Dharma, although some historians foolishly said he was of the shūzen line. While Bodhidharma was on Mount Sū there were some people who did not know the truth: they were like barking dogs. Who can truly understand Bodhidharma? Who can realize his compassion and see his true place?

If we have a true and sincere mind, we can both recall the compassion of Bodhidharma, and live according to on^{1-EN}. The great compassion of Bodhidharma is superior to that of parents. Indeed the compassion of Patriarchs cannot be compared with the love of parents and children.

If we think about how poor our country [Japan] is in comparison to India and China, it is disturbing. We do not see saints or sages: no one is spiritually developed. The people’s spiritual level is low and since the beginning there has been no one in Japan to guide this profane world. There has been no pristine and peaceful time and the people do not know the meaning of pure and impure, nor do they have any clear understanding of nihei-sansai^{2-EN}.

Furthermore, they did not know about the movement of gogyo^{3-EN}. The reason for their foolishness was primarily their lack of understanding the meaning of the sūtras, of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, and because there was no teacher to impart the meaning of the sūtras.

We had no teacher because we did not realize how many volumes of sūtras or how many verses there were and because we concentrated merely on the superficial understanding of letters.

If we look again at the old sūtras and old books, we will be able to feel adoration for the teaching of our predecessors. If our desire to grasp the old teachings is strong, we will be able to get their true meaning by reading the old sūtras.

Koso of the Han Dynasty and Taiso of Gi were emperors who could clarify verses of astrology and physical geography. If we clarify the sūtras, we clarify the meaning of nihei-sansai. If people do not have the experience and influence of a wise emperor, they will not know how to behave before their emperor or their parents. It would be sad for the emperor, ministers, parents, and children, if no such able emperor were to be found. Even if we had precious jewels, we would spend them frivolously and time would fly by uselessly. Anyone born into a family such as this would not get any important position, nor even indeed an insignificant one. Only when the country is confused do people born into poor families have high positions; when the country is tranquil we would never hear of such things.

Why do people hesitate to learn the right Buddhist teaching, even though they may be from a rural background or from a poor family? Why are they not open-minded enough to see that they can learn the teachings regardless of their background? If they are not open-minded, how can they lead useful lives?

Even if we are wise and have a high position we must keep an open mind to learn the right Buddhist teachings. This is even truer for poor people. If we are poor and abandon our life for the Way of the Buddha, life will be more fruitful than that of any celestial being, more exalted than that of any king in the world, and more valuable than that of the gods in heaven and the sentient beings of the three worlds^{1-EN}.

Bodhidharma was the third son of the King of Kōshi which is in southern India. His family origins can be traced back to the emperor of India.

Japan is a country in the Far East, far from India. Its people did not know how to treat honourable people such as Bodhidharma. There is no excellent perfume here, nor flower, nor zaniku [padded cushion] nor wonderful palace. Japan is on the edge of the Far East. How could we know how to welcome a great prince from a great country? Even if we learned correct behaviour, we might still be confused about how to care for such a prince. The way to care for an emperor is different from that of a lord. For different people, there are different ways of caring, and we do not know these differences due to our lack of nobility and to our poor virtue which gave us no standards of behaviour. If we are unable to maintain standards of behaviour, we must first clarify our lack of nobility and our poor virtue.

Bodhidharma, the first Patriarch in China, was the twenty-eighth Patriarch since Shakyamuni Buddha. His refined behaviour, the result of his background as a noble prince, became even more refined through his practice. Such a great and honourable

1-EN On: gratitude. This is the true nature of a ‘human being’ i.e. compassion and help for one another.

2-EN Nihei-Sansai: great men. Nihei stands for pen and sword, sansai for heaven, earth, and human beings.

3-EN Gogyo: the movement of the five planets and how they affect and control the country.

1-EN Sentient beings of the three worlds:

Desire – with appetite and sexual desire

Form – with form but no appetite or sexual desire.

Formless world – without form.

sage came to China without worry about his own life because he desired to transmit the Dharma and save all people.

In China, before the First Patriarch came, there had been no one to transmit the right Dharma and no Patriarch to bestow it. After the First Patriarch, Bodhidharma, no one else, apart from his followers, came to China. This is like the udumbara flower. From the blossoming of this flower we should count three thousand years. However, there will never be another Patriarch like the First Patriarch who came from India.

Among the so-called followers and students of the First Patriarch, there were some, such as scholars of the sūtras and the abhidharma, who were the same level as Bodhidharma, but they had not grasped the Dharma. They are like those in the Sung Dynasty who had picked up stones, mistaking them for jewels. This happened because of their insufficient understanding and failure to listen to the teachings.

If we do not have the original seed for enlightenment, we cannot say we are students of Bodhidharma's lineage. We remain under the illusion of teaching which is based on form and name only. This is so pitiful!

After Bodhidharma came to China in 520 and transmitted the right Buddhist Dharma, there was a true master [in China]; therefore it was no longer necessary to go to India. Some people, however, continued to go to India to seek the Dharma. Why did they do so? It was foolish of them. It was their bad karma that led them to India, where they merely walked around, slandering the Dharma, acting maliciously, and gradually forgot about their homeland.

Was it good for these people to go to India, where they uselessly spent their time in the mountains and by the oceans? If we do not learn the real meaning of why the Patriarch came from India to China, we cannot clarify the meaning of the transmission of the Buddha Dharma to the east. These people did not understand: they just wandered in India saying they were seeking the Buddhist Dharma. Since they did not have the true Buddha-seeking mind, they were unable to meet the right master. They merely happened to meet scholars and students of the sūtras. Why did this happen? There were true masters in India, but they could not find them because they did not have the right mind to do so. We never hear of people who went to India and found a true master. Were there any such people? No such people are recorded in history.

After Bodhidharma came to China from the west, there were many priests who merely concentrated on the sūtras and abhidharma and did not seek the right Dharma. These people glanced at the sūtras and abhidharma, never grasping the essence. This was a result of both their present karma and their predetermined fate. It was very sad for them not to hear the true essence of Buddhism nor see the right Dharma. If we do not face the right transmission of the Buddha, use a Buddhist mind, or hear the teachings of the Buddhas, we will have a sad life. There were many such people during the Sui, Tang, and Sung Dynasties.

People who possess the seed of original wisdom and by good fortune become disciples transcend their past accumulation of karma because they had the right capacity to understand the teachings of Buddha.

Foolish people, were those who stayed in their huts reading the sūtras and the abhidharma, while those who did not avoid or dislike hard practice and who had respect for the original nature of Bodhidharma neither hesitated nor spared themselves any effort to gain understanding.

Zen Master Kyōgen said:

"Most people think that all our efforts, plans, and challenges are for ourselves, but they do not realize that this means nothing – it is useless, like dust in the cemetery. Please stop saying 'White hair does not have any words' or 'This is a man who brought the message from heaven.'"

That is why any kind of challenge, effort, or ambition will only be like a handful of dust in the cemetery.

If you are only an ordinary citizen in a small country, you may have much suffering, or you may from duty have to kill yourself. This is pitiful and sad because these kinds of people also have the capacity to seek the right Dharma. Even if we have to give our life one thousand times, we should continue to seek the right Dharma. Do not worry about losing your life but concentrate on seeking the right Buddhist Dharma. Do not worry how you spend your life or about whether you are wise or foolish.

Even if we wish to live according to right Dharma it will not be possible if there is no Law present in our society. We should hope and pray that the right Dharma appears now. If we see the right Dharma yet lose our life we will not feel regret. We should be ashamed not to have such a mind. If we spend our life giving great thanks to the Patriarchs, this will be ceaseless practice in our daily life. We should not think only of our small personal life. Do not try to hold on to the bonds of worldly affection – this is mere folly – nor cling to notions of family, which are like dust; remember you cannot stay forever with those you are attached to. Even if you are attached, you cannot live forever. All the Buddhas and Patriarchs of the past were wise and abandoned jewels, jade, and even palaces. They thought these to be no more valuable than spit or excrement. They were able to know true and sacred affection because of the compassion of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Consider the sacredness of Buddhism, and you will realize that the bonds of worldly affection, to family, jewels, or palaces are nothing. Even the turtle and the sparrow may have the right Buddhist mind, as is shown by the sparrow who bestowed a fortune on the man who helped him^{1-EN}. It is a pity that even though we have the form of a human being, we may be more foolish than a sparrow or turtle. This is because we lack gratitude and understanding of true, sacred affection.

Our presence in Buddha and our hearing of the Buddhist Dharma should be the result of our ceaseless practice and the compassion of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. If the Buddhas and Patriarchs had no transmission from one to another, we might never have seen the Buddhist Dharma. So we should give thanks for each Buddhist word and Dharma. Even more, we should give thanks for the great Dharma and the Eye and Treasury of the True Law.

Abandon your life for the Teachings, for this is a good deed that will bring about your salvation. Prostration and veneration are intrinsic to the Way; thus they should be part of our everyday life. When we do these things the gods and heavenly guardians will make a place for us, and we shall want for nothing.

In India it is said that some people sold the skulls of people who had heard Buddhist teachings to Brahmans, who believed that good luck came from such skulls. If we do not abandon our life and body for the Way, we will not receive the merits and virtues possible from listening to the Law. But, if we listen to the Dharma with an open spirit and forget about our body and

1-EN There is a Japanese fairy tale about a sparrow which, when wounded, was helped by an old man. It later repaid him by bestowing gifts and fortune.

life, then such listening will help us gain maturity.

Those skulls of people who studied the Buddhist Way are very important. If our skulls were merely scattered about the streets or left out in the sun, who would prostrate themselves or want to buy them? Instead, we should regret each weak spirit that did not listen to the teaching of the Buddha, and instead became a demon bearing grudges against its previous lives. If we listen to the Buddha's teachings, we can become celestial, giving thanks and prostrations for our previous life. Soon our bodies will be ashes and we will pass on to the next world. Think about this and you will not get too attached to your body. Our tears are the same tears as those of people in the future who see our lives. We must have ceaseless practice based on the right teaching of Buddhism, otherwise people in the future who look back up on our ashes will feel remorse. So, do not be afraid to practice, even in the cold, and continue your ceaseless practice. Suffering in the cold will never break a person, nor will it break the way of practice. Likewise, do not fear the heat. Heat will never break a person, nor will it break the way of practice. Not to practice will break a person and the Way.

Eating wheat or wild grasses is a precious thing, so do not mimic or imitate blood-sucking animals such as the hungry ghosts who suck blood and milk. A day based on ceaseless practice is the same as that of the Buddha. Taiso Eka, the Second Patriarch in China, had the title Great Master Shōshū Fukaku. He was respected and worshipped by the gods. Priests and laymen respected him as he was of high virtue and was detached from worldly things. Before he was ordained, he stayed at a place between Isui and Raksui reading many kinds of books. He rarely saw people, and people rarely saw such a one as him. He had a highly developed knowledge of Buddhism and was most virtuous.

One day, a celestial being appeared before him, saying: "If you wish to have some result from studying for such a long time, why do you stay in this one place? The Great Way is not distant from here. Go south."

The next day, he had a very painful headache, as if something were piercing his head. As his master, Kozan Hojo was trying to cure him, a voice came from the heavens and said: "You are changing skulls. That is not an ordinary pain."

When Eka told his master about hearing this voice, his master saw his skull seemingly shaped like five mountains, and said:

"This is a sign that you will have good fortune. The voice told you to go to the south; it must be that the great master Bodhidharma, who is at Shorinji, will be your teacher."

After hearing what his master had said, Eka went to Shorinji Temple. The celestial being told him that he heard the voice because of his ceaseless practice.

It was very cold on the night of December 9th, so cold that the joints of the bamboo broke, and one could hardly bear the winter night in the deep mountains, it was snowing so hard. Though a heavy snowfall had covered the earth and the mountains on that night, the second Patriarch continued to forge a path through the snow and proceeded on his way. It was extremely difficult but he finally arrived at the place where Bodhidharma was, but he was not permitted to enter, and Bodhidharma paid no attention to him.

Eka stood in the snow, without sleeping, resting or sitting, until dawn. It snowed all night; there was no respite for him and the snow piled up as far as his waist. His tears continued falling down his face, turning to ice as they did. When he looked at his clothes, he realized he was standing covered in ice. Staring at his clothes, with tears flowing down his face, he said to himself:

"In ancient times there were many examples of people seeking the Way. Some dug marrow from their bones, others pierced their flesh and fed their blood to the hungry, some laid their hair on the mud to make a path for the Buddha, and others gave their bodies to tigers in the valley to save them from hunger. In ancient times there were many seekers such as this. Why can't I stand here on such a cold night?"

Such thoughts gave him encouragement. Followers [of the Way] should never forget the Second Patriarch's thoughts. If we forget them even for one moment, we will collapse.

The Second Patriarch tried to make his mind strong by thinking of such examples, and he did not care about the deep snow. It is frightening even to imagine standing on such a cold night until dawn: it could cause us to lose our minds. However, just before sunrise, the First Patriarch came to him and asked:

"You, who keep standing in the snow, what do you want?"

Eka, speaking through the tears of gratitude which continued to flow down his face, said:

"O master, please show compassion and allow me to open the gates of Buddhism. I want to share the truth with all people."

The First Patriarch told him:

"The Way of all the Buddhas and Patriarchs is based on patience. The most difficult practice is ceaseless practice. If you have only a small amount of virtue and wisdom, and try to seek the true teaching, you will feel only suffering and the results will be useless."

When the Second Patriarch heard this, he became even more determined and he took out a sharp knife. As the light gleamed and reflected from the knife onto the two Patriarchs, the Second Patriarch cut off his left arm. The First Patriarch then knew that Eka was the one with the capacity to transmit the Law and he said:

"When all Buddhas and Patriarchs started to seek the Way they abandoned their own form in favour of the Truth. As you stood in front of me, you cut off your own arm. That means you seek the real Dharma."

The Second Patriarch studied with the First Patriarch for eight years. He experienced many kinds of suffering, and learned real diligence. Thus he came to understand the origin of our mind, and became a great religious leader. Such diligence had never been seen before in India or China since the story of Mahākāśyapa who transmitted the Dharma from Shakyamuni through a smile.

And so the Second Patriarch received the marrow from Bodhidharma. We must quietly reflect that even if Bodhidharma had come from India one thousand times, the Buddhist Dharma could not have been transmitted to the present day if the Second Patriarch had not received the teaching of ceaseless practice from Bodhidharma. If we meet the right Dharma, we cannot help but give thanks for the Second Patriarch's compassion. We cannot express our thanks for this in any other way, for body and life themselves are not enough. To have a castle in the country is not enough, because a castle may be conquered or

passed on to the next generation, and our body and life are also impermanent and may belong to a lord.

We should not spend our life uselessly, but should base it on ceaseless practice, not wasting time on personal matters. Our life is a result of our predecessors and due to the great compassion of ceaseless practice. Once we have begun to awaken our Buddha mind and to achieve the ceaseless practice of the Buddhas and Patriarchs we should feel ashamed and sad to revert to an undetermined mind in matters such as serving our wife and children. If we become malicious and fall into fame and fortune, this fame and fortune will be our great enemy unless we have great compassion.

The meaning of having compassion for fame and fortune is to understand that we have the capability in our body and life to be Buddhas and Patriarchs – and not to destroy our life with fame and fortune. We should realize that fame and fortune are like dreams and illusion: they are like a flower of emptiness. We should learn that fame and fortune are illusionary and so should not commit crimes for them. People who study the Buddhist Way should have right observation in everything. Even lay people who have compassion, give thanks for any gold, silver, jewels, or favours they receive. If we have compassion, we must always try to give thanks for favours.

How can we forget to give true thanks for seeing and learning the right Dharma of the Tathagata? How can we forget to give thanks? To not forget is the same as a great jewel: to actualize ceaseless practice without relapse is a great virtue to follow. If we know how to give true thanks, we will see virtue pile up like a mountain and not fall down like a dew drop from a leaf. This is ceaseless practice. Through its merit we will find ourselves and will continue the lineage of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

The First and Second Patriarchs never built temples, nor did they even cultivate the earth. The same was true of the Third and Fourth Patriarchs. The Fifth and Sixth Patriarchs did not build temples, nor did Seigen or Nangaku.

One of Seigen's disciples was Sekitō. This great master built a hut on top of a large stone where he concentrated day and night on Zazen. Without sleeping, he constantly did Zazen. He carried water, hewed wood, and concentrated on Zazen. Due to Sekitō's ceaseless practice, Seigen's line of disciples became strong and brought well-being to the people of the land. The Unmon and Hogen sects, which come from the lineage of the great master Sekito, clarified the Buddhist Way.

The Thirty-first Patriarch [the fourth in China] Zen Master Daii Dōshin worked under the Third Patriarch when he was fourteen years old. After he received the right Dharma from the Third Patriarch, he concentrated on Zazen for sixty years, neither sleeping nor lying down. The influence of his teaching spread to everyone and its virtue was transmitted to all terrestrial and celestial beings. Such a person was the Fourth Patriarch in China, and in Teikan 17 [643 A.D.] Emperor Taishū of the T'ang Dynasty heard about him, was impressed by what he heard, and wished to meet him. He invited him to the castle, but Daii Dōshin excused himself three times by saying he was ill.

The fourth time, Taishū sent a messenger with the following message:

"If he does not come, cut off his head and bring it to me."

The messenger went to the Fourth Patriarch's mountain and told him what the Emperor had said. Without changing his facial expression, the Patriarch maintained his composure and offered his head. The messenger became very excited and frightened. He left and returned to the Emperor and told him what had happened. The Emperor was most impressed and respected Daii Doshin even more and sent him beautiful and costly silks to show his respect.

Due to his ceaseless practice, the Fourth Patriarch did not worry about his own life, nor did he need to visit the emperor. Such a ceaseless practice is rare, and we will not see its like in a thousand years. Learn by this example of ceaseless practice and avoid kings and emperors. Even though we may find it of interest to see well-known and popular people such as kings and emperors we should not do so.

Even Emperor Taishū, the highest person in the profane world, respected and yearned to meet this Zen Master who was prepared to give his head up to the sword.

The Fourth Patriarch rejected Emperor Taishū's invitations for a particular reason: he begrudged the time he would have to give away from his ceaseless practice. For a man to refuse the emperor three times is very rare. Nowadays, so many people want to see the emperor, thinking it to be a great honour.

On September 4th, 651, the Fourth Patriarch gave the following teaching to his disciples:

"Everything is in the form of nirvana. All of you should know your own reality, your own essence and should teach society."

After he had spoken to his disciples, while sitting in Zazen, he passed away. He was seventy-two years old. A stupa dedicated to him was built at the top of Mount Hatto. However, on April 8th, the door of the stupa opened by itself, the following year and the Fourth Patriarch was seen therein, sitting in Zazen, just as before. It was as if he were still alive. His disciples did not attempt to close the door. Students should learn that everything is in the form of nirvana, and that we should not attach ourselves even to emptiness. The essence of everything itself is in the form of nirvana.

The Fourth Patriarch practiced ceaseless practice both before and after his death. To think that the living being perishes is a stupid conclusion, and to think that death has no consciousness is a foolish misunderstanding. Those two views – there is no death for the living, and the dead have no consciousness – are rubbish. Buddhist trainees should not waste time even considering them.

Great Master Gensha Soichi was called Shibi after he was ordained. He was born in Min province in Fukushu and his lay name was Sha. When he was young he was very fond of fishing, and as an adult he became an ordinary fisherman on the Nandai river. At the beginning of the Kantsu [860-873] period of the Tang Dynasty he was thirty years old. All of a sudden, he wished to leave society; he abandoned his boat and began to study Zen under Master Reikun on Mount Fuyo. He shaved his head and received the precepts from the precept master Dōgen of Kaigenji Temple at Kōsei. He wore a very simple kesa and plain sandals and took only enough food to keep himself alive. He concentrated on doing Zazen all day long. All the priests thought he was the kind of practitioner that one very rarely sees. He got on very well with Seppō Gison; their relationship was like that of master and disciple. Seppo admired Shibi's practice as an ascetic.

One day Seppō asked Gensha:

"Everybody calls your practice ascetic. What does that mean?"

He answered:

"I do not deceive anyone."

Another day, Seppo called Gensha and asked:

"Mendicant priest, why do you not study under a master?"

Gensha answered:

"Bodhidharma did not come to China and the Second Patriarch did not go to India to study."

Seppō agreed with Gensha's answer.

Later, Seppō started to live on Mt. Seppō and with Gensha, built a fine monastery there. Many monks gathered there like clouds, and Gensha always used to go to Seppō's room with many questions. Monks came from different places with many unsolved questions. They always asked Gensha to teach them the answers, for Seppō always said:

"If you have a question, ask Gensha."

Gensha always fulfilled his responsibility to his master. This cannot be done without the ceaseless practice of Zazen. Ceaseless practice, without stopping for even one day, is very rare. There are so many people who are preoccupied with worldly concerns; it is rare to see someone who does Zazen all day long. As followers of the Way, we should realize that we do not have so many years and months, and so should concentrate on Zazen all day long.

Priest Erin of Chōkei became an outstanding master like Seppō after having been his disciple. He studied under Seppō and Gensha for twenty-nine years. During this time he wore out twenty Zazen pillows. If there are people who love Zazen, they will long for his deed as a good example. Many people vied with him, but none went beyond him. But his long practice was not in vain and finally, when he lifted a straw curtain, he had a great enlightenment.

He did not return to his native country for thirty years and during that time he had no contact with relatives and did not talk to his fellow men in the zendō. He only continued sitting. He continued such ceaseless practice for thirty years and kept silent about his doubts and questions for thirty years. We should recognize him as an extraordinary practitioner with great capabilities. Through the sutras we can study his determined mind. If we wish to live a life such as Erin's we should be ashamed of our past deeds and study his thirty years of practice and enlightenment. However, if we do not have a Buddha-seeking mind, lack pure practice, and are occupied with fame and fortune, we will merely continue to be confused.

After Zen Master Daien on Mount Daii received inka^{1-EN} from Hyakujō, he moved to Mount Isan which was very steep. He moved onto the mountain and built a small hut there; he made friends with the animals and birds, lived a simple life and concentrated on his practice. He did not care about the strong winds or snow, and he was never too lazy to practice Zazen. For his staple diet he ate chestnuts. He did not have a Buddha Hall or any sturdy building, and for forty years the only form to be seen was his ceaseless practice. Gradually he became very famous throughout the country and monks came from all over to him. Finally, he became founder of the Igyō sect and produced more than forty Zen masters, including Gyōzan, Kyogen, and Biun.

If we wish to build a temple, we must remember that the main purpose is not form, fame, and fortune, but it is rather the ceaseless practice of the Buddha Dharma which is most important. Practising without a temple was the Way of ancient Buddhism as was sitting Zazen on the ground or under a tree. The point is to do Zazen, for this is the basis of ceaseless practice. Only when we have real ceaseless practice may we then find our dojo. When we have real ceaseless practice, the dojo of the Buddha will be transmitted to our present time. Foolish people today only attach themselves to the form of a building or temple, but the Buddhas and Patriarchs were never attached to any building. We do not clarify our observations of ourselves by thinking only of buildings or temples.

To the Buddhas and Patriarchs, buildings do not bring well being. Buildings are only a means to fame, fortune, and merit. Quietly look at Isan's practice and you will realize the correct way to live.

Evening rain strong enough to break moss covered stones,

Nights full of winter snow.

No animals to be seen,

No smoke from any chimney.

Far removed from all worldly things.

If we have neither ceaseless practice nor value the Dharma more than our personal lives, we will never know a life such as Isan's. Do not hurry to cut the grass or prepare the land to build a temple. Only continue your ceaseless practice.

If we have serene and devout compassion we can see that all the Patriarchs who had right transmission had difficulty in such deep mountains. However, as far as Isan was concerned, there was only a pond, water, ice, and mist. Most people could not tolerate being so deeply in the mountains. However, the Buddhist Way and deep truth emerged out of such an environment for Master Daii, through his ceaseless practice. When we hear about such ceaseless practice, we should not take it lightly. If we are sincere followers, we can be greatly encouraged by Isan's practice.

Because of Isan's ceaseless practice the windmill stopped, the world did not break, the celestial palace was serene, and our country was kept at peace.

We are not descendants of Isan. He was a Patriarch of the Buddhist Way. Later, Gyōsan studied under Isan. He was a brilliant person who had already studied under Zen Master Hyakujō; if the master asked him a question, he was able to give a hundred answers. Gyōsan practiced three more years under Isan. Such practice was unprecedented. There is nothing more we need say about Gyōsan, because those three extra years under Issan express the nature of his ceaseless practice.

Zen Master Fuyo Dokai of Mount Fuyo actualized original ceaseless practice. The emperor gave him the title of Zen Master Josho and bestowed upon him a purple robe, but he could not accept them and wrote to the emperor pleading his inability to accept the robe and title.

He used to give his own rice gruel to others. He built a hut on Mount Fuyo and monks and laymen began to gather around

1-EN Inka: certification of enlightenment presented by a master to his disciple

him in the hundreds. However, because there was only one meal a day, many left. He would not go out to beg food for a mid-day meal.

One day, he gave the assembly of monks his teaching on the meaning of leaving society. This is the way of a monk: concentrate on practice, cast off illusions and transcend the illusion of life and death. Why should a monk worry about worldly fame and fortune? He should cut off all relationships, and at each moment have a tranquil mind. This is the meaning of leaving society. If we spend our time on useless matters, we will lose our life. Right away abandon all confrontation, opposition, and compromise. If we continue our opposition, it is like planting a flower in stone. If we are attracted to fame and fortune, it is like dust in the eye. If we did not know the true meaning it would be excusable, but we have had experience of it since ancient times. Still, even though we are aware of that reality, we continue to be confused.

Why be greedy? If we do not desist now, how can we become detached? All the Patriarchs teach us to do our best at each moment. If we do not do our best in the present, how can we do so later? We must do our best now.

If we reach that stage of mind where we do not seek anything, even the Buddhas and Patriarchs will be unnecessary. A clear mind can be attained, and we will be able to see reality if we leave behind all worldly conflicts. For the first time, we will become worthy because we see the truth.

Do you know the following stories?

Baso's disciple Injan had no wish to see people his entire life and Jōshu did not speak his entire life. Hentan collected the fruits of the chestnut and buckeye trees. Dabai used lotus leaves for his clothing and Shie used only paper to protect himself against the cold. Gentai simply wore cloth. Sekisō concentrated on Zazen with his followers, maintaining such a simple life that people called him "old hermitage." Throughout his strict practice he kept saying:

"What is your mind?"

Tōsu Gisei made his monks prepare rice and he always worked and ate together with them because he wanted his monks to have right observation through practice.

The masters who are listed above had such kinds of ceaseless practice. If they did not have good merit, how could they be satisfied with such a simple life? If all people search through practice for the Buddha's precious experience, they would not lose anything. If we do not realize this, all our life will be useless. Likewise will be the case if we do not achieve enlightenment: we will merely pile up useless efforts. Fuyo Daishi had such views and so maintained his practice and finally became head priest on Mount Fuyo.

How can we forget the efforts of these Patriarchs and their transmission of the Dharma? We must try to concentrate on these previous examples of ceaseless practice transmitted by the Patriarchs. Discuss them with each officer of the temple. Do not go where individuals may invite you, do not ask for donations. Just leave off the crops which you grow on the temple land. Divide all you grow into 360 parts and use one part each day for food, no matter how many people are present. When you can, make rice. If there is not enough, make gruel. If there is not enough for gruel, make mush. If more and more monks come, just drink tea. It is not necessary to bring them the tea: each monk can come to a certain place to drink it.

Concentrate only on the important things and cut off the useless, excess ones. Through such a mind, our practice will become more fruitful and will not appear to be so difficult. It will be like a flower blooming, birds chirping, a wooden horse neighing and a cow running fast. Blue mountains outside will not influence our minds, the sounds of the hot springs will not disturb us. When we look at the mountains, we will hear the monkeys cry and see the dew drops covering the half-moon. The crane will sing in the forest and the wind will blow through the pine trees in the morning. Spring winds will bring buds to the old trees, and the autumn leaves will wither and fall in the cold forest. The steps on Mount Fuyo are covered in moss; the faces of the people are covered in mist. There are no sounds, no dust, no people. The whole mountain remains quiet, all things are transcended. This is the atmosphere we want on Mount Fuyo.

Today, I have told this assembly how important and valuable it is to study the Buddhist Way in order to gain spiritual satisfaction. This is only my personal opinion, so it is not necessary to preach from the dais, use a hossu, give a katsu, hit anyone with a stick, or raise the eyebrows. Are these necessary? They may all be of value sometimes, but they are also sometimes contrary to the teachings of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Do you remember that Bodhidharma came from India and sat for nine years in Zazen facing the wall? And that the Second Patriarch experienced great difficulties while seeking the Buddha and finally cut off his arm? We know this about them: Bodhidharma did not utter a single word and the Second Patriarch did not ask a single question. However, we cannot say that Bodhidharma did not direct people. They both practiced wordless samadhi. Can we say that the Second Patriarch did not go out to seek a master? When we think of these Patriarchs, strict ceaseless practice, I am ashamed of my own immature and inadequate practice. We should be ashamed of our weak intentions towards practice.

We see that some followers insist on their worldly desires and only after they think they have enough food, shelter, clothes, and medicine do they begin to practice. Realize the point is practice, not food, clothes, shelter, and medicine. If we wait until we have sufficient of these, we may find ourselves permanently separated from our Buddhist practice.

Time flies like an arrow: do not begrudge your practice. However we do not want to force ourselves. When the time comes, you will know what I mean.

Do you know this poem written by an ancient worthy?

Brown rice from mountain rice paddies and yellow vegetables

... eating this poor food is your own decision.

But if you cannot eat this, go to the east or west. Leave here.

All monks are together in the temple making their own efforts,

trying to do their best, and caring for themselves.

This catches the essence of what has been transmitted from Patriarch to Patriarch.

There are many anecdotes about Fuyo Dokai, and the above concern ceaseless practice.

We should yearn for a practice like his and should follow the example he set on Mount Fuyo. It is a continuation of Shakyamuni's right teaching.

Zen Master Daijaku of Kaigenji Temple in Kōsei Kōshu had a monk named Baso Dōitsu who was from Jippoken in Kōshu. He had practiced under Zen Master Nangaku Ejō for more than ten years. One day, when he was going back to his home town, he changed his mind and returned to Nangaku, where he burned incense and prostrated himself before the Zen master.

Nangaku said to Baso,

"I advise you not to return to your home town. If you do, you will be unable to practice the Way because the people in your neighbourhood will call you by your former name."

When Baso heard this, he respected Nangaku and promised him thus:

"I will not go back to my home town for three lifetimes."

He stayed with Nangaku. Many monks came from every direction, like clouds. Among these monks, there were many outstanding students and some, such as Hyakujō, became Zen masters themselves. At least twenty-seven of them became great masters. Baso proclaimed that our life is Buddha and nothing else. Baso's life was nothing but Buddha: he was the right transmitter of Nangaku and was a great master.

We should clarify the meaning between "You should not go back to your home town." and "I will not go back to my home town." In the coming and going of the enlightened one, to the east, west, north, and south, there is no place to go or return to. There is no difference in going or returning. Going and returning are transcended so that going is the real living of oneself, the actualization of ceaseless practice. It is the enlightenment of oneself: that is why it was not necessary for Baso to return to his home town in Kanshu. There is ceaseless practice which is the real practice to find our true self, and there is ceaseless practice to not attach ourselves to trying to find our true self. Is it possible to discover ourselves by our deeds?

Old people may say the name of their home town, but if they live according to the truth, the name of the town itself is no different from the truth. How do Ejō and Baso teach? When we face north, east, or west, the entire world faces north, east, or west. What we experience mountains, oceans, sun, moon, and stars also experience. Thus we understand that we should not merely follow our own ideas.

Zen Master Daiman Kōnin, the Thirty-second Patriarch [the fifth Patriarch in China] was a right transmitter of the Buddha Dharma. He was from Obai. He was born without a father and took his mother's name, Shu. It was the same as with Lao-tsu who took his mother's name. From the time he was seven until he was seventy-four he taught the right Buddhist teachings, and finally he transmitted them to the Sixth Patriarch, Enō.

Enō spent nine months just grinding rice with a stone mill. At the end of that time, because Enō's practice was so outstanding. Daiman Kōnin gave the inka to him instead of to his disciple Jinshu. And that is how this right lifeblood^{EN-1} has been transmitted to the present day, and how the true Dharma has been ceaselessly brought to modern times.

Zen Master Tendō Nyojō, my late master, was from Etsu. He concentrated his studies of Buddhist teachings at Kagonji Temple of the Tendai sect. He found, however, that studying the teachings was not enough to learn the true Buddhist Way. When he was nineteen he abandoned his studies of the teachings and concentrated on practising the Buddhist Way, not stopping even after he was seventy years old.

Emperor Nei of the Southern Sung Dynasty, respected his devotion and gave him the title of Zen Master, and presented him with a purple robe. Tendō Nyojō could not accept these gifts, and he sent the Emperor a letter of apology saying so. Monks and lay people came from all over the country to him: they respected him and praised him with one voice. The Emperor, in honour of his deep and serene practice, held a special tea ceremony for him. This was an unheard of honour for the Emperor to bestow.

Tendō Nyojō considered that the worst thing was to love fame and fortune. He thought this was worse than breaking any precept or commandment. He believed the latter to be only a temporary mistake which could be rectified through repentance. The former, however, was a curse which would stay with one for one's whole life. If you want to study how to practice, especially Zen practice, do not abandon the basic spirit of seeking the Buddhist Way. We should not, through ignorance, be proud. Not to accept fame is ceaseless practice, and abandonment of fortune is also ceaseless practice.

From the First Patriarch, Bodhidharma, to the Sixth Patriarch, all Patriarchs were given the title Zen Master by the emperor after their deaths. While they were alive, they did not care for fame and glory and abandoned life and death based on fame and fortune. You should pray for the practice of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Do not be greedy, coveting fame and gain, do not think of your small ego like an animal does.

Abandoning fame and fortune is difficult for all terrestrial beings, even for Buddhas and Patriarchs. Some people seek for and love fame and gain because they say they want to save people. This is a malicious viewpoint. Even though they think they are practising the Buddhist Way, they are far from it. Indeed they are slandering the Buddha. If what they say were true, then the Buddhas and Patriarchs, who do not covet fame and gain, could save no one.

We should love people, without greed. There are many ways to help people, and there are ways to save people without being covetous. To say we are saving people, yet not actually doing so is evil. If we are 'saved' by such people we may go to hell and will feel regret at having to spend a life in darkness. We should never say nor think that such foolishness can help people.

Thus, my late master Nyojō, when he was given the title of Zen Master and a purple robe, merely sent back a letter apologizing for his inability to accept them. Such an outstanding story as this must be re-told today so that followers can study and learn by this experience. The meaning of "I met my master" is "I met my real master."

My late master left his home town when he was nineteen years old, and he travelled to many places looking for a master until he was sixty-five years old. He was never too lazy to practice and search for enlightenment. He avoided emperors, ministers, and all governmental officials. He rejected the title of Zen Master and the purple robe, and never wore a colourful kesa all his life. He always wore a black robe and kesa when giving his talks and instructions to disciples in his room.

EN-1 In Japanese, Kechimyaku. This means 'blood vessel': the transmission of the teachings is often compared to a blood vessel, and is the unbroken succession of teaching from master to disciple especially in the Zen and esoteric schools of Buddhism.

One day, he taught his disciples thus: "When you learn the way to do Zazen, it is primarily necessary to have do shin^{1-EN}. To have doshin is the first key to the Way. For the past two hundred years, the Buddhist Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs has not flourished very much. This is sad. As a result, few people really know how to express the real meaning of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. When I stayed at Kinzan, I met a man named Tokko Bushō who was in charge of the granary. Once he gave a speech, saying: 'It is not necessary to study the words of others, especially when studying the Buddhist Way. It is better to study your own way.' He never practiced Zazen. Other monks copied him and also did not practice Zazen, so that the zendo was always empty. Tokko was busy taking care of his guests and his officials, concentrating on gaining fame and fortune. If the Buddha Dharma is as Tokko said [i.e. learn by yourself], there would not be any examples of people seeking the way to practice. In the Sung Dynasty, there were old and famous people, but most of them did not have doshin. They had been influenced by Tokko Busshō, so that, sadly, we could not find any true Buddhist teachings among these lazy people."

My late master Nyojō told me this story. When the descendants of Tokko Bushō heard Nyojō tell this, they bore no grudge against him, due to Nyojō's personality.

He also said: "Learning Zazen is to cast off body and mind. It is not necessary to burn incense, prostrate oneself, recite the name of Buddha, perform repentance or chant the sutras. If you concentrate on Zazen, your main purpose will be attained."

Truly, there have been so many people who have pretended to do Zazen, while calling themselves descendants of the Patriarchs. Instead, there are few priests who have held Zazen as their ultimate goal. In the whole of China, I would say my master Tendo Nyojō was the only one. People from all quarters praised Nyojo, though he did not praise them. Some priests who lived in great temples, however, did not know about Nyojo at all. Even though they were born at the centre of the world [China] they are like animals because they do not study what they should and spend their time uselessly. It is pitiful that such people, not understanding Tendo Nyojo, built up their own kind of Buddhism. Truly they have missed the essence.

My late master used to say to his students:

"I have searched for a real master all over the country since I was nineteen years old, yet I could not find one who could be a master for all people. Since I was nineteen I have been concentrating on Zazen, never missing one single day or night.

"Even before I became a full priest, I never talked with people from my home town because I did not want to waste time that I could have spent practising. I begrudged wasting any time that could have been used for practising and studying. Most of the time I stayed in the monastery; I never even visited other residents of the dormitory. Moreover, I have never spent time travelling around the mountains sight-seeing or enjoying the beautiful views. I just concentrated on practice and did not spend my time uselessly. When I was in the monastery, I not only practiced Zazen at the regular times, but also devoted myself to Zazen whenever I could find a good place, such as a high place in summer or a sunny one in winter. Sometimes, when I had time, I would carry my zafu and place it on a rock, or at the bottom of a steep cliff. Sometimes, I liked to sit in full lotus posture like Shakyamuni but because of doing so much Zazen, I developed haemorrhoids.

"I am sixty-five years old this year. Because of my age, my mind is getting weaker. Even in Zazen, it is not as sharp as it used to be. However, when I see students gathering from various places, I continue to stay on this mountain in order to direct and instruct them. I especially feel that the old priests do not know the meaning of Buddhist Dharma."

Nyojō spoke thus to his students because he had a deep devotion to the Dharma, not because he wanted to receive any gifts.

There is a story as follows:

There was a man called Choteiko who was a descendant of Neishū of the Sung Dynasty. He was in charge of troops and of farming in the country. He invited my late master Nyojo to preach, and afterwards gave him ten thousand silver coins for his speech. My late master said to Choteiko: "Because you invited me, I came down from the mountain and gave a talk about the Right Dharma which has been transmitted from the Buddhas and Patriarchs. I mentioned the deep meaning of nirvana and also prayed for the good welfare of your dead father. However, I cannot accept these coins because they are not necessary for a priest. I greatly thank you for thinking of me but I cannot accept the money."

Choteiko, the director, said:

"Priest, I am the most respected person among the relatives of the emperor and am respected wherever I go. I have many opportunities to gain treasures. Today you prayed for my dead father, and I would like to give you these coins as an offering from my father. So why do you not accept them? Out of great compassion please accept them as a small token of my gratitude and then I will feel happy."

My late master said:

"I understand your feelings and respect your good intentions. However, I have my reasons so now please listen carefully"

The director said, "I am happy to listen."

My late master said:

"I am very happy because you have grasped what I explained about the roots of Buddhist teaching." The director said:

"Truthfully, it was very meaningful and I was happy to hear it." Then my late master said:

"You are so clever that I hesitate to speak in front of you. But I would like to ask one more thing. I think you have had a good understanding, so would you please repeat to me the teaching I gave to you? If you can tell me what I told you, I will then receive the ten thousand coins. If you cannot, you must keep the coins."

The director, without pause, then said:

"It seems to me that you look well and I am very happy for you."

1-EN Doshin: the mind to seek the Way.

My master said:

"That is part of what I told you a while ago. Is that all you heard from me?"

The director then seemed to hesitate and my master continued:

"We will pray for your dead father. We will hold the coins until your father's judgement is made."

At this he made to leave and said good-bye. The director said as he saw him off: "I do not feel sorry that I could not understand your preaching; rather I feel very happy so see you."

Priests and laymen from all quarters praised the master. This story can be found in the diary of Hei who was assistant priest to Nyojo. Hei said, about this story:

"We have not seen before an old master who would not accept ten thousand coins."

And my master said:

"To look at and take gold and silver and jade is to be the same as mud. Even if you are given gold and silver coins, even though they seem to be gold and silver, you should not accept them. That is the real way of a true priest."

We can see this action only in our master, in no other. My master used to say:

"In the past hundred years, no one has spent their life only in Zazen. I hope that everyone will accept my ceaseless practice as their own and concentrate themselves on Zazen."

A man called Dosho, who used to be a Taoist, from Menshu in Seishoku, went to see Nyojo with five other people and said to him:

"I would like to practice under you, honourable Zen Master. I promise with my whole life that if you ordain us, we will never again return to our home town."

My late master was especially happy to hear this and permitted them to join the order. Nyojo had them do Zazen and samu^{1-EN}, just as the monks did, and put them next to the nuns in rank. This was indeed exceptional treatment.

A priest named Zennyō from Fukushū also made a promise to Nyojō:

"I will never take one step towards my home town, I will just concentrate on the great Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

There were many such students as these around my late master in China. There were no other such Zen masters, only my late master maintained ceaseless practice in a zen monastery during the Sung Dynasty. However, here in my country [Japan] people do not have such a tendency. This is lamentable. Even though I practice the Buddhist Way, I feel that other people should be ashamed if they do not practice. We should quietly reflect on the brevity of life, learn some words of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, and base our practice on those real words. That is the basic learning of Buddhist truth, and that is the practice and enlightenment of the Buddhist Way.

Buddhas and Patriarchs have one body and mind so that even one word is a part of this one body and mind. Studying the body and mind of the Buddhas and Patriarchs will help us obtain the Way in our own body and mind. When we obtain the Way in our body and mind, our life becomes the true life. So we obtain the Way in the very quick of our bodies and so become the Buddhas and Patriarchs, and even go beyond them. That is what even one or two words about ceaseless practice mean. So people who practice must not cling to fame, fortune, and profit nor should they wander around. If they do that, they will be able to obtain the ceaseless practice of the Buddhas and Patriarchs and pass it from one to another.

People who have discarded fame and fortune should continue the ceaseless practice of the Buddhas and Patriarchs as their own ceaseless practice, without any attachment.

Delivered on April 5, 1242, at Kannondōri-Kōshōhōrinji. Compiled and recopied on March, 8, 1243, by Ejō.

1-EN Samu: work.

17. IMMO

態度

“Suchness”

Great Master Kōkakudōyō of Mt. Ungo^{1-EN} was the chief disciple of Master Tōzan; Kōkakudōyō was the 39th Patriarch from Shakyamuni. He said to the monks one day: “If you want to get immo^{2-EN} you must become a man of immo. And since we are already followers of the Buddhist Way why is there any hesitation?”

The real meaning of this statement is that people have already manifested the Way, as they are, in their original nature. Immo is “It” – the incomparable form of the Buddhist Way that contains the entire world; indeed, it transcends all worlds and is limitless.

We are part of the entire world so why is it necessary to find immo? Immo is the real form of truth as it appears throughout the world – it is fluid and differs from any stable substance. Our body is not really ours. Our life is easily changed by time and circumstances and never remains static. Countless things pass and we will never see them again. Our mind is also continually changing. Some people wonder, “If this is true on what can we rely?” But others, who have the resolve to seek enlightenment, use this constant flux to deepen their enlightenment. However, we cannot get this understanding by any personal effort. This is very important. We are all originally “that man” (the man of immo) [because we already possess enlightenment]. Our actions can be understood as “that man’s” resolve to gain enlightenment. From the first we have the innate ability to become “that man.” Therefore, it is useless to worry about attaining enlightenment. Nevertheless, worry itself is already a step towards enlightenment. Do not be surprised to hear this. It is the only way to enlightenment.

The Buddhist Way is absolute. It cannot be controlled by anyone, nor totally comprehended by even an enlightened Buddhist mind. The working of the universal mind cannot be fathomed. Since you are already “that man” why worry about enlightenment? It is nonsense to do so. The very essence of all phenomena is enlightenment; the real nature of body and mind is immo – Buddha is immo. Just as we cannot separate ourselves from the earth when we fall, [we cannot be separated from the Buddhist Way]. Do not be troubled about this. There is no room for doubt.

There is an ancient saying that came from India and China, “If something falls to the earth it will surely arise.”^{3-EN} After you have studied yourself and attained great enlightenment the meaning of this saying will be seen to illustrate the principle of the liberation of body and mind. Therefore, if you are asked, “How can we accomplish the Buddhist Way?” you can answer, “It is like arising from the earth after you have fallen.” In order to understand this clearly you must be detached from the illusion of past, present, and future. Enlightenment is to transcend enlightenment; to go thoroughly into illusion is to transcend illusion and to arrive at great enlightenment. You are covered with either enlightenment or illusion; your condition depends on the principle of falling and arising from the earth. This principle is applicable in everything, everywhere, any time – India, China, wherever it is in all the Buddhas. Intellectual understanding is not enough, you must experience it. No matter what words of Buddha we receive, or what teachings we hear from the Patriarchs, if we receive it in the same spirit as they did, we share their enlightenment. We can then speak words that are not spoken in India or China. However, if you do not understand this when you fall to the earth you can never arise. When you fall you can only arise by emptiness; when you fall in emptiness you arise by the earth. This must be said for all the Buddhas and Patriarchs. If someone asks, “How far between emptiness and the earth?” you should answer something like this: “108000 ri^{4-EN}.” You cannot separate yourself from either the earth or emptiness. If you do not answer like this it means you do not know the Buddhist Way and do not have enlightenment.

Sōgya Nandai was the 17th Patriarch. One day he heard a wind bell hanging in the main hall and asked his chief disciple Kayashata^{5-EN}: “Which is ringing – the wind or the bell?” “Neither,” answered Kayashata, “my mind is ringing.” “What do you mean by that?” asked the master. “It is total quiescence,” said the disciple. “Good answer,” said Sōgya. “Who but you can transmit my teaching?” This is how the right transmission of the True Law was bestowed.

This question is actually concerned with the state of mind when neither bell nor wind is ringing. This is the standard we should follow for our study of the Buddhist Way. It began in India, was transmitted to China and has been handed down right up to the present time even though many have misunderstood it. Most people think Kayashata’s answer is about cognition based on sound. That is, if we hear the bell it is perceived by our mind. This is a mistaken view. People think like this because they have not been taught by a true master. Their interpretation is like that of a grammarian or logician. If we study like that we can never learn the profound meaning of the Buddhist Way. A true disciple of the right transmission equates this teaching with the Eye and Treasury of the True Law, nirvana, non-action (mu-i), samadhi and dharanis (mantras). If one is in a state of peace all things are in a state of peace~the mind, the bell, all relationships. The ringing of our mind is not the ringing of the bell or the wind; this is only true if we conceive of ringing from the perspective of one particular standpoint. Actually nothing special exists, and there is no need to have illusion. Immo exists where no questions are made by us.

Before the 33rd Patriarch, Zen Master Daikan Enō was ordained he lived at Hoshoji in Koshū. One day two monks were arguing. “The flag is moving,” one insisted. “No, the wind is moving,” the other contended. “Neither the wind nor flag is moving. Your minds are moving,” Enō told them and they bowed after hearing his explanation.^{6-EN} These monks came from India and did not really understand Enō’s explanation, not to mention share his experience of the Buddhist Way. They understood his words literally; consequently, they had no real meeting with him and could not be his disciples. Enō’s answer was an expedient because in reality the wind, flag and mind are in quiescence, i.e., nirvana. If you are a true disciple of Eno you should say “you are moving” instead of “your mind is moving.” Movement is movement, you are you, everyone is “that man”; that is immo, “suchness.”

Long ago, the sixth Patriarch was a woodcutter in Shinshū. He worked in the forests, valleys, and near lakes. He wanted to cut off the root of illusion but since he was so poor and his life was so busy he could not formally train in a monastery but had to practice Zazen under a pine tree. He had no Zen master. One day he heard this verse being chanted from the Diamond

1-EN Yün-chü Tao-Yin d. 902.

2-EN “Suchness”, tathatā. In this chapter it is a symbol of the completed Buddhist Way. This saying is from Keitoku Dentōroku, chapter seventeen

3-EN Keitoku Dentōroku chapter one.

4-EN One ri is about 3.75 kilometres, 2.3 miles.

5-EN This story is in the Keitoku Dentōroku. Samghanandi and Gayāśata (Samghayasas) were the 17th and 18th Indian patriarchs.

6-EN Tensho Kotoroku, chapter seven.

Sutra: "Arouse the mind without letting it settle anywhere." Although it was totally unexpected he immediately decided to enter a monastery. Eno did not realize that he possessed just one small pearl that would illuminate heaven and earth. His father died when he was young and he had to take care of his mother, but after he discovered his inner light he resolved to gain enlightenment and left her in order to search for a good master. It is very rare for a layman who has such a heavy obligation to forsake his parents and seek the Way. To the sixth Patriarch, however, nothing was more important than the Buddhist Way. Another factor is that Buddhist Wisdom seeks Buddhist Wisdom – if you have this wisdom you can quickly find the Way, but it cannot be learned from others or arise by itself. There is the story about the 500 bats who died in order to learn the teaching of the sutras. When they were found it was discovered that they possessed Buddhist Wisdom in their bodies.^{7-EN} The 10,000 fish who continually chanted the name of Buddha also possessed the Buddhist Wisdom in their bodies. Even though there was no principle of causality when they listened to the teaching they comprehended it easily. We can see in these two stories that Buddhist Wisdom does not come from outside. It is like the god of spring meeting spring [in other words, we should meet out true selves at all times]. Buddhist Wisdom is not contemplation, nor existent or non-existent mind. It is not concerned with large or small, enlightenment or illusion. [The sixth Patriarch was a woodcutter,] and had no interest in or desire to seek the Buddhist Way because he never knew what it was like. After he heard the Buddhist teaching he put his obligations second and forgot about his own welfare. This is why we say if you find Buddhist Wisdom you can immediately understand the teaching of Buddha.^{8-EN}

We are living within illusion, within the endless cycle of life and death, despite our potential for Buddhist Wisdom. This is like the relationship between a piece of rough stone and a finished piece of jade. Originally, the jade is just rough stone with no idea of becoming a finished piece. A man can take this rough stone and turn it into a finished piece of jade, but neither the original stone nor the finished piece anticipated their respective states. It is neither from the stone's perspective nor the finished piece's wisdom that they came into being. In the same way human beings and Buddhist Wisdom are unaware of each other yet can be enlightened to the Buddhist Way.

There is this Buddhist saying: "Doubt based on ignorance is a loss for all eternity."^{9-EN} Buddhist Wisdom itself cannot be said to be existent or non-existent; if it exists everything exists and vice-versa. Existence and non-existence are like the spring buds of a pine tree or the withering of an autumn chrysanthemum. In a state of ignorance there is a tendency to doubt this and almost everything else. This is a great loss. Yet the Buddhist Way and Buddhist Wisdom appear all through the universe – we cannot say that only we possess it. The entire universe itself is Truth, and this Truth cannot belong to any one person or thing: it contains nothing extra and is the incessant source of life. "No matter how much we doubt or go astray, still there is only the Buddhist Way in every world of the Buddha." All things appear as their own eternal life. Wisdom and ignorance appear to be in opposition like the sun to the moon, [but they ultimately transcend this opposition].

The sixth Patriarch realized this. He went to Mt. Obai and became the disciple of Zen Master Daiman. Daiman^{10-EN} told him to work in the rice polishing hut. Eno worked there for eight months polishing rice day and night. One night Daiman came into the hut and asked, "Isn't the rice polished yet?" Eno replied, "Yes, but I'm not done sifting it." Daiman then hit the mortar three times with his staff. Eno shook the rice bag three times. At this moment master and disciple became one. We do not know the exact circumstances of this transmission but we do know that Eno actualized his master's teaching and received his master's kesa.

For some reason, Yakusan asked Great Master Sekito Musai of Mt. Nangaku, "I have almost mastered the teaching of the three vehicles and twelve schools. However, I heard that there is a school in the south that teaches 'Direct pointing to the heart of man, seeing into one's nature and becoming a Buddha'. I cannot grasp its meaning, O Master; please have compassion on me and explain it."^{11-EN} Yakusan was a commentator on the sutras and well versed in their teachings. He should know everything there is to know about Buddhist teaching. Long ago, study of the Buddhist Way meant clarification of the sutras. However, present-day people are so foolish that they insist on interpreting the Buddhist teaching from their own point of view and try to grasp its essence through the intellect and study. This is not the proper method. Sekito replied to Yakusan's question like this: "Immo cannot be gained; Immo cannot not be gained. Neither can be gained. What can you do?" Sekitō's immo cannot be expressed by any number of words; all the expressions in Sekitō's answer go beyond our limited understanding; his enlightenment surpasses enlightenment.

The sixth Patriarch once asked Zen master Nangaku Ejō, "What and how does Immo come?"^{12-EN} Here, "What and how" is not just a simple question. It transcends comprehension; it is asking how all things exist. We should know that this is "it," immo – it actualizes the truth without any doubt.

This was delivered on March 26, 1242, at Kannondōrin, Kōshōhōrinji. Recopied by Ejō on April 14, 1243, in the chief disciple's quarters.

7-EN Saiyuki chapter two.

8-EN Lotus Sūtra, Yakuyoyubon.

9-EN ibid., Hōbenbon.

10-EN The fifth Patriarch Kōnin.

11-EN Rentōiyō, chapter nineteen. Yueshan (d. 834) and Shih t'ou (700-790).

12-EN Tensho Kōroku, chapter five.

18. KANNON

観音

“The Bodhisattva of Compassion”

Great Master Ugan Mujū visited Master Shūitsu of Mt. Dōgo^{1-EN} and asked him, “Why does Daihi Bodhisattva have so many hands holding various instruments and have eyes on every finger?” Dogo answered, “It is like someone who falls off his pillow during the night and gropes for it while still asleep.” Ugan said, “I understand completely.” Dōgo then asked, “What do you understand?” Ugan replied, “Does Daihi have hands and eyes all over its body?” Dogo said, “You have spoken properly but it is not enough.” Ugan asked again, “I only know what I answered. What else do you want?” Then Dōgo said, “The entire body of Daihi is hands and eyes.”^{12-EN}

There are many stories about this Kannon who attained the Way, but none can be compared to this one. Here Daihi Bodhisattva is the same as Kanzeon, or sometimes called Kanjizai Bodhisattva. Kanzeon is respected as the father and mother of all the Buddhas, and therefore not inferior to the Buddhas as people sometimes think. Kanzeon had been enlightened in a previous world, where he was called Shōbōmyō Nyorai.

Some Buddhist sects venerate Kannon while others do not; many people who do worship Kannon only venerate the limited idea of one or two Kannon. Both Ugan and Dōgo are concerned with all the manifestations of Kannon and their interpretation is the one we should follow. They are concerned with the unlimited aspects of Kannon, not with conceptions like Kannon’s twelve faces or his thousand hands.

When Ugan said, “Why does Kannon have so many hands and eyes?” by “many” he meant countless numbers, and Dōgo, s reply, “Your answer is not quite enough,” meant that we should never think that anything is totally completed or finished. Keep this in mind.

Ugan and Dōgo were the two best disciples of Yakusan and knew each other for more than forty years. They had studied and investigated various forms of practice, ancient and modern. Therefore, we should pay particular attention to their exchange here about Kannon. They are concerned with Kannon’s hands and eyes and if we study this dialogue closely perhaps we can learn to utilize our own hands and eyes properly – what their function is, how they work, what they experience, etc.

The real meaning of “It is like someone at night groping for his pillow while still asleep” is this: Kannon Bodhisattva is always using his hands to embrace everyone without discrimination. Dōgo’s expression is rather strange but we must realize that this is only an illustration. “Night” has a special meaning not related to “night” in the sense of “night” and “day.” Dōgo is not concerned with groping for, or pushing or pulling the pillow; all these belong to discrimination. Also we should understand that there is no distinction between “eyes” and “night.” The action of groping for the pillow has no limitation. If there is an unconscious action to replace the pillow, perhaps there is also a reflex action of looking back for it. And “night” itself has its own activity. This total freedom of activity is the world of hands and eyes, and every function is gathered there.

In order to clarify this point we must consider why Daihi Bodhisattva has so many hands and eyes. It can be said that this Bodhisattva is hands and eyes. How does he use his hands and eyes? Kannon’s hands and eyes are not in opposition to his other attributes; rather, he utilizes them freely, as if he is completely hands and eyes. It is easy to see why we say that the entire body of Kannon is hands and eyes – and they are not limited to any ideas of self, mountains and rivers, sun faced Buddha and moon faced Buddha, or that our mind is the Buddha.

Ugan said, “I understand completely.” He understood Dōgo, s question. “How do we use our hands and eyes” should be understood as the function of truth, that is, our original nature working through our body as hands and eyes. Ugan’s realization is an exclamation of the Buddhist Way. We should strive to actualize this spirit in our everyday life. When Dōgo asked, “Do you understand?” he was trying to emphasize to Ugan that “My understanding is your understanding!” This method is the correct manner to practice the Buddhist Way.

Later on, many people thought that Ugan meant that Kannon’s entire body is literally all hands and eyes. They were mistaken. Even if the body included the entire world neither hands nor eyes could cover it. The unlimited activity of hands and eyes is not bound by any sort of observation, behaviour, or words. Hands and eyes are beyond number like the means of proclaiming the Law to save sentient beings. Neither can be counted. This is Ugan’s main point. He wanted to show that the activity of hands and eyes transcend the body and we should use them as Kannon does, without discrimination or attachment.

When Dōgo told Ugan that his answer was pretty good but still only 80 or 90 percent of the complete answer he implied that the meaning of Buddhism cannot be totally expressed by using words. In order to express the entire truth billions of words would be required; Ugan is so far advanced that he can express 80 or 90 percent by only using a few. While it is better to use billions of words to express the truth than not to use any, Ugan’s method is the best. If you agree with some people that an 80 or 90 percent answer is not enough then you should realize that if this were so the Buddhist Way could not be transmitted. Even 80 or 90 percent has countless meanings.

Next we have Ugan’s statement: “My understanding is like this. How about yours?” Ugan approved Dōgo’s 80 or 90 percent interpretation – this dialogue contains not only words but a deeper meaning, so do not think that Ugan was saying that he was unable to answer further. Dogo meant that the body itself is hands and eyes by his answer, “The entire body is hands and eyes.” That is, hands and eyes work through the body and can be utilized endlessly. If you happen to be questioned how to use your body and mind more effectively perhaps you can answer something like this: “By all-embracing activity, body and mind working together.” Ugan’s “complete body” and Dōgo’s “entire body” cover the truth; and we should not be concerned with the difference in their expression.

Shakyamuni’s conception of Kannon has a thousand hands and eyes, twelve faces, thirty-three different kinds of bodies, and 84,000 forms; but Ugan’s and Dōgo’s have countless hands and eyes. Yet there is little difference between them. If we have learned the meaning of Ugan’s and Dōgo’s Kannon we can see that all the Buddhas manifest 80 or 90 percent of his glory.

This was delivered to the monks on April 26, 1243.

I decided to explain about Kannon because the interpretation of Ugan and Dogo surpasses any of the others handed down

1-EN Yunyen and Taowu, (c. 800) disciples of Yakusan (Yueshan d. 834).

2-EN Shōyōroku case fifty-four

since Shakyamuni. Great Master Yoka Shingaku^{3-EN} said: "Kannon is called Nyorai or Kanjizai because he cannot be attached to any particular standpoint—he always has absolute freedom." Nyorai and Kannon have different forms but the same essence. There is a famous koan about Kannon's hands and eyes between Mayoku and Rinzai. This koan tries to show the limitless activity of Kannon's hands and eyes.^{4-EN} Unmon's saying is also famous: "Look at the form to clarify the mind, listen to the voice to enlighten the Way."^{5-EN} Kanzeon Bodhisattva, in his real essence, sees our true form and hears our real voice. All the forms and voices in this world are Kanzeon Bodhisattva. Then there is this well-known saying of Zen Master Hyakujo: "Kannon enters the Truth."^{6-EN} Entsu Kannon was one of the twenty five Bodhisattvas who gathered around Shakyamuni as recorded in the Ryoga Sūtra, and in the Lotus Sūtra Fumonjigen Kannon is mentioned. Kannon's have walked together with the Buddhas everywhere on this earth so these only represent one or two of the limitless Kannon's.

Transcribed in the summer of 1244.

3-EN Yungchia d. 713. A disciple of the six Patriarch's. This annotation is from his work the Shodoka (Chengtaoke).

4-EN In the Rinzai Roku.

5-EN From the Gotoegen, chapter on Ummon.

6-EN Pai-chang Huai-hai (749-814). This saying is recorded in the Keitoku Dentōroku, volume six, the chapter on Hyakujo.

19. KOKYŌ

古鏡

“The Ancient Mirror”

That which all the Buddhas and Patriarchs transmit to each other is the Ancient Mirror [kokyō]. The Ancient Mirror and the Buddhas are one body; outside the Mirror there are no Buddhas, and outside the Buddhas there is no Mirror. The seer and the seen, the reflected and the reflector, are one; practice and enlightenment are one. Everyone can become the Ancient Mirror and can perceive the Ancient Mirror: it is the truth in all things. The action of the Ancient Mirror is totally actualized in all things and in all changing phenomena. All things are actualized at all times: the past is actualized, the present is actualized, Buddhas are actualized, Patriarchs are actualized.

The Eighteenth Patriarch, Venerable Kayashata, was from Matai in Central Asia. His family name was Uzzuran, his father's name was Tengai and his mother's Hōshō. One day his mother dreamt that a god appeared before her holding a great mirror. She became pregnant and seven days later gave birth to Kayashata. At birth, his skin was like polished jade and, without being first washed, he was naturally pure. From childhood, he preferred quiet places, and his manner of talking was different from that of other children. From birth, he had a pure halo around him, and this halo was a round mirror. It was truly miraculous. He was not born with this halo, but it appeared at the moment of his birth in front of him, as if it were a natural accessory.

The nature of this halo was extraordinary. When he moved forward, it was as if he were holding it in both hands. However, it did not cover his face. When one saw him from the back, the halo was on his shoulders, but it did not hide his body. When he was sleeping, it was on top of him, just like a canopy. When he was sitting, the halo was in front of him. In other words, it followed all of his movements, but this was not all. In the halo he could see the deeds of all Buddhas from ancient to present times and, moreover, all things celestial and terrestrial. It was clearer to look in this halo to understand the past and present than to read the sutras. However, once he became a monk and took the precepts, the halo did not appear, and people from both near and far thought it was very strange. In this world there are, indeed, few like him, and we must consider and reflect on the fact that even among such respected figures there are none his equal. Moreover, we must realize that the teaching of the sutras is written in the stones and trees and that there is knowledge which is spread through the fields and countryside. All must be the halo. Accordingly, this writing is the halo.

One day, when he was walking around the country, he met Honourable Sōgya Nandai [the Seventeenth Patriarch] and stood before him. Sōgya Nandai asked him “What do you have in your hands?” We should examine this carefully because it is not just a simple question.

Kayashata answered:

“The great halo of all Buddhas and Patriarchs which has no imperfections nor impurities. You and I can see it: the eye of our mind is the same.”

If we consider that Sōgya Nandai had the great halo of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, it is because he possessed wisdom as clear as the great halo. All Buddhas learn and are enlightened with this halo, and all Buddhas are reflections of the halo.

The great halo is not wisdom, nor truth, nor essence, nor form alone. Among the various seekers of the Way there is the name “great halo”, but it is different from the halo of the Buddhas. All Buddhas do not possess wisdom alone, and wisdom alone cannot be called Buddha. We should study this: to clarify wisdom alone will not illuminate the Buddhist Way. Although we know that the great halo of the Buddhas is in our lives, we should in addition learn its principle. This is to say that this halo is not one we should attain in this world or the next; nor is it a Mirror made of jade, copper, flesh, or marrow.

Were Kayashata's words those of the halo or merely the explanation of a child? Such words were not learnt from a teacher or from the sutras but from raising the halo up before him. From his childhood, it was his custom to simply face the Mirror with total wisdom. The child facing the Mirror, and the Mirror itself were one, and, moreover, are so in past and future worlds. The great halo is none other than the virtue of all Buddhas.

The Mirror is unclouded inside and out, and there is no difference between inside and out or front and back. We can see both equally: we can see our eye and mind inside and out. They are the same for everyone. If there is inner form, the eye of the mind is there and can be seen. Everything that appears around us is one, and is the same inside and out. It is not ourself, nor other than self, but is mutually one and the same. Our self is the same as other than self; other than self is the same as our self. This is also so of mind and eye: the mind is mind and eye is eye. Both are mind and eye, and mutually each other. “Mind is mind” means the mind of all the Patriarchs, and “eye is eye” means that the eye of enlightened people is the same as that of all other enlightened people.

This is the meaning of Kayashata's words and is the reason for his meeting Sōgya Nandai. We should learn the meaning of this teaching and of the teachings of the halos of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. They are all descendants of the Ancient Mirror.

The Thirty-third Patriarch, Zen Master Daikan, while he was practising at the meditation hall on Mount Ōbai, gave the following gatha to his master:

Bodai is essentially not like a tree,

Nor is it like a bright mirror.

Originally not one thing exists

So where can dust alight?

We should clarify the real meaning of this verse. People called Zen Master Daikan "Ancient Buddha", and Zen Master Engo said, "I respect the Ancient Buddha on Mount Sōkei." We should see that the stage of clear Mirror indicated by Daikan is shown by: "Originally or deception. We should see that there is no break in the waters of the ocean.

In the phrase "not like a bright mirror" we find the true essence, and we should clarify the main point of this expression. It is that when the Mirror is clear, everything is clear. The clear Mirror reflects the true form, and when everything is reflected, nothing remains. Furthermore, when there is no single defilement in the Mirror, there is none anywhere in the world. We must learn this: the world is not a world of defilement; it is nothing other than the Ancient Mirror.

A monk asked Zen Master Nangaku Ejō:

"If we make an image of the Buddha in the Mirror, where will the light reflect?"

The master replied:

"Where was your face before you became a monk?"

The monk asked:

"If it is not in the Buddha image, why is it not reflected?"

The master answered:

"It is not reflected. However, the true nature of the Mirror does not change."

Although this does not show the true nature of such a Buddha image, we will, if we search for the true meaning of the Mirror, find it in the words of Nangaku. The Mirror is neither gold nor jade, nor is it shiny, nor does it possess any form. When it becomes one with form, this is truly the ultimate stage of the Mirror.

The meaning of the question ["Where will light reflect?"] is that the Mirror itself makes form. That is to say, the image reflected is in itself made by the Mirror, and is the Mirror.

The master's question ["Where was your face before you became a monk?"] means that the Mirror reflects the Mirror and asks which side is our true one?

Zen Master Nangaku's words "It is not reflected; however, the true nature of the Mirror does not change" mean that there is no reflection or deception. We should see that there is no break in the waters of the ocean nor in its depths. It is unbreakable and immovable. Further, we should learn the principle that, from the image the Mirror is formed. When we understand this, everything will become illuminated and clear, with no obstructions.

Great Master Seppo Shingaku once said to his disciples:

"To experience our real selves is the same as facing the Ancient Mirror. Whatever appears is reflected."^{1-EN} Then Gensha asked him:

"If all of a sudden a clear Mirror appears, what happens?"

The master answered:

"Whatever is there will be hidden."

Gensha said:

"I doubt that."

Seppo asked:

"What is your view?"

Gensha said:

"Ask me the question."

Seppo asked him:

"If all of a sudden a clear Mirror appears, what will happen?"

Gensha said:

"It will break into many pieces."

We should carefully think about what Seppo means and should, further, think about what the Ancient Mirror of Seppo is.

The meaning of "it is the same as facing the Ancient Mirror" is that one form transcends all opposition: there is neither inside nor outside. It is our pure self: in other words, self will be cast off.

"Whatever appears will be reflected" means that if someone with a red beard comes, he will be reflected, and if a Chinese comes, he will be reflected. It is said that the Chinese have been in the world since its very beginning, but what Seppo actually means is that a person who has the virtue of the Ancient Mirror will be manifest. By "Chinese" is meant not only Chinese, but it is a symbol for the realm of enlightenment.

When Seppo said "Whatever is there will be hidden" he means that the Mirror moreover hides itself.

Gensha's "It will break into many pieces" may indeed show the truth, but I wish to ask Gensha to bring back the pieces, and to return the clear Mirror to me. Can he do so?

At the time of Emperor Kō, there were twelve Mirrors. According to his ancestors, these came from heaven, but it was also said that Kōseishi of Mount Kōdō gave them to mm. The principle of these twelve Mirrors was that they were used in turn in each of the twelve hourly, monthly, and yearly cycles. It was said that the Mirrors were the sutras of Kōseishi. When they were given to Emperor Kō, all time was seen in the Mirrors: both past and present were shown. By looking at the twelve

1-EN Literally: If a foreigner comes, a foreigner is reflected. If a Chinese comes, a Chinese is reflected.

hours in these Mirrors, he could clarify past and present. In this, twelve hours stands for the twelve forms of Mirror, and the twelve forms mean twelve Mirrors. Time from past to present is spent as twelve hours, which indicates this principle.

This story is a folk-tale, but the principle is the same as mentioned before [of the Chinese being reflected], and is the form of each time, of the Ancient Mirror.

Emperor Kō asked Kōseishi of Mount Kōdō, "How do we purify ourselves and attain a long life?" asking by this for a special teaching of the transmission.

Kōseishi said, "The Mirror is the basis of the yin-yang principle in the world. When we purify ourselves there are three types of Mirror: heaven, earth, and human beings. We cannot see or hear this Mirror. If we keep our mind peaceful, our body will be peaceful and in harmony with it. If we keep our mind at peace and pure, we will not fall into illusion or disturb our spirit. This is the secret to attaining a long life."

Long ago, these three types of Mirror were used to govern the earth and regulate the great Way. Those who clarified the great Way were masters of heaven and earth. According to popular belief, Taishū [of the Tang Dynasty] had a Mirror made from the reflection of his people, and he knew how to control the country through the use of this mirror. He used one of the three kinds of Mirror: human beings. When we say he used human beings as the Mirror, we mean that he used to ask saints and sages, such as Gicho and Bōgenrei, about the past and present. In actuality, Taishū did not use his people as a Mirror. Using humans as a Mirror is to make a Mirror into the Mirror, to make oneself into the Mirror. It is to make the five elements^{1-EN} as the Mirror, and the five cardinal virtues^{2-EN} as the Mirror. To see the past and future of people, without being clouded by the traces of past and future, is the true nature of human beings as the Mirror. That, among people, there are those who see and those who do not is like the weather in the universe. This is indeed a natural phenomenon. Man becomes the Mirror; the sun and moon both are the Mirror. In China, the spirits of the five mountains [Taisan, Kasan, Eisan, Kōsan, and Sūzan] and the four great rivers [Yangtze, Hwang Ho, Junsui, and Saisui] keep the country pure: this is the power of the Mirror. The way of Taishū is to understand people and the movement of heaven and earth. It is not necessary to know everything intellectually.

In Japan since the age of the gods, three Mirrors and one sword have been passed down to the present age. One Mirror is at the Great Shrine in Ise, one is at Hinosaki Shrine, and one is in Najidokoro in the Emperor's Palace. Accordingly, we know that the Mirror has been transmitted in this country throughout history. The one who held the Mirror was the one who held power in the country.

According to popular legend, these three Mirrors were transmitted together directly from the gods, as their representatives. They were made from highly polished copper in accordance with the yin-yang principle. These Mirrors express the time as it comes, whether past or present; if it is present, it expresses the present, and if past, it expresses the past.

Seppō's teaching is that if people from Shiragi come, Shiragi is reflected, while Japanese people reflect Japan. Heaven will reflect heaven, and people reflect people. We have been learning about coming and reflecting, but we do not know the real meaning of "reflect" in reference to the Mirror: we just experience it. So we need not necessarily learn about such things as coming to this world or understanding this. The point of this teaching is that when a foreigner comes, he will be reflected. "Foreigner comes" means simply that he comes, while "foreign-er is reflected" means simply that. He does not come in order to be reflected. Even if the Ancient Mirror is simply the Ancient Mirror, we should study this point.

We should study Gensha's question "If all of a sudden, a clear Mirror appears what happens?" We must ask, what does "clear" mean? Seppō's teaching says that the people who come are not necessarily foreigners and that the clear Mirror does not only reflect foreigners and Chinese. "A clear Mirror appears" means that even if a clear Mirror comes, there will not be two Mirrors. When we say there are not two Mirrors, we mean that the Ancient Mirror is simply the Ancient Mirror and the clear Mirror is simply this clear Mirror. Both Seppo and Gensha's teaching certify that there is both Ancient Mirror and clear Mirror. We should use this to study the true nature of the Buddhist Way. Gensha's words "a clear Mirror appears" mean complete freedom and full and clear vision: we should study this.

Therefore if someone comes, accept and welcome them with complete freedom. Are the "clear" of the clear Mirror, and "Ancient" of the Ancient Mirror the same, or are they different? We should not think that the principles of the Ancient Mirror are in the clear Mirror [and vice versa]. We must realize that the words "Ancient Mirror" do not necessarily imply "clear." This teaching applies to all people everywhere. It is the same principle for the Patriarchs in India, and we should practice in order to understand clearly. The Buddhas and Patriarchs say we should polish the Ancient Mirror, but I wish to ask has this been done yet? We must diligently study the words and Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

To Gensha's question, Seppo answered: "Whatever is there will be hidden." The meaning of this is that when the Mirror is clear, both Chinese and foreigner will be hidden. What, however, is the meaning of "both will be hidden"? When the clear Mirror emerges, it absorbs the Ancient Mirror so that both disappear in form. If in the Ancient Mirror both the foreigner and the Chinese come and are reflected, why is it that when the clear Mirror emerges and clears itself, the foreigner and the Chinese, who were reflected in the Ancient Mirror, are hidden?

According to Seppō, s explanation, the Ancient Mirror has one face and the clear Mirror one face. When the true clear Mirror emerges, the foreigner and Chinese, who are reflected in the Ancient Mirror, have to be hidden: we must realize this point. The teaching that "Whatever appears will be reflected" means there is not coming or reflecting either outside of the Mirror, from its back, or in anything which appears and reflects at the same time as the Mirror; outside the Mirror there is neither appearing nor reflecting. We must understand this point. When the Chinese and the foreigner come and reflect, this is a coming and reflecting of them in the Ancient Mirror. When they are both hidden, the principle of the Mirror which we must be aware of is that we do not know the meaning of reflection or appearance. This is most confusing for us.

At that time, Gensha said:

"I doubt that." and Seppo said: "What is your view?"

Gensha replied, "Ask me the question."

We must not see this simply as a question from Gensha. Seppo and Gensha continued to question back and forth, demonstrating the closeness of their understanding. When Gensha asked Seppo to put the question to him, he was already in

1-EN Five elements: water, fire, metal, earth, wood.

2-EN Five cardinal virtues: benevolence, justice, politeness, wisdom, and fidelity.

an ego-less state.

To Gensha's question, Seppo said: "If all of a sudden a clear Mirror appears, what will happen?" repeating the question. These questions show the stage of the Ancient Mirror which master and disciple study.

The meaning of Gensha's "It will break into many pieces" means it breaks into hundreds of thousands of pieces. In other words, when the clear Mirror suddenly emerges, it will break into pieces. Studying these pieces is itself the clear Mirror. If we try to grab the clear Mirror, it will certainly break into pieces. Breaking into pieces is in itself the clear Mirror. We must not speculate that there is a time when it does not in the past or future break into pieces: it simply breaks. These pieces are nothing but pieces. When we say "pieces," are we talking about the Ancient Mirror, or are we talking about the clear Mirror? We must question this again and see we are not just talking about the Ancient Mirror or the clear Mirror. Even if we understand the question about the Ancient Mirror and the clear Mirror, we should consider Gensha's view that the Ancient Mirror or the clear Mirror hides everything, and then all breaks into pieces. We must ask, what is the nature of those pieces? This is a deep stage, like the moon in the vast and endless expanse of the sky.

When Great Master Seppō Shingaku and Zen Master San Shōin Enen were walking together, they saw a group of monkeys. Seppō said:

"Each of those monkeys carries the Ancient Mirror on its back."

We should closely study what Seppō said. What were the monkeys Seppo saw really like? If we ask this question we may be able to understand, but even if it takes a long time we should not worry.

"Each of them carries the Ancient Mirror on its back means that the Ancient Mirror, even if it is that of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, and even when there is progress, is still the Ancient Mirror.

When we say that each monkey has the Ancient Mirror on its back, we mean that the Mirror has no defined size: it is simply the Ancient Mirror. The words "carries on its back" are, for example, like that which is on the back of a Buddha image. That which is on the back of the monkeys is the Ancient Mirror. What kind of glue has been used for this? Try answering this: if what is on the back of the monkey is the Ancient Mirror, what is on the back of the Ancient Mirror? A monkey? What is on the back of the Ancient Mirror is the Ancient Mirror, and what is on the back of the monkey is the monkey. The words "each carries the Ancient Mirror on its back" are not fiction, but the manifestation of truth. But, what is it we are talking of – is it a monkey or an Ancient Mirror? Are we monkeys? Or are we not monkeys? Is there any point in asking? Whether we are or not, neither we nor others know. The point is that we are simply ourselves and it is not necessary to search any further.

Sanshō said:

"We cannot name things which are eternal. Why is it called the Ancient Mirror?"

Mirror, it will certainly break into pieces. Breaking into pieces is in itself the clear Mirror. We must not speculate that there is a time when it does not in the past or future break into pieces: it simply breaks. These pieces are nothing but pieces. When we say "pieces," are we talking about the Ancient Mirror, or are we talking about the clear Mirror? We must question this again and see we are not just talking about the Ancient Mirror or the clear Mirror. Even if we understand the question about the Ancient Mirror and the clear Mirror, we should consider Gensha's view that the Ancient Mirror or the clear Mirror hides everything, and then all breaks into pieces. We must ask, what is the nature of those pieces? This is a deep stage, like the moon in the vast and endless expanse of the sky.

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Sanshō said:

"We cannot name things which are eternal. Why is it called the Ancient Mirror?"

This is Sanshō's own interpretation of the Ancient Mirror. "Things which are eternal" means things which were present before the awakening of our mind, and whose form has not emerged since the beginning of time. "Cannot name" means such as the sun, moon, Ancient Mirror, and clear Mirror. "We cannot name" means that which we cannot name because it is eternal. If, after all, eternal things are not eternal, then Sanshō's words do not express the truth. However, "beginning of time" actually means the present. Without this present, we cannot practice. Indeed, "we cannot name things which are eternal" has great meaning. Why is it necessary to call it the Ancient Mirror? Everything is none other than the Ancient Mirror.

At this time, Seppō should have said to Sanshō, "It is the Ancient Mirror," but, instead, he said, "A blemish appeared." In other words, there was a blemish in the Mirror. The meaning of this is that we cannot name things which are eternal, so this is a blemish. A blemish in the Ancient Mirror is the whole Mirror, and Sanshō remained in the stage of the blemished Mirror, his understanding that of the blemished Mirror. However, we should learn that the blemish occurs in the Mirror, and that which produces the blemish is the Mirror. This is the meaning of learning about the Ancient Mirror.

Sanshō said, "Why do you hurry so, when you do not even understand what I said?" The meaning of these words is in the "Why do you hurry?" Does it mean today or tomorrow, ourselves or others, the whole world, or the Chinese Kingdom? We should clarify this thoroughly. "When you do not even understand what I said" has various meanings: some can be understood through the words themselves, some are not understood through the words, and others are understood without

words. Here, the principle of the Ancient Mirror is manifested in the words themselves. Is it not like Shakyamuni's words "I am enlightened at one and the same time as the entire universe." Is there any other way to express this?

When we do not understand, we use the expression "I do not know." It is the same expression which Bodhidharma used when he met Emperor Bu of Ryo. When the Emperor asked, "Who are you, who stands before me?" Bodhidharma, standing directly before him, answered, "I do not know." In this way, the subject may lie before us yet still elude our intellectual understanding. That it does not have any words does not mean that there are no words for it. It means simply that we do not understand and are not conscious of our mind at every moment. Clear understanding can only emerge when we cease being egocentric.

Seppō then said, "I, the old priest, was wrong." This expression can indicate one's own errors, but here it does not mean just this. "Old priest" here is akin to the venerable head of a household, someone who does not spend time only on trifling things, earnestly studying only the "old priest" [oneself]. There may be many different forms, there may even be some which are like devils, but we should study only one, and that is the "old priest." Buddhas and Patriarchs may emerge and be manifested at all times, but we should study simply this "old priest." The words "was wrong" indicate that he was busy doing just this.

One must remember that Seppō was a disciple of Tokusan and Sanshō was a disciple of Rinzai. These two distinguished priests, both from excellent lineages, one from Seigen and one from Nangaku, continued to transmit the Ancient Mirror. They are true paragons, we should study them at length.

Seppō once said to his disciples: "If the breadth of the world were one jō^{1-EN}, the breadth of the Ancient Mirror is one jō; if it is one shaku^{2-EN}, the breadth of the Mirror is one shaku."

At this time, his disciple Gensha pointed to the hibachi^{3-EN} and said:

"Then, how big is the hibachi?"

Seppo said:

"It is the same size as the Ancient Mirror."

Gensha said:

"Old priest, your feet do not touch the ground."

When Seppō calls the world one shaku, then the world is one shaku, and when he calls it one jō, it is one jō. Here we are using jō and shaku as ordinary, simple measures. If we study further, we know that normally we say that worlds are limitless, boundless, and innumerable, but even if we say this, it shows only a small part of our own world, as if indicating merely the next village. Thus Seppō said, when the world is one jō, the Mirror is one jō. When we study this "one jō," we should see it as one part of the world.

When we hear the teaching of the Ancient Mirror, it is like seeing a thin layer of ice, and no more. However, this size [e.g. one jō] is the same as that of the infinite world: this is their nature, and we should compare and clarify the two. Can they be equal?

The Ancient Mirror is not like a jewel, and we should not conceive of it as light or dark, square or round. Even if the world were one bright jewel, it would not equal the Ancient Mirror. The Ancient Mirror has no connection with foreigners and Chinese; it just reflects the horizontal and the vertical. There is no relationship to many or large: no relationship to size. When we talk of size, we usually mean, for example, two or three inches, or, in numbers, seven or eight and so on. However, in the Buddhist Way, when numbers appear in the realm where we no longer are attached even to enlightenment, they transcend their numbers whether it is two or three or whatever and in the view of Buddhas and Patriarchs, express totality. Thus one jō is the Ancient Mirror, and the Ancient Mirror's width is complete.

Gensha's question, "How big is the hibachi?" is an obvious one, and one we should study. It expresses the principle of the Ancient Mirror, and has deep meaning. When we think about the hibachi, what standpoint should we take? The hibachi he sees is not just one that is seven or eight feet high; Gensha is seeing it from the standpoint of a Buddha and thus takes a different view from normal. It is similar to the questions [put by Nangaku] "Who are you? Where do you come from?"

The question involves an answer, and the size of the hibachi already involves an answer. When we think of the expression "size," it will not be related to normal concepts of size. It expresses a transcendent principle which we must not doubt. We should learn the essence of Gensha's teaching, which is that the size and form of the hibachi are unimportant. We should not become attached to the expression "hibachi." We should break down our attachment, and this should be our practice.

Seppō then said: "It is like the width of the Ancient Mirror." We should quietly think about this. If we say the hibachi is one jō wide, we attach a number to it. To say that the answer "one jō" is right and the answer "It is like the width of the Ancient Mirror" is wrong is an error. We should think about the implications of "It is like the width of the Ancient Mirror." Many people may think that if we do not answer that the width is one jō, the answer will be insufficient. We should think about the meaning and character of the width, and about the Ancient Mirror as part of this world and our everyday life. Moreover, we should not forget to act in unison with the Ancient Mirror and experience it in our daily lives, earnestly maintaining our practice.

Gensha then said, "Old priest, your feet don't touch the ground." In this case, "old priest" does not necessarily mean Seppō, for it is not necessary to use the title "old priest" for Seppō. We should clarify the meaning of "feet." When we study it, does it mean the Eye and Treasure of the True Law, the universe, the infinite world, or the true essence [of the Buddhist Way]? How many things is it? One, just a half, or many millions? We should seriously clarify this.

He said "... do not touch the ground." What is this "ground?" The land which we call the great earth has long been called so in common parlance. However, it could be seen as the gate to the wonderful awakening of truth, and the 'Way of practice of all Buddhas. Accordingly, what kind of ground is this on which we place our feet? Does it exist or not? In the great Way is there even a speck of this ground? We should continually question this. We must question ourselves and others.

Feet touch the ground; feet do not touch the ground. Where does the view "feet do not touch the ground" originate? When

1-EN Japanese measure of approximately ten feet

2-EN Shaku: Japanese measure of approximately one foot

3-EN Hibachi: Charcoal fire brazier.

the great Way does not have a speck of ground, our feet cannot touch the ground, or not touch the ground. Accordingly, "Old priest, your feet do not touch the ground" expresses the stage of the "old priest" and the action of the feet.

A monk asked Zen Master Kokutaiin Kōkō of Mount Kinka in Bushū:

"When the Ancient Mirror is not polished, what is it like?"

The master answered:

"The Ancient Mirror."

The monk continued:

"What is it like after it is polished?"

The master answered:

"The Ancient Mirror."

So we should understand that there is a time when it is polished, a time when it is not polished, and a time after it has been polished, and all are the Ancient Mirror. Accordingly, when it is polished, the totality of the Ancient Mirror is polished. It is not polished by the Ancient Mirror itself, by mercury, or any other material. The Ancient Mirror is polished by the actualization of itself. When it is not polished, the Ancient Mirror is not dark. It is simply functioning as the Ancient Mirror. Generally, polishing the Mirror is in itself the Mirror, polishing tile is in itself the Mirror, polishing a tile is in itself the tile, polishing the Mirror is in itself a tile. If we practice and polish without any conscious effort and continue to practice limitlessly, this will be our everyday life and deeds of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Long ago, Baso of Kōsei studied under Nangaku, and Nangaku secretly gave Baso the seal of enlightenment. This is the origin of the remarks about the Mirror and the tile. Baso stayed at Dembō Temple continuously, earnestly practising Zazen for over ten years. We should reflect on the fact that though wind and rain came into the Zazen hut, and though it was often enveloped in icy snow, he never failed to practice Zazen. One day Nangaku visited Baso's hut. Baso stood and greeted him. Nangaku asked:

"What have you been doing recently?"

Baso replied:

"I have done nothing but sit in Zazen."

Then Nangaku asked:

"Why do you continually sit in Zazen?"

Baso answered:

"I sit in Zazen in order to become Buddha."

Then Nangaku picked up a tile and started to polish it using a tile he found by the side of Baso's hut.

Baso watched what he was doing and asked:

"Master, what are you doing?"

Nangaku answered:

"I am polishing this tile."

Baso asked:

"Why are you polishing the tile?"

Nangaku answered:

"To make a mirror."

Baso said:

"How can you make a mirror by polishing a tile?"

Nangaku replied:

"How can you become a Buddha by doing Zazen?"

People who have studied this important dialogue over many centuries have thought that Nangaku was encouraging Baso, but this is not necessarily so. It is simply that the actions of a great sage transcend the level of ordinary people. If a great sage [such as Nangaku] does not use such skilful means as polishing a tile, how can he guide men? Such great power as this is the essence of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Even if this is only a tentative method, it is still an important device. If there were not such devices, the Buddhist Way would not be transmitted. And furthermore, Nangaku continued to guide Baso ceaselessly. From this story, we can understand that Nangaku correctly and directly transmitted the true merit of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

We must understand that when the polished tile is the Mirror, Baso is Buddha. When Baso is Buddha, Baso directly becomes Baso. When Baso is Baso, his Zazen directly becomes Zazen, so polishing the tile to make the Mirror is the essence of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Accordingly, the tile becomes the Ancient Mirror and when we polish the Mirror we will find untainted and pure practice. This is done, not because there is dust on the tile, but simply to polish the tile for its own sake. In this, the virtue of becoming the Mirror will be realized. This is the basis of the practice and observation of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. If we cannot make the Mirror by polishing a tile, we cannot make the Mirror even by polishing the Mirror. Who understands this? In the action itself [polishing] is the realization of Buddha and the actualization of the Mirror. If we doubt this, are we not when we polish the Mirror mistakenly polishing it as a tile?

The situation, when he was polishing the tile, was not the same as any other situation. Accordingly, Nangaku's teaching was

exactly the right one; in other words, polishing the tile in itself makes the Mirror.

People nowadays should pick up tiles and polish them in order to make the Mirror. If the tile does not become the Mirror, people will not become Buddha. If they frivolously think that a tile is basically a clod of earth, then they too are basically clods of earth. If a human being has mind, then a tile also has mind. Who else knows that when a tile appears, there is a Mirror to reflect it, and that when a Mirror appears there is a Mirror to reflect it?

Delivered to the assembly of Kannondōri-Kōshōhōrinji, September 9, 1241, and recopied at Sandanrin, January 13, 1243.

20. UJI

有時

“Being-time”

An ancient Buddha^{1-EN} once said: “Being-time stands on the highest peak and lies on the bottom of the deepest ocean, being-time is the shape of demons and Buddhas, being-time is a monk’s staff” (Shakujo in Japanese), being-time is a hossu, being-time is a round pillar, being-time is a stone lantern, being-time is Taro, being-time is Jiro, being-time is earth, being-time is sky.”^{2-EN} “Being-time” means that time is being; i.e., “Time is existence, existence is time.”

The shape of a Buddha statue is time. Time is the radiant nature of each moment; it is momentary, everyday time in the present. Even though we have not calculated the length of day by ourselves, there is no doubt that a day contains twenty-four hours. The changing of time is clear so there is no reason to doubt it; but this does not mean that we know exactly what time is. Generally speaking, when someone doubts something he does not understand completely, it remains uncertain until it is resolved later on; by then, the doubts are different. The doubts themselves in each case are shaped by time.

All things exist in ourselves. Every thing, every being in this entire world is time. No object obstructs or opposes any other object, nor can time ever obstruct any other time. Therefore, if we have the resolve to attain supreme enlightenment the entire world will also be seen to possess that resolve at the same time. Here, there is no difference between your mind and time; you are related through the resolve for enlightenment. It is the same for practice and attainment of the Way.

The entire world is included in ourselves. This is the principle “We, ourselves, are time.” Study the principle that everything in the world is time. Each instant covers the entire world. If we can comprehend this, it will be the beginning of practice and enlightenment. When we attain this level, we have clear understanding of the significance of each and every practice: one blade of grass, every single object, each living thing is inseparable from time. Time includes every being and all worlds.

Ordinary people, unlearned in Buddhism, think that being-time sometimes takes the form of a demon, sometimes the form of Buddha. It is like the difference between living in a valley and then wading through a river and climbing a mountain to reach a palace. That is, the mountain and river are things of the past, left far behind and have no relation to living in the present. They are as separate as heaven is from earth.

This is not true, however; when you cross the river or climb the mountain, you are [time]. We cannot be separated from time. This means that because, in reality, there is no coming or going in time, when we cross the river or climb the mountain we exist in the eternal present of time; this time includes all past and present time. Crossing the river, climbing the mountain, living in the palace exist together, interrelated, in being-time. Demons and Buddhas are yesterday’s time, a tall Buddha image is today’s. Yesterday’s time is experienced in our present existence. It appears to be passing but the past is always contained in the present. Like this, the pine tree is time, the bamboo is also time.

Do not think of time as merely flying by; do not only study the fleeting aspect of time. If time is really flying away, there would be a separation between time and ourselves. If you think that time is just a passing phenomenon, you will never understand being-time. The central meaning of being-time is: every being in the entire world is related to each other and can never be separated from time. Being is time and therefore it is my own true time. However, there is movement of time in the sense of moving from today to tomorrow, from today to yesterday, from yesterday to today, from today to today, from tomorrow to tomorrow. This movement is the characteristic of time and the past and present cannot be duplicated [i.e., independent and not overlapping]. But the master Seigen is time, Ōbaku is time, Kōsei is time, Sekitō is time. Since we are in being-time, practice and enlightenment are also being-time. The difficult task of teaching others is, again, being-time.

Because the thinking of unenlightened people is not based on proper understanding of being-time they cannot discover the True Law. The True Law is within themselves but they do not realize it. Their ignorance of the Law causes them to transmigrate. Furthermore, such people think that the True Law is not in present time or within themselves and convince themselves that there is not even a possibility of any kind of eternal, perfect law. However, even this very limited view is also one part of being-time. People who think they are unenlightened must know this.

For example, we can calculate time as Uma no koku [11:00 am – 1:00 pm], Hitsuji no koku [1:00 pm – 3:00 pm], Ne [11:00 pm – 1:00 am] or Tara [3:00 am – 5:00 am]; but all these are only independent, instantaneous moments of being-time.

Both enlightened and unenlightened people are being-time. Demons and Buddhas are being-time. Indeed, being-time covers everything. It is pure Being; in it resolve, practice, enlightenment and detachment are acting, i.e., not different from being-time. The eternal present includes limitless space; there is nothing beside this.

Even if you make a false step, or lose your way temporarily you are still rooted in being-time because before and after you have lost your way, you are in, of course, being-time. Every living thing is rooted in pure, original Being. Do not think, however, that being is a stable concept; being encompasses all temporary lapses. Most people think time is passing and do not realize that there is an aspect that is not passing. To realize this is to comprehend being; not to realize this is also being [Both realization and ignorance are contained in being-time.]

However, if you do not understand being-time, you can never be truly detached. Even though you think you know exactly what you are, it is very difficult to have real understanding of oneself. Your self-conception continually changes as you discover more and more about your Real Self. If you have complete understanding then even the ideas of the wisdom of enlightenment or the status of detachment will be seen for what they are—tentative and delusive.

Remember, however, that being-time is not dependent on ideas; it is the actualization of being. Heavenly beings like gods and celestial beings are in being-time. All the things in the water or on the land are being-time. The world of life and death and everything in them is being-time; it continually exists, actualizing itself in your present experience. Everything exists in the present within yourself.

Continuous existence is not like the rain blown by the wind east and west. Continuous existence is the entire world acting through itself. Consider this illustration: When it is spring in one area, it is spring everywhere in the surrounding area. Spring covers the entire area. Spring is only spring; it does not presuppose winter or summer. It is the actualization of the wind and sunshine of spring. Continuous existence is like this. But continuous existence is not spring; rather, the continuous existence of spring is spring. If we fail to study Buddhism earnestly we will think that continuous existence is located far away and

1-EN Zen Master Yakusan Igen (Yueshan d. 834).

2-EN A hossu is a fly whisk; Taro and Jim are very common Japanese names – like “Tom, Dick, and Harry.”

things chase after it, and it keeps changing over long periods of time.

For some reason, Great Master Sekitō Musai made Master Yakusan Kōdō visit Zen Master Daijaku. Yakusan asked Daijaku, "I have learned the contents of the three vehicles and the twelve schools but I do not know the spirit behind the sūtras. Please tell me why Bodhidharma came from the west." Yakusan replied, "Sometimes we raise our eyebrows and blink, sometimes we don't." When Yakusan heard this answer he had great enlightenment and said, "When I studied under Zen Master Sekitō I could not understand at all. I was like a mosquito trying to bite an iron cow."^{3-EN}

Daijaku's sayings are very different from other people's. Here, eye and eyebrow symbolize mountain and ocean because enlightened people are in harmony with nature. If they raise their eyebrows they see a mountain, if they blink they may learn about the ocean. They possess the truth. But do not think that actions are important; whether you raise your eyebrows or not is not related to the truth.

The real meaning is always in being-time. Mountain is time, ocean is time. Mountain and ocean exist only in the present. If time is destroyed, mountain and river are also destroyed. From this standpoint, morning stars, Buddhas, the wisdom of enlightenment, and the transmission from mind to mind are enlivened by being-time. No being-time, and none of these things could occur.

One day Zen Master Kisei of Sekken^{4-EN} – the direct descendent of the Rinzai Zen sect and transmitter of Shūzan's teaching – told his monks, "Sometimes mind surpasses words. Sometimes words surpass the mind. Sometimes mind and words surpass themselves. Sometimes they do not surpass themselves." Mind and words are in being-time. Surpass and not surpass are also being-time. Coming-time is not coming; not coming-time has already come. It is like a donkey and horse: mind does not leave and words have already come; mind has already come and words cannot leave. Coming does not come from outside, not-coming has not yet come. Being-time is like this. Coming or not-coming should only be thought of as coming or not-coming. Think of mind as only mind and words as only words. They are the function of being-time.

The total penetration of being-time can only be accomplished in ourselves. Total penetration of being-time is complete activity. It is like the following example: When I go out to meet someone I meet him as another person, as a fellow human being and finally as someone possessing the same essence as myself. This is natural activity. If any of these are separated from being-time they could not exist. From the standpoint of practice, when we say "mind" is being-time, it is the occasion for the Buddhist Way to appear; "word" is the time to open the door of enlightenment. Coming-time is detachment; not coming-time is neither attachment nor detachment. If we recognize this we can find being-time.

The previous sayings are the words of Buddhas; the following is also very important: "Mind and words are between coming and going, not-coming and not-going; and they are also being-time." Clear understanding of this is essential. Raising the eyebrows or blinking the eyes is only half being-time or even an illusion of being-time. The beginning of study, the completion of study, the actualization of study and even not studying are being-time.

This was written during November, 1240 at Kōshōhōrinji and recopied by Ejō during the summer training period of 1243.

3-EN Rentōeyō, chapter nineteen. Daijaku is Baso (Ma-tsu).

4-EN Shê-hsüang, dates unknown.

21. JUKI

授記

“Prediction of Buddhahood”

The great Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs and its continual transmission from master to disciple is juki.^{1-EN} If we do not have proper study and the practice of the Buddhas and Patriarchs we cannot even dream about juki. However, juki is not only given to those who have awakened their Buddha-nature; it is given even to those who have not aroused their Buddha-seeking mind, or discovered their Buddha-nature. Juki is given regardless if there is a body or not. Juki is given to all the Buddhas and Patriarchs, and they all maintain and preserve their juki.

The usual interpretation is that one receives juki after becoming a Buddha. Do not accept that, nor expect to be given juki after you become 2 Buddha. When you are given juki you become a Buddha; when there is true practice there is juki. All the Buddhas have juki, their spiritual advancement has juki. And this is where we find juki in our body and mind. When we study and find the great juki, our Buddhist Way is also great. There is juki in our past and future self. There is a juki that can be known by ourselves and others; and there is a juki that cannot.

Juki is the actualization of self; indeed, it is actualized self. Therefore, what the Buddhas and Patriarchs have transmitted from generation to generation is nothing but juki – all things are nothing but juki: mountains, rivers, earth, and the great oceans. This is the only possible interpretation of juki. Juki understood in this way, is the “one word” [of enlightenment]: spoken, heard, and comprehended. It is the practice and teaching of enlightenment. Juki knows exactly how to move backward and forward. If the Buddhas and Patriarchs had not bestowed juki we would now be unable to sit in Zazen or wear a kesa. Accept those acts with a gassho; this manifestation is juki.

Buddha said that juki can be interpreted in eight basic ways: 1) One knows of his own juki, but others do not; 2) Others know, but not oneself; 3) Both oneself and others know; 4) Neither oneself nor others know; 5) People close to the person with juki know, but those far away do not; 6) People who are far away know, but those close do not; 7) Every one, near and far knows; 8) No one, near or far, knows. There are such diverse understandings of juki but do not think there is no juki in this stinking bag of bones [i.e., our body]. Nevertheless, do not state that unenlightened people cannot receive juki.

Generally speaking, most people think that juki is given when one completes his practice and becomes a Buddha. This is not the correct Buddhist Way. Hearing “one word” from a Zen master, or learning “one word” from the sūtras is the occasion to receive juki. In this state, our original nature, the Buddha-nature, emerges; this is the basis of goodness. To receive juki is to receive the essence of Buddhism. We should know that even a speck of dust has absolute value, limitless capability. Why then cannot juki be found in a speck of dust? It cannot be found in only one thing but is found in all things. Juki is practice and enlightenment, Buddhas and Patriarchs, practice and enlightenment based on Zazen, great enlightenment, and great illusion, is it not?

[Once Ōbaku said to Rinzai], “The teaching of my school will expand in your lifetime.” [Master Enō told his disciple Nangaku,]^{2-EN} “I am like you and you are like me.” Master and disciple are one; this is juki. It is the mark of Buddhist teaching and transcends all relativity. It is the transmission from mind to mind, the coming and going of life and death, the ten quarters of the world, and the present world with nothing concealed.

Once Great Master Gensha Sōichi was walking with his Master Seppō.^{3-EN} Seppō pointed at the ground in front of him and said: “This ground is suitable for a stūpa.” Gensha asked, “How high will the stūpa be?” Seppo glanced up and down indicating the height. “O Master,” Gensha told him, “you are the most fortunate monk in the world but why is it that even you cannot begin to dream about the juki given from Shakyamuni to Mahākāśyapa on Vulture peak?” Seppō asked in return, “How high is the stūpa?” “Seven or eight feet,” Gensha said.

Gensha’s question about Vulture Peak was not directed towards whether or not Seppō had received the juki of Vulture Peak; it is concerned with Shakyamuni’s saying, “I possess the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and the Serene Mind of Nirvana. Now I transmit this to Mahākāśyapa.” Likewise, when Master Seigen^{4-EN} gave juki to his disciple Sekito, Seigen received the same juki as Mahākāśyapa – i.e., Shakyamuni’s juki is in each transmission of the Way from Buddha to Buddha, Patriarch to Patriarch. When the sixth Patriarch, who lived on Mt. Sōkei, transmitted his teaching to Seigen, Seigen became the real Seigen by his reception of his master’s juki. Indeed, all of the predecessors of the sixth Patriarch directly transmitted their law through Seigen’s juki.

This mind of the Buddhas and Patriarchs is like the hundred grasses – pure and natural. Since the Buddhas are like the hundred grasses we ourselves are like the hundred grasses. But do you think you are always aware of or can see what you possess. What we are able to know is not necessarily possessed by us and what we possess is not necessarily known or seen by us. Do not doubt that we possess something like juki just because it does not fit into normal categories of thinking or visual perception.

The juki bestowed on Vulture peak was Shakyamuni’s jab’; it was bestowed from Shakyamuni to Shakyamuni. That is, juki is not given to people who lack understanding, but passes to people who already know they possess it. Here, there are no obstacles, nothing is lacking or extra. This is how juki is transmitted from Buddha to Buddha. Concerning this an ancient Buddha said, “All the Buddhas of the present and the past used a hossu^{5-EN} to teach the true meaning of east and west. This meaning is so subtle, so profound, how could it even be discussed if the Buddhas had not transmitted its principle?”

If we look closer at the real meaning of Gensha’s words we will see that his question was about the height of the stūpa. He expected a definite answer, something like 500 or 80,000 miles. But he was not angered by Seppō’s glance up and down, nor did he lose his resolve. Seppō’s glance is not Shakyamuni’s juki; the only answer that would be in accordance with Shakyamuni’s juki is “seven or eight feet.” I stopped thinking whether Gensha’s “seven or eight feet” was the right or wrong answer. In juki, it is good to have Seppō’s type of juki and also necessary to have Gensha’s type. Nevertheless, when we think about the height of a stūpa we must think by means of juki. Without having received juki the Buddhist Way can never

1-EN Being told by the Buddha that one will attain enlightenment; prediction of future realization of Buddhahood. In the Lotus Sūtra Shakyamuni assures many of his disciples that they will attain future Buddhahood.

2-EN Huang-po (d. 850) and Lin-chi (d. 867); Hui-neng (d. 713) and Nan-yuen (d. 744).

3-EN See Ikka Myōju.

4-EN Ch’ing-yiian (d. 740).

5-EN fly whisk.

be proclaimed.

If we comprehend, study, and proclaim the teaching that our own self is the Real self, the actualization of juki will be our koan. We must actualize in our body and mind the understanding that juki and the Buddha-darsana^{6-EN} are inseparable. In order to bring out the true meaning of juki all the Buddhas actualized enlightenment. The power of receiving juki is what brings Buddhas into existence. Attainment of enlightenment is the most important thing. In order to attain Buddhahood juki must be received by the egoless ego and the non-substantial self. This is how all the Buddhas are given juki by all the other Buddhas.

There are various ways to receive juki – by raising one or both hands, by seeing a blooming udumbara flower or a golden robe.^{7-EN} These actions have no power to enlighten by themselves, their efficacy comes from juki. Juki can be received either interiorly or exteriorly. If you want to understand the aspects of the interior and exterior self you must learn the condition of bestowing juki. The reception of juki itself is to learn the Way, then there is no instability. To receive this juki is to do Zazen, and then eternity is captured in a moment.

An ancient Buddha said, “One after another, people are becoming Buddhas and bestowing juki continuously.” “Becoming Buddhas” is the ceaseless transmission of the Buddhist Way – the bestowal of juki is the transmission of the Buddhist teaching. If you follow the current of the Buddhist Way then you yourself become a Buddha. This transmission of juki is linked together and passes from generation to generation. It does not create any specific conditions or consciousness in either body or mind but adapts to the development of time and place. We must study this. The appearance of all the Buddhas and Patriarchs and Bodhidharma’s coming to the west and the subsequent transmission of his juki develop according to this principle.

Similarly, such everyday activities as drawing water and carrying firewood should be based on juki. “Our mind is Buddha” is also an actualization of the state of detachment. Few people realize this. We should know that there are many levels of detachment, numerous ways of fulfilment and a variety of Buddhas. Therefore, one after another people are becoming Buddhas, attaining detachment, receiving juki, and proclaiming the Buddhist Way. Right transmission cannot be attained easily in the beginning but through practice it can be actualized in various ways. All the Buddhas and Patriarchs have actualized detachment, and bestowed the right transmission continuously. They have transmitted their juki from generation to generation without interruption.

An ancient Buddha said, “When I heard that juki is solemnly being given and received I was filled with joy.” This means that I too ‘am surely following the Buddha and hearing about others who are also following his Way and continuously receiving juki; this fills me with joy. Juki is transmitted continuously; this means “I receive juki right now.” Juki is independent of any kind of discrimination of past, present, or future, or of self and others. “Hearing” about juki depends entirely on the Buddha; it does not depend on others, not on the opposition between illusion and enlightenment, not on sentient beings, not on grasses, trees, or land. Only by following Buddha can juki be solemnly received and given. Then it increases continuously without ceasing and is accompanied by overwhelming joy in body and mind.

Therefore, since the body undoubtedly influences the mind and vice-versa, the joy we get from receiving juki permeates the world and the four directions of the universe—it is the supreme joy. Be assured that this joy – sleeping or waking, enlightened or unenlightened – is the true joy. It can be found by everyone but because it is so pure it transcends normal categories of thought. It is pure and serene and therefore passes from generation to generation.

Shakyamuni once told Yakuō Bodhisattva:^{8-EN} “O Yakuō Bodhisattva! There are all kinds of beings here: Countless gods of music, war, birds, snakes, and demons; human and non-human beings; monks, nuns, laymen and women; shamans, Buddhas, and other seekers who want to hear the teaching and gain enlightenment. Among all these beings gathered here, a few will listen to just one gatha or verse of the Lotus Sūtra and attain instant joy. I will bestow juki to those people and they will attain supreme enlightenment in the future.”

Innumerable types of beings – gods and humans, kings and disciples – were present and each has a different resolve or understanding of Shakyamuni’s teaching. Nevertheless, all can approach supreme enlightenment and through that enlightenment experience true joy. Further, it is the study or hearing of the Lotus Sūtra that gives them true joy. Therefore, all beings are forms of the Lotus Sūtra. “Gathered before Buddha” means to be within Buddha. Although humans and non-humans have different interpretations of any particular phenomena, they share the same essential nature; that is why Shakyamuni can give them his juki and they will ultimately attain supreme enlightenment.

Shakyamuni also told Yakuō Bodhisattva; “Even after I enter the final stage of supreme nirvana, I will still bestow juki to those who have experienced true joy after reading or hearing just one gatha or verse of the Lotus Sūtra and they will attain supreme enlightenment in the future.” What did Shakyamuni mean by “after I enter the final stage of supreme enlightenment?” Does he mean the forty-nine year period of proclaiming the Dharma? Or his entire life of eighty years? Here he meant his entire life of eighty years. Also, is it possible for someone who lacks learning or scholarship to experience true joy after reading or hearing just one verse or is it only for those who are wise or learned? If it is explained properly any human being can understand it so we should not be concerned whether or not someone has learning.

We must realize that when we study the teaching of the Lotus Sūtra through the profound and limitless Buddhist wisdom we can grasp its essence in just one verse or gatha and experience true joy in an instant. Then we receive juki which is the certification of the attainment of supreme enlightenment. We are then able to bestow juki to others and they in turn can pass it on to still others. But do not entrust careless or lazy people with juki. Strive to be one who experiences true joy from hearing just one verse or gatha of the Lotus Sūtra. Do not disregard the skin, flesh, bones and marrow of the true Buddhist Way. If you receive juki it will lead you to enlightenment and your resolve to gain liberation will be fulfilled. It must be done in this manner.

There are many ways juki is bestowed. [Shakyamuni] used an udumbara flower and [Saishō Dōsha] used a pine tree; others blinked or smiled, and [Master Taiyō Kyōgen] used a pair of straw sandals to bestow his juki.^{9-EN} These illustrations are beyond any intellectual understanding. Similarly, a master sometimes says “I am like juki” or “you are like juki.” [We share the same condition of enlightenment.] This principle has caused juki to be bestowed in the past, present, and future – in those three conditions of time both our juki and others’ juki are actualized.

6-EN The most profound insight of the Buddhas.

7-EN See the chapter Udonge.

8-EN The Bodhisattva of healing. Bhaisajya-rāja-bodhisattva.

9-EN Saishō Dōsha means the fifth Patriarch Kōnin (Hung-jen 643-716). Kyōgen is Hsiang-yen, dates unknown.

Vimalakirti said to Maitreya Bodhisattva,^{10-EN} "O Maitreya, you received juki from Shakyamuni and will attain supreme enlightenment in this life. What is the proper time to receive juki? In the past, present, or future? If it is in the past, the past life has already gone. If it is in the future, that life has not yet come. If it is in the present it is in a state of flux.

"Shakyamuni taught the monks that life in the present is birth, old age, and death. His teaching was based on the 'non-created' (mushō). We receive juki by means of the 'non-created'; it is the true form that transcends discrimination. In this stage there is no idea of receiving juki or supreme enlightenment.

"O Maitreya. What is your juki? Did you receive it through birth or death? If you receive it through birth how can truth be born? And if through death, how can truth die?

"All sentient beings, all dharmas are 'suchness' (tathatā). All the saints and sages are 'suchness'. All the Patriarchs including yourself are 'suchness'. Therefore, if you receive juki all sentient beings also receive juki because there can be no dichotomy of 'suchness'. If you attain supreme and perfect enlightenment all sentient beings also attain supreme and perfect enlightenment because all sentient beings are the real form of enlightenment."

Shakyamuni did not contradict Vimalakirti. Maitreya's reception of juki was already determined by Shakyamuni; so whenever sentient beings receive juki it has also been determined by Shakyamuni. If all sentient beings do not receive juki then Maitreya's juki could never have been given. All sentient beings [taken together] are the real form of enlightenment. This enlightenment confirms the enlightenment of juki. And juki is our present life. Therefore, all sentient beings share Maitreya's resolve to attain enlightenment and they simultaneously receive juki and attain enlightenment when he does.

However, Vimalakirti said that there is a certain state where receiving juki or attaining supreme enlightenment. This shows he did not understand the real form of juki and consequently did not understand the real form of enlightenment either. He also said the past has already gone, the future has not yet come, and the present is in a state of flux. But it is not necessary for the past to leave, the future to come, or the present to be in a state of flux [to gain understanding of juki]. We may use past, future, and present to describe the destruction, potentiality, or fluidity of things but we must be awakened to the past, future, and present which have not yet arrived. This is the principle by which we can attain enlightenment in birth and death. This is what we mean when we say "When all sentient beings receive juki, Maitreya receives juki."

Now I will ask this question of Vimalakirti. "Please tell me if Maitreya and all sentient beings are the same?" As mentioned before, when all sentient beings receive juki, Maitreya receives juki. If Maitreya and all sentient beings are not the same then Maitreya is not Maitreya, and sentient beings are not sentient beings, are they? And then Vimalakirti will not be Vimalakirti and what he says is senseless. Therefore, when juki confirms the real nature of all sentient beings then all sentient beings and Maitreya exist in their own true form. When you receive juki the true form of all things emerges.

This was written at Kannondōri, Kōshōhōrinji on April 25, 1243. Recopied at the chief disciple's quarters of Kippōji, Echizen, on January 20, 1245.

10-EN See Sokusbinzebutsu, note four.

22. ZENKI

全機

“The total activity of life and death”

The Great Way of all the Buddhas and the ultimate goal in Buddhism is detachment from life and death and the realization of enlightenment. We must be detached from life in life and death in death, i.e., when we are alive life is total activity; and in death, death is total activity. Life is the experience of life and death is the experience of death. Life and death together are the actual appearance of truth. The ultimate goal is detachment from, that is total immersion in, life and death. Understanding life and death are [the means whereby the Bodhisattva achieves salvation for himself and others].

Realization of enlightenment means true life-full, free activity. When we actualize enlightenment the full meaning of life and death becomes clear. However, this experience cannot be defined by consciousness or cognition, large or small, limited or unlimited, long or short, near or far.

Our present life is formed by this experience; in the same way, this experience is formed by life. Life is not coming or going, appearing or disappearing. Life is the total experience of life; conversely, death is the total experience of death. In the unlimited nature of Buddhist practice life and death have this special meaning. If we reflect on our present life and begin to have some awakening, gradually, the world starts to manifest its complete appearance. The entire universe is filled with the total activity of life. Each instant has total existence.

Life is like being in a boat. Even when we control the sail, rudder and oars, still, the boat has its own independent existence and is absolutely necessary for us to survive – we cannot live without it. On the other hand, the boat cannot function correctly without us. Man and boat are complete, harmonious, totally activated interdependence. When man and boat function together and form complete, full activity the entire sky, all the water, and every shore also belong to the same time and space—indeed, all the circumstances work together harmoniously. Like this, life and our existence function together.

Zen Master Engo Kokugon^{1-EN} said, “Life is the total activity of life; death is the total activity of death.” These two dimensions are not opposed; they exist together in one universal experience^{2-EN}. They are not concerned with conceptions of time and space. Universal experience is accomplished in life and death and nothing can obstruct it; but each individual experience of life and death, while not completely different, is not exactly the same as universal experience. Everything has its own life and death [and non-existence of life and death]. Through these we can discover the true nature of existence. It is like a man stretching out his arm or a sleeping person grasping for his pillow. It is the actualization of Divine Light and complete activity.

Life and death appear in each moment. They appear instantly, naturally, without thought. If we strive earnestly we can perceive their appearance. At the moment of realization, life and death become completely clear. Do not think, however, that there is no previous realization. Every moment contains total reality and is complete in itself. Recognize that there is continual realization, constantly renewing itself.

This was given at the castle of the Daimyō Hatanō Izumono Kami Yoshishige on December 17, 1242, and transcribed January 19, 1243, by Ejō.

1-EN Yuan-wu (1063-1135).

2-EN That is, all the worlds and all the universe. What follows is a paraphrase of the extremely abstruse and difficult original text.

23. TSUKI

都機

“Complete fulfilment”

Each quarter of the moon is complete within itself. The various shapes of the moon before and after [it is full] are perfect and complete. Shakyamuni said, “The true form of Buddha is universal emptiness;^{1-EN} and it is like the moon reflected in the water.” Here, “moon reflected in the water” means “water as it is” or “moon as it is”; “as it is” does not mean similarity but indicates the true form of existence.

That is, the true form of Buddha, the true form of the dharmakāya, is universal emptiness. Therefore, all wisdom, all worlds, all phenomena are universal emptiness. Each and every form of existence, as It is, is the true form of Buddha.

It does not have to be night for the moon to exist. It is not always dark at night. Do not rely only upon normal perception. Even if there is no sun and moon there will still be night and day. The sun and moon do not only exist in relation to day and night. They are Truth itself and cannot be limited by numbers such as one or two, 1,000 or 10,000. The moon cannot exist independently. This is the teaching of the Buddhist Way. Consequently, we should seek tonight’s moon and not be concerned with last night’s moon–tonight’s moon exists in the present, from beginning to end; it is independent of past and present with no discrimination of old or new.

Zen Master Banzan Hōshaku^{2-EN} said, “The moon of our mind is round and its light envelops all phenomena. But this light does not illuminate objects and being does not exist. Light and existence are extinguished together and cannot be named.” Banzan means that Buddha and his disciples have a mind like the moon; this is the only true definition of mind. No mind, no moon. “Round” is complete fulfilment, which lacks nothing. It is not one or two; it is countless; yet it does not only exist in itself—it is the absolute expression of “moon.” “Phenomena” is extinguished by “moon” [i.e., they are related as one]. “Phenomena” is “moon” and there is no opposition between them. It is called absolute transcendence: “light does not illuminate phenomena and being does not exist.”

If we attain this level of transcendence we can act in the proper manner. For example, if we must save sentient beings by taking the form of Buddha and appearing to be in illusion and teaching them the practice of enlightenment we will be able to do just that. And even temporary changes like balls of fire in the sun or moon light are still part of their true form. “Moon” itself is “Mind.” This is what clarification of the mind means to Buddhas and Patriarchs.

An ancient Buddha once said, “One mind is everything; everything is one mind.” Here, “mind” equals “moon” and illuminates every world. It has an eternal past and future and reflects all forms of existence—there is nothing beside “moon.” Body and mind, the illumination of the sun-faced Buddha and moon-faced Buddha, life and death coming and going – all these are “moon.” The four positions of the moon – up, down, right, left – contain the entire world. Even our daily behaviour is the activity [enlightenment] of the “moon”; it is like the illumination of the hundred grasses.

Once a monk asked Great Master Jisai of Mt. Tōsu in Jōshū,^{3-EN} “What was the moon like before it became round?” “There are three or four kinds,” the master answered. “What is it like after it becomes round?” the monk asked again. “There are seven or eight kinds,” Jisai said. This monk’s question is about the activity of the “moon.” There is not a full moon among the three or four kinds but there is in the seven or eight kinds. [Three or four, seven or eight symbolize discrimination.] “Full moon” is a symbol of Mind // bright and clear, penetrating everything: heaven and earth, ourselves and others.

Shakyamuni said to Kongōzō Bodhisattva: “Full moon is like the moving eye that sees waves on stationary water or the stationary eye that sees a torch make a circle of fire. Again, when clouds drift the moon moves; when a boat sails the bank flows by.” Strive to clarify the meaning of this saying. Do not be lazy. Do not succumb to vague thinking. It is rare to find someone who studies like Shakyamuni. Even so they are still far from complete enlightenment. Clouds and moon appear to move simultaneously, i.e., there is no distinction between beginning and end, front or back. Boat and bank flow together without beginning or end. If we consider the actions of human beings without regard to beginning or end, there is detachment; but if we cling to ideas of beginning or end we are not real people. Do not adhere to that opposition. Accept the drifting clouds and moving boat as they are; advance beyond limited ideas. Remember that the clouds have nothing to do with direction and the moon is not related to night and day, old and new. The boat and bank also transcend past, present, and future – they move in their own time. They appear continuously, without end.

Since foolish people think that the moon and boat are actually moving, what will happen to Shakyamuni’s Way? We must realize that his teaching is completely different from that of the world of men and gods. It is beyond comparison. The Dharma cannot by any means be compared with the clouds, moon, water or boat. Do not waste time and effort trying to learn about the clouds and moon, or the boat and bank. One movement of the “moon” is the Tathāgata’s enlightenment – it has no motion, inertia, progress or regression. The changing of the moon is not a metaphor but the real, complete form of a circle. It is beyond any movement of the clouds or moon and has no discrimination of past, present, or future. Like this there is a first moon and a second moon, but they are both “moon.” The time that is good for practice, memorial services and beneficial acts is “moon.” Sometimes “moon” is full, sometimes half-full. “Moon” is not controlled by change but changes itself. It gives and receives. It reveals its strength by appearing in different forms depending on its function.

Written down on January 6, 1240 at Kannondōri-Kōshōhōrinji. Revised by Samana Dōgen on the day before Kaisei [the day a training period ends], 1243, and recopied by Ejō

1-EN Koku, ākāṣa literally “space”. Here, and in the Kokū chapter of the Shōbōgenzō it has the connotation of non-substantial, liberated existence. It is cosmological sūnyatā, hence our translation, “universal emptiness.”

2-EN P’anshan, dates unknown. A disciple of Baso (Ma-tsu).

3-EN T’ou-tzu, a contemporary of Jōshū. Actually what Jōshū said was “Three or four moons are drunk” and “Seven or eight are vomited up.” “Vomited up” or “expelled” is a symbol of the moon’s true form, function, and actualization. What follows is a paraphrase of Dōgen’s interpretation.

24. GABYŌ

畫餅

“A painting of a rice cake”

All the Buddhas are enlightenment; all things are enlightenment. However, there are individual entities and individual minds. Although there seem to be no independent entities or individual minds when there is enlightenment, they are still completely actualized. When this happens all obstacles are removed. This is the teaching of the Patriarchs. However, when we study the Buddhist Way we should not be concerned with the idea that all the Buddhas and all things are the same. “If you master one thing, you can master everything.” To master one thing it is necessary not to create opposition or remove the real form of each entity. But do not try to force your non-opposition; that also is attachment. When your experience is completely detached you can properly utilize every form of existence. Like this, if you master one thing, you have truly succeeded and can master everything.

Zen Master Kyōgen Shikan^{1-EN} said, “A painting of a rice cake cannot satisfy hunger.” There are many kinds of people who study this saying – Bodhisattvas, demons, gods, and so on. They all possess different degrees of intelligence. This saying has been studied in the past and present, under trees and in huts.

Some people say that studying the sūtras and the commentaries is not the way to attain wisdom; it is like trying to appease hunger with a painting of a rice cake. Others maintain that the teaching of the Hinayana or Mahayana is not the way for enlightenment, i.e., it cannot satisfy the hunger for enlightenment. It is a serious mistake, however, to consider the teaching in the sūtras incomplete or unable to lead us to enlightenment. Anyone who holds that opinion cannot transmit the true Buddhist Way.

“A painting of a rice cake cannot satisfy hunger” is similar to other expressions like: “We cannot commit evil,” “Every act is a good one,” “Something is manifesting itself here,” or “At all times each individual existence accomplishes its extremes,” and so on. But these are only expressions and miss our real experience.

Only a small number of people have heard this expression about the rice cake and few of them have understood its meaning. I have asked several people about this saying but they were not interested and did not care about my explanation. The painting of a rice cake existed before our parents were born. The painting of a rice cake can be said to be everything: [Buddhas, sentient beings, illusion, enlightenment]. A rice cake, made from glutinous rice, represents both transitory and unchanging life. The painting of a rice cake actually symbolizes detachment, and we should not think about coming or going, permanence or impermanence when we look at it.

The equipment necessary for painting a rice cake is the same for a water and ink painting. If you paint mountains or rivers you can use blue paint, and for a rice cake you use rice cake powder. The activity of drawing and composition is the same. The rice cake is detachment and contains various kinds of rice cakes: sesame, vegetable, milk, baked, bean flour, etc.

From this we can see that a painting of a rice cake is not different from all the various forms of existence. Thus, this present rice cake is the same as a painting of a rice cake. Do not try to find a real rice cake outside of the painting, if you do not know what the painting signifies. A painting of a rice cake sometimes appears in its true form and sometimes it does not. The true meaning of a painting of a rice cake transcends the distinction of past and present, or birth and destruction.

The “hunger” that cannot be satisfied symbolizes the illusion of sentient beings. If we are “hungry” we are in a state of illusion, but if there is no more illusion we are detached from ideas of enlightenment or illusion and then no longer “hungry.” In this state a painting of a rice cake and hunger are not opposed to the condition of detachment. If you try to eat a painting of a rice cake – that is to say, try to gain or grasp enlightenment from outside – you will never be satisfied by it. In reality there is no hunger or rice cake conflicting with each other, but when you think you are hungry the entire world becomes hungry; conversely, if there is a real rice cake it exists everywhere.

When someone paints a picture he must use many different elements: in a landscape, perhaps a set of blue paints, many kinds of finely ground stones or Buddhas he needs golden powder, special types of mud, and should include the thirty-two aspects of enlightenment; a painting of a blade of grass also uses different materials; in addition, we should use the endless fragrance [of the Buddhist teaching].

If you have true insight you can paint, or be able to see, all the Buddhas in only one painting. We must discover what is a Buddha painting, what is a rice cake painting. Where are stones, crows, turtles? Where are iron pillars, and the natural laws of mind and body? We must clarify this in detail. If we study like this we will be able to see that life and death, coming and going, Buddha’s incomparable enlightenment, and the entire universe are paintings.

An ancient Buddha wrote [this verse about Shakyamuni’s enlightenment on a landscape painting of snow-covered mountains]: “Enlightenment was attained, and white snow covered the earth but still green mountains can be seen. This painting, on one sheet of paper, expresses the world of enlightenment.” This verse is a hymn of detachment; they are the words of Shakyamuni’s enlightenment. A high level of detachment was painted on a small canvas of snow-covered mountains. All forms of activity – both movement and inertia – can be seen in this painting. Buddha’s ten honored expressions and his three observations are also in this one painting. The way of practice is also there. If it is not a true painting then nothing in it is in the proper perspective and Buddha’s teaching is not true. But Buddha’s teaching is true. Buddha’s teaching is the truth and a painting of a rice cake is also the truth.

A monk once asked Great Master Ummon Kyoshin, “What is the meaning of detachment for” Buddhas and Patriarchs?” Ummon answered, “A sesame rice cake.”^{2-EN} We must quietly reflect upon this dialogue. Since there is such a dialogue as this, it means that there are masters and disciples who are even detached from the Buddhas and Patriarchs and there must be monks who have heard and comprehended it. We can see in this dialogue the respective methods of tenji and toki.^{3-EN} This is an example of the several ways of understanding a rice cake painting. Here there is a transcending of the Buddhas and Patriarchs-Buddhas and demons are no longer separate.

My late master said, “A tall bamboo or a banana plant can be painted on a canvas.” This saying, which transcends long or short, is the type of painting we must study. A tall bamboo is only a tall bamboo. In its natural state bamboo grows according

1-EN Hsiang-yen, dates unknown. This quotation is from the Keitoku Dentōroku, chapter eleven

2-EN Yunmen (d. 943). Ummon Kōroku, first volume.

3-EN See Shinjingakudō, note four.

to the principles of yin-yang. Likewise, the duration of the bamboo's life influences yin-yang – that is to say, they are interdependent with the movement of the universe. While we are unable to accurately gauge the duration of the bamboo's life, great sages can. But even they cannot comprehend the basic principle of the transcendence and detachment of yin-yang – it is like a painting that transcends ego and is beyond discernment. It is very different from the world of non-believers or Hinayānists. This movement is like the movement of bamboo in time; in every bamboo, all the Buddhas exist.

The entire universe manifests itself in the roots, trunk, branches, and leaves of a tall bamboo. Like this, an ocean or mountain contains the entire world; even a master's staff and shippei^{4-EN} contain eternity.

Similarly, a banana plant is made up of earth, water, fire, wind, air, heart, mind, consciousness and wisdom – these exist in its roots, trunk, branches, leaves, flowers, and fruit. Further, when an autumn wind blows, it transcends the term "autumn wind." It is pure existence [beyond categories]. There should be no thought of muscle and bone, hard or soft – each and every thing is detachment. Transcend any notions about how long or short it takes to attain enlightenment; do not even discuss it. Through this power we freely manage earth, water, fire, wind, heart, mind, consciousness and wisdom. Then we can accept spring, summer, autumn, and winter as our home and furnishings.

A bamboo or banana plant can be thought of as a painting. Listening and recognizing the sound of a bamboo leads to Great Enlightenment, like seeing a painting of a dragon or snake. Just as there is tall bamboo and short bamboo, there is undoubtedly a difference between Buddhas and ordinary people. Short bamboo has its enlightenment as short, long bamboo has it as long. Both short and long bamboo fit on a canvas; if there is a long painting surely there is a short one. We must clarify this. The entire world and all things are this kind of painting. The truth which we experience is also from a painting. Buddhas and Patriarchs arise from a painting. Only a painting of a rice cake can satisfy hunger. You can only find your true Self in a painting of a rice cake which "hungers." By understanding the rice cake painting the fulfillment of enlightenment can be attained. Only through the experience of the rice cake painting can you comprehend the meaning of to satisfy hunger, satisfy non-hunger, not to satisfy hunger, or not satisfy non-hunger. We should study this teaching that our existence is a painting of a rice cake. When we master this we can master free, full virtue in our body and mind. If such a virtue does not appear, the effort of our study will not be manifest. Actualization of this virtue is the painting of our enlightenment.

This was delivered at Kannondōri-in, Kōshōhōrinji on November 5, 1242, and transcribed by Ejō in the guest quarters of Kōshōji on November 7, of the same year.

4-EN A small staff sometimes used by Zen priests.

25. KEISEISANSHOKU

谿聲山色

“Sound of the Valley, colour of the mountains”

There are many examples of the various methods used to transmit the incomparable Buddhist Way from master to disciple. All of these stories tell us to practice diligently, do our best, and make a strong effort. [For instance, Eka, the second Patriarch in China, showed his determination to seek the Buddhist Way] by cutting off his arm; and [when Shakyamuni was still a Bodhisattva in a previous incarnation he showed his resolve to Nento-Buddha by bending over until] his hair touched the ground and splashing himself with muddy water.

If we consider these examples we cannot practice with complacency. When seekers gain liberation, escape from the obstacles of illusion and self-ego, and achieve detachment from their limited viewpoints their real nature, enlightenment, emerges. It actualizes itself without us realizing it. No one knows or expects it; even the eye of Buddha cannot penetrate it, so how can it be recognized by human beings?

There was a layman called Sotōba, also known as Shisen, who was very famous as an essayist. He lived during the great Sung Dynasty. He had a profound understanding of the ocean of Buddhism, and a high level of spiritual attainment. Once when he was on the way to visit Mt. Ro he was enlightened to the Buddhist Truth by hearing the sound of a stream in a mountain valley. He composed this verse:

“The sound of the valley stream is His great tongue,

The colours of the mountains are His pure body.

In the night I have heard the 84,000 hymns

But how to tell people the next day?”

He showed it to Zen Master Jōsō^{1-EN} who acknowledged his enlightenment.

One day Sotōba met Zen Master Buchin Ryōgen^{2-EN} and asked to become his disciple. Buchin then gave him a kesa and the precepts. Sotōba put on the kesa and began his Buddhist practice. Later on Sotōba gave Buchin a very wonderful obi^{3-EN}, the kind worn only by high officials. It cannot be bought for money or influence. People of that time praised Sotōba’s verse and his gift to his master. His reputation is still very great and most people think they can never attain Sotōba’s level.

Sotōba’s insight enabled him to receive enlightenment when he heard the valley stream, and his example is very edifying. It is a pity that from ancient times up to the present there are people who do not realize that the universe is proclaiming the actual body of Buddha. These people are miserable. What do they see when they look at a mountain? What do they hear when they listen to a valley stream? Do they hear only one sound instead of the 84,000 hymns? It is regrettable that many only appreciate the superficial aspects of sound or colour. They can neither perceive nor experience Buddha’s shape, form and voice in a landscape. They never have the opportunity to see the wonderful Buddhist Way: mountains and rivers ceaselessly proclaiming the Law, the colour of the mountains manifesting His pure body—this is limitless life. If people fail to experience this, they think that when mountains appear they are nearby and if they are concealed they are far away. However, their appearance or concealment and their proximity is relative – they transcend our discrimination.

From the beginning, spring and fall, mountains and rivers have never been separated; it is not possible to perceive them independently. Time cannot be separated from mountains and rivers. Seekers of the Buddhist Way should study the verse, “The mountain flows, the river sits.”

Sotōba studied the teaching “inanimate objects proclaim the Law” under Master Jōsō.^{4-EN} When Sotōba first received this koan he lacked sufficient insight and could not understand it. But the following night when he listened to the sound of the valley stream it seemed to echo through the mountains with such force as to reach the heavens.

When Sotōba heard the sound of the valley stream he was enlightened. “Was it caused by the sound or by his master’s teaching? Perhaps Jōsō’s teaching and the sound of the valley stream are mixed together; the water is proclaiming the Law by its sound – objectivity and subjectivity are unified. Is this unity Sotōba’s enlightenment? Do mountains and rivers manifest the Buddhist Way? When your mind is clear you can experience the sound and colour that proclaim the teaching of mountains and rivers.

Long ago, Zen Master Kyōgen Shikan practiced in the training hall of Zen Master Dai’e Daien.^{5-EN} On several occasions Dai’e asked Kyōgen: “You are an authority on the sūtras. Please explain the self that existed before your parents were born without using interpretations or memorization of passages in the commentaries.” Kyōgen was unable to give a quick answer. Afterwards he was very ashamed and consulted his books and commentaries, but could not locate the proper answer. He so regretted his lack of study that he burned all his books and said, “A painted rice cake cannot satisfy hunger. I do not desire enlightenment in this life any longer. From now on, I will be nothing but a monk who works in the kitchen and serves rice.”

After this he spent years working as a kitchen attendant carrying and serving meals to the other monks. He worked like this for a long time, acquiring merit. One day he said to Dai’e: “I am nothing but a simpleton. I have spent years seeking the Way and still cannot find it. O Master, please give a word that will lead me to the Way.” Dai’e told him, “I can give you a word but it I do you will resent it later on.”

Several more years passed and Kyōgen moved to Mt. Butō where National Teacher Daisho (Nanyo Echū)^{6-EN} lived. He built a small hermitage and planted some bamboo which became his only companions. One day when he was sweeping the path he accidentally struck a piece of tile and it flew against a bamboo tree. The sound of the tile hitting the bamboo gave him great enlightenment. He then purified his body by bathing, burned some incense and made a prostration in the direction of Mt

1-EN Chang-tsung (d. 1091).

2-EN Liao-yuan (d. 1098).

3-EN A kind of sash.

4-EN A monk once asked Jōsō, “Do inanimate objects preach the Law?” “Continuously,” was Jōsō’s answer. This was given to Sotōba as a koan.

5-EN Hsiang-yen (c. 820).

6-EN Nan-yang Hui-chang (683-769).

Dai'e. He was reminded of his past life and said, "O Honourable Master! If you had given an answer to my foolish question I never would have attained this enlightenment. Your deep compassion is limitless and surpasses the gratitude people have for their parents. Sincerely I now show my great respect and appreciation." He then composed this verse: "At the moment the piece of tile struck the bamboo I threw away all my knowledge of the sūtras. My wisdom increases more and more because there is nothing in my mind for anything to attach to. I just move in my own original Way. My daily fare consists of manifesting the Original Buddhist Way. This Way is free and dynamic. My actions leave no trace; this is the true Buddhist Way. Enlightened people in all parts of the world can now call me the 'man of detachment'." He presented this verse to Dai'e who praised it and said, "You have acquired the Way."

Zen Master Reiun Shigon^{7-EN} practiced the Way for over thirty years. Once, on his way to another mountain, he rested at the foot of a mountain. In the distance, he saw a village. Spring was in full bloom and peach blossoms were everywhere. Upon seeing this he suddenly attained the Way. He composed this gatha:

For over thirty years I searched for the man who possesses the sword of enlightenment;

Many times flowers have fallen and new buds appeared.

Today I saw the peach flowers in bloom and attained the Way

Thanks to Great Master Dai'e, s compassion.

He showed it to Dai'e who said, "The deep bond between us can never be severed." Dai'e acknowledged Reiun's enlightenment and gave him his seal of the right transmission. To attain the Way it is necessary to have such a deep bond. When you arrive at that level you can never get rid of your enlightenment. This is not only true for Reiun Shigon. He inherited his master's Buddhist Way; how could this have happened if the colours of the mountains are not the pure body of Buddha?

A monk once asked Zen Master Chōsa Keishin:^{8-EN} "How can we possess mountains, rivers, and the earth as our own?" In reply Chōsa said, "How can we return to mountains, rivers and the earth?" This answer means that when we are not thinking of ourselves as something else, and are truly existing in our own real nature, then there is nothing wrong in saying we are "mountains, rivers, and the earth."

Great Master Kōshō^{9-EN} Eikaku of Mt. Roya was in the line of transmission from Nangaku Ejō. One day Shisen, who was a lecturer on the sūtras, asked Eikaku, "How can our original nature be mountains, rivers and the earth?" Eikaku replied with this question: "How do you interpret mountains, rivers, and earth? Is there any difference between our pure original nature and the impure condition of mountains, rivers, and the earth?" Here we must realize that the true forms of the mountains, rivers, and the earth in their original states differ from their existence as natural phenomena. If you only study the sūtras you will never hear such an interpretation. Consequently, you will never discover the real nature of mountains, rivers, and the earth. Students should realize that the transmission from Shakyamuni to Kāśyapa, or from Bodhidharma to Eka, could never have occurred if they had not been enlightened concerning the true colour of the mountains or the real sound of the valley stream. There were forerunners like Shakyamuni who attained enlightenment when they saw the morning star; other Buddhas discovered the truth by seeing a mountain or hearing a valley stream. These people had a very strong determination to find the truth. We should follow the example of our predecessors and not be concerned with fame or fortune. In this remote area [Japan] true seekers are rare and good masters even rarer. We have people who become monks but they use the Buddhist Way as a means to acquire fame and fortune.

It is indeed sad and a great pity to spend our valuable time in meaningless pursuits. To attain enlightenment is to leave that world of vanity. When most people meet a true master they never even ask, "What is truth?" Shakyamuni called these people pitiful because they had produced bad karma in their past lives and still could not seek the truth for its own sake. They doubted truth even when confronted with it and could not follow the right teaching. Since they failed to realize that body and mind spring from the truth they could not receive or manifest truth.

The Buddhist Way has been transmitted for ages from Patriarch to Patriarch. However, nowadays when I speak to the monks about the Patriarch's enlightenment-seeking mind it is like relating a dream of long ago. It is pitiful that we are living in a treasure mountain but cannot see it. If we develop an enlightenment-seeking mind everything becomes the practice of enlightenment even if we are in the midst of the various worlds of samsara. Even if you have already wasted much time it does not matter; it is still possible to develop an enlightenment-seeking mind in this lifetime. Together with all sentient beings you should desire to hear the true teaching in both this world and the next. When you hear it, believe it without any doubt; as soon as you are confronted with the true teaching you can accept the Buddhist Way without any error and then fulfil your practice together with all sentient beings. If we develop this attitude it will be the source of our Buddha-seeking mind. Never be indolent.

This country is remote from India and China and people lack a proper mind for seeking the Way. It is very difficult to find people who wish to study the true Buddhist teaching. Throughout our history saints and sages are quite rare.

If we try to explain the Buddha-seeking mind people shut their eyes and ears and run away from the truth. They do not have any introspection – they only have resentment. When you practice with a proper mind for enlightenment do not reveal it to others; keep it hidden and never talk about it. Because so few people seek the truth in this present age the majority never practice and lack enlightenment, and desire praise for their practice and wisdom. This is "illusion in the midst of illusion." You must cut off this depraved mind immediately. In your study of Buddhism, if you have trouble comprehending easily it is caused by lack of an earnest determination to find the true teaching. Each Patriarch was awakened to and transmitted this earnest determination; it is transmitted as the Divine Light of Buddha and the Buddha-mind.

From the time of Shakyamuni up to the present there have been people who think that to study the Buddhist Way is to gain fame and fortune. But even such misguided people can accomplish the Buddhist Way if they amend their actions and follow a true master. Errors sometime occur in the study of the Buddhist Way but they can be overcome. Previously some people learned from an older, respected teacher while others vilified those teachers of the True Law, never studied, and became demons. However, present day people do not care about either studying or not studying – they are apathetic. They do not realize that their life will be destroyed by greed, anger, ignorance – the three poisons. Although they are born as human beings, which is difficult to achieve, they care nothing for the Buddhist Way. It is difficult to develop a Buddha-seeking mind

7-EN Ling-yün, dates unknown.

8-EN Chang-sha, dates unknown.

9-EN Kuang-chao, no dates.

but when you do you should never abandon your initial resolve. From the first never seek the Buddhist Way to receive others' praise; cut off the desire for fame and fortune. Devote yourself completely to the practice of the Buddhist Way. Do not expect to receive fame or fortune, the acknowledgement of kings and ministers, or prosperity from Buddha. It is true that special treatment of monks by kings and ministers has occurred before but those monks never sought or expected such treatment.

A seeker of the Buddhist Way should not expect to receive honour or prosperity from either men or gods because those things become shackles. Fools rejoice when they anticipate the prosperity they hope to receive; they misunderstand the effects of the Buddhist teaching and forget their Buddha-seeking mind along with their original determination. If kings and ministers have a strong belief in their teachings, such foolish monks think that they have fulfilled the Buddhist Way. Actually, it is a great obstacle for practice when kings and ministers become devout believers. You must not forget to feel ashamed about any reliance on kings and ministers. Do not rejoice if you have their esteem.

Even in Shakyamuni's time sages admonished foolish people who slandered the Way like this. We must not follow the example of those who lost their practice by associating with non-believers, Hinayānists, or kings. Loss of practice is not caused by the superiority of the non-believers' doctrines or by any deficiency in Buddhist wisdom but by the monks themselves.

When Bodhidharma came from India to China and stayed at Shorinji on Mt. Suzan, he found that the Emperor Bu of Ryo did not know the basic spirit of Buddhism, and neither did the King of Gi. Also at about the same time there were two types of people, similar to Bodairushi and Kotorishi^{10-EN} who were little better than dogs. Because of their false reputations and malicious intentions they tried to prevent the true teaching from prevailing in all parts of the world. They did not want their own teaching hindered so they slandered the true teaching. Their efforts had a deleterious effect on the world. It was a worse disturbance than that caused by Devadatta in Shakyamuni's time. It is very sad that these people loved fame and fortune which Bodhidharma despised worse than excrement. Even though there are people like this it is not because the power of the Buddhist Way is weak. We know that there are dogs that bark at good people. Do not worry about those barking dogs, but do not resent them either. It is better to say to them, "You beasts! Awaken your Buddha-seeking mind!" One of our predecessors said that those who calumniate the True Law are beasts with a human face. However, among those "beasts" there will be some who will ultimately profess the true Buddhist teaching. As Shakyamuni said, "Avoid kings, princes, ministers, high officials, brahmins and lay devotees." This is very important. The longer monks practice the deeper their understanding of this precept.

It is said that in ancient times Indra came down from heaven to investigate the devotees' resolve and Mara, the prince of darkness, tried to disturb their practice. This only happens when followers cannot cast off the desire for fame and fortune. If you possess deep compassion for and a strong desire to save all sentient beings then the desire for fame and fortune cannot arise. The effort made in practice helps the Buddhist Way expand throughout the country. Although those efforts produce good karma it is more important to comprehend and experience the basic spirit of the Buddhist Way in your innermost being. Some are blind to this approach and are full of resentment. These fools who mock the true teaching are like dogs that bite dry bones – their actions are meaningless. Saints and sages regard their criticism as human beings regard excrement.

The profundity of the Buddhist Way cannot be measured by the reasoning or conjectures of a novice. Only someone who has attained the ultimate goal of enlightenment can fathom the meaning of the Way. Our practice should be based on that of our predecessors. Then we can ascend the steep Way of Buddha and cross the turbulent sea of life. If you sincerely try to find the right master you will ultimately succeed. Then he will guide you, in both body and mind, through the conditions of living and not-living, being and not-being. It is natural to listen with the ear but it is also possible to "hear" through your eye [of wisdom]. When you meet with Buddha you will see Buddha in yourself and in others. Do not be amazed or frightened at the appearance of a Great Buddha or doubt the existence of a small one. These diverse forms of the Buddha are in the sound of a valley stream and in the colour of the mountains. When you realize this there will be a great proclamation of 84,000 hymns, complete freedom will be attained, and great enlightenment achieved. "When you look up, your vision extends limitlessly, like an immovable rock." [Zen Master Nyojō said about this:] "Endless sky is filled endlessly."

Another illustration: the green foliage of a pine tree in spring or the beauty of a chrysanthemum in autumn are the real form of truth. When a true master attains this level of enlightenment he is a teacher of men and gods; but if you try to direct people without attaining enlightenment first, there will be nothing but opposition. If you do not know the real form of the spring pine and autumn chrysanthemum how can you find the real meaning of their existence? How can you penetrate your own original being?

If you are physically or mentally lazy and lack faith you must repent before the Buddha and show your earnest resolve. The virtue of repentance purifies the mind; it also increases our faith and improves our attitude for practice. Once pure faith is manifested discrimination of self and others ceases – there is equality and harmony. Buddha's great compassion also emerges and our virtue benefits and influences all beings, living and non-living. A general rule for repentance:

O Buddhas and Patriarchs, enlightened by the Way, have compassion on me and grant me release from all bad karma and evil deeds committed in my past. Remove all obstacles from my study of the Buddhist Way. The virtue of the Buddhist Way fills the entire world; please have compassion on me and remember that all the Buddhas and Patriarchs have shared my condition. I vow to follow the true Way so I also can be a Buddha.

When we respect the Buddhas we become like them – there is no difference between our resolve and theirs. In order for compassion to flow everywhere we must know when and where to apply it. Ryuge said, "If there was no enlightenment in our past lives then we must gain it in this one. Before our predecessors attained enlightenment they were just like us; consequently, if we attain enlightenment we are one with the Buddhas and Patriarchs"

If we repent, surely we will have Buddha's assistance [even if we cannot perceive it]. Concentrate your thoughts, straighten your body, empty your mind, prostrate yourself and reveal all your past sins and evil behaviour. The power of repentance removes all sins. This is pure, correct practice – it is true faith manifested in your body. Then you can hear the 84,000 hymns of praise coming from the valley stream and the mountains. When you repent before Buddha instead of begrudging your lack of fame and fortune, the valley stream and the mountains will never hold back their teaching of the Buddhist Way. However, whether the sound of the valley stream and the colour of the mountains manifest the 84,000 hymns of praise to you or not the 84,000 hymns still exist. They are not only heard at night. If we do not have the right mind for practice and lack the power of truth how can we discover the unity of the sound of the valley stream, the colour of the mountains and ourselves?

This was delivered to the monks on the fifth day after the training period of the year 1240 at Kannondōri, Kōshōhōrinji.

10-EN Scholars in the time of Shakyamuni.

Recopied on the anniversary of Buddha's birth, 1243, at Kōshōhōrinji by the chief disciple Ejō. Recopied again on July 11, 1275.

26. BUTSUKŌJŌJI

佛向上事

"Continuous development beyond Buddha"

The Patriarch Great Master Tōzan Gohon of Kinshū was the Dharma-heir of Great Master Ungan of Tanshū. He was the thirty-eighth Patriarch from the Tathāgata, and from himself to the Tathāgata he holds the thirty-eighth position.

One day, Tōzan gave a lecture to an assembly of monks. He said, "After experiencing continuous development beyond Buddha we are able to speak of the Buddhist Dharma somewhat." A monk asked, "What kind of speech can we make?" Tōzan said, "When I speak about it you won't be able to hear it." Then the monk said, "O Priest, can you hear it yourself?" Tōzan said, "When I'm not speaking about it I hear it."

"Continuous development beyond Buddha" was first used by this great master, a true Patriarch. Other Buddhas and Patriarchs have learned this saying from Tōzan, and then experienced continuous development beyond Buddha. You must clearly know that continuous development beyond Buddha is not contained within practice nor attained after enlightenment. Rather, it is experienced in "When I speak about it you cannot hear it." If we do not arrive at the state of continuous development beyond Buddha we can neither gain nor experience it. Also, if we do not speak about it, it cannot be gained. There is no opposition or concealment here and no reciprocal or symbiotic relationship. Therefore, when such speech is actualized it becomes continuous development beyond Buddha. When continuous development beyond Buddha is actualized it becomes "When I speak about it you won't be able to hear it." "You won't be able to hear it" means that continuous development beyond Buddha is involved with "not hearing." You must know that "When I speak about it you won't be able to hear it" is not polluted by hearing or not-hearing; therefore, there is no relationship between hearing and not-hearing.

Within hearing there is a "you" (the monk) and a "you" within speech. Meeting people is sometimes not to meet them, i.e., appearance differs from reality. In other words, speaking about it but not hearing it. The essence of not-hearing lies in not being able to hear because of the obstacles in our vocal cords [i.e., our individual, limited speech] and in our ears [i.e., our ability to hear the truth]. We cannot hear since our vision is narrow and our body and mind are in bondage. Due to these reasons we cannot hear. Nevertheless, do not take these things for speech; not-hearing is not true speech. There is only "When spoken, it is not heard." Tōzan said, "When I speak about it you won't be able to hear it." The beginning and end of speech is like a winding, tangled wisteria; speech is intertwined with speech, and speech obstructs itself.

The monk said, "O Priest, can you hear it yourself?" This question is not concerned with whether or not Tōzan can hear it, since speech cannot be expected to come from outside.

The point the monk was trying to make is whether we should study the principle of hearing when there is speech and when there is not. That is, the monk was asking if speech is speech and hearing is hearing. Speaking like that is not simply using the tongue.

The Patriarch Tōzan's "When I am not speaking I can hear it" must be clarified. That is, when it is spoken nothing can be heard. When hearing is actualized, there is no speech. Yet it is futile to disregard the everyday notion of "not speaking"; do not anticipate any special form of "not speaking." When we hear, there is no observation of speech, since real observation comes from outside. When we hear, it does not mean that speech is in some other place, nor does it mean that hearing is concealed in the essence of speech. Therefore, that is why even if the monk cannot hear it when he is speaking – or we can hear it when there is no speech – it is "speaking of the Buddhist Dharma somewhat" and "experiencing continuous development beyond Buddha." We can even experience this when no speech is heard. Therefore, we have "when I am not speaking I can hear it." Continuous development beyond Buddha did not exist prior to the seven past Buddhas; it is the seven Buddhas' continuous development beyond Buddha.

The Patriarch said to an assembly, "You must know that there is a man who possesses continuous development beyond Buddha." A monk asked, "What kind of man possesses continuous development beyond Buddha?" The master said, "Non-Buddha" Ummon said about this, "We cannot name or describe it; it is just 'non'" Hōgen said, "The word 'Buddha' is used as skillful means."

In general, the continuous development that occurs among Buddhas and Patriarchs is similar to that of the Patriarch Tōzan. There are many so-called Buddhas and Patriarchs but none of them can even dream of continuous development beyond Buddha. If we were to explain it to Tokusan, Rinzai, etc. they would argue with us. Although Ganto, Seppō, and others have exerted themselves to the utmost, they can get only part of it. Tōzan's "After experiencing the continuous development beyond Buddha we can speak of the Dharma somewhat" and "You must know that there is a man who possesses continuous development beyond Buddha," etc. can be totally comprehended only after countless kalpas of practice and study. Only those who study and practice the profound and hidden Way can comprehend this.

We must know that one who possesses continuous development beyond Buddha possesses spiritual activity. We can find it in ancient Buddhas and manifest it in a fist. After observing and comprehending this, we can distinguish between those who have, and those who have not, continuous development beyond Buddha. What we find here is not that we should become men who possess continuous enlightenment beyond Buddha, or that we should meet these men with continuous development beyond Buddha; rather, we must be aware that such people exist. When we grasp this we can be liberated from ideas that there is, or is not, a man of continuous development. The man who possesses continual development beyond Buddha is "non-Buddha." What is "non-Buddha."? It is not a state prior to, or succeeding, Buddha. "Non-Buddha" is not simply that which has gone beyond Buddha. Why do we say "non-Buddha"? Because it is the original detached face of Buddha, and Buddha's liberated body and mind.

Zen Master Join Koboku of Tonkin (the secular name was Hōjō), the Dharma-heir of Fuyo Dōkai, once said to an assembly of monks, "When we realize that there is continuous development beyond Buddha and Patriarchs we will be able to explain it to others. O good Zen students! What is continuous development beyond Buddha? A single family has one child but he is lacking the six sense organs and missing the seven forms of consciousness. Such persons are called icchantika, beings who lack the seed of Buddha-nature. When they meet Buddha, they kill Buddha; when they meet a Patriarch they kill that Patriarch. Heaven refuses to accept them and even hell provides no gate for them to enter. Do any of you here have any idea of such people?" He went on, "That kind of person is dull-witted, always in a daze, and babbles foolishly in his sleep."

"Lacking six sense organs" means exchanging the pupils with the fruit of the Bodhi tree, the nostrils with hollow bamboo, and the skull with an excrement spatula. What is the principle of "exchanging"? It means a lack of the six sense organs. Since

there is a lack of the six sense organs, we can pass through the blacksmith's furnace as a metal Buddha, emerge from the ocean as a clay Buddha, and rise from the flames as a wooden Buddha.

What is "missing the seven kinds of consciousness" like? It is like a broken ladle. They kill Buddha when they meet Buddha, because when they meet Buddha they kill Buddha. If they try to enter heaven, heaven will be broken; if they move toward hell, hell is shattered. Whenever they meet someone they smile foolishly; they do nothing but walk around in a daze and talk foolishly in their sleep. This is the principle of "mountains and rivers are unique in themselves, and jade and stone maintain their own independent existence." Reflect quietly on this saying of Zen Master Koboku and do not take it lightly.

Great Master Kōkaku of Mt. Ungo (Dōyō) studied under the Patriarch Tōzan. Once Tōzan asked him, "What is your name?" Ungo replied, "Dōyō." Tōzan then asked, "Tell me your previous name." Ungo said, "If I tell you, I will no longer be Dōyō." Tōzan said, "Your answer is no different from the one I gave Ungan when I was studying under him."

We must carefully study this dialogue. "If I tell you, I will no longer be Dōyō" refers to the Dōyō who exists beyond Dōyō. We should study the Dōyō who cannot be named, rather than the one who exists now. After this principle is actualized the real Dōyō emerges. However, we should not say that they are one and the same Dōyō. When Tōzan said, "Tell me your previous name," even if Ungo said "Dōyō," it still would have been continuous development beyond Buddha. Why? Because Dōyō's entire body transcends itself and he completely emerges.

Zen Master Sōzan Honjaku was also studying under the Patriarch Tōzan. Tōzan asked him, "What is your name?" Sōzan said, "Honjaku." Tōzan said, "Tell me your previous name." Sōzan said, "I can't say." Tōzan said, "Why not?" Sōzan answered, "I can't be called Honjaku." Tōzan said, "Good." There is a word here that describes continuous development, i.e., "I cannot say." Hence, we have "Why not?" and the answer "I can't be called Honjaku." There is a "non"-Honjaku, a liberated "not-called," and a liberated Honjaku.

Zen Master Banzan Hōshaku said, "The path of continuous development has not been transmitted by thousands of Hinayana saints." "This path of continuous development" was only used by Banzan. He did not say "thing" or "person" of continuous development, only "path." The main point here is that even if thousands of competing saints appear, they cannot transmit the path of continuous development. "Cannot transmit" means that the thousands of saints preserve part of "not transmit." We must study this. There is another related saying: "There are thousands of saints and sages but the path of continuous development lies outside their world."

One day, a monk asked Zen Master Kōso of Mt. Chimon, "What is continuous development beyond Buddha?" The master replied, "Pointing at the sun and moon with the head of your staff." The staff does not obstruct the sun and moon; this is continuous development beyond Buddha. When we study the staff of the sun and moon it covers the entire world; this too, is the continuous development beyond Buddha. Do not say that the sun and moon are the staff. The head of the staff must become the entire staff.

Once, in the community of Great Master Sekitō Musai, Zen Master Dōgo of Tennō temple asked Sekitō, "What is the great meaning of the Buddhist Dharma?" Sekitō answered, "It cannot be attained or comprehended." Dōgo said, "Is there any change in continuous development or not?" Sekitō replied, "The endless sky does not prevent the clouds from drifting."

Sekitō was the second Patriarch after Sōkei Enō. The Priest Dōgo of Tennō temple was a disciple of Yakusan. Dōgo asked, "What is the great meaning of the Buddhist Dharma?" Such a question cannot come from either novices or senior monks; it occurs only after we have comprehended the great meaning.

Sekitō answered, "It cannot be attained or comprehended." We must know that a great meaning is contained in the very first thought as well as in the final stage of the Buddhist Dharma. It cannot be attained. Yet do not say that there is no resolve, practice or attainment of enlightenment – it is not attained. That great meaning cannot be comprehended. We cannot say that there is, or is not, practice and enlightenment – it cannot be comprehended, or attained. Again, this great meaning is beyond attainment or comprehension. We cannot say there are no holy truths, practice, or enlightenment, nor can we say that there are holy truths, practice, and enlightenment. Nothing can be attained, nothing can be comprehended.

Dōgo said, "Is there any change in continuous development or not?" That is, if a change is actualized, is continual development actualized? "Change" here is a form of skilful means. Skilful means are used by all the Buddhas and Patriarchs. If we say this, change occurs. Yet even if there is change we must not overlook the aspect that does not change. We must speak like that.

"The endless sky does not prevent the clouds from drifting." This is Sekitō's saying. The vast sky cannot obstruct itself and clouds do not obstruct clouds. Drifting also does not obstruct itself or the endless sky. Here there is no obstruction of self or others. Yet it is not necessary, for each thing does not obstruct any other thing and each one possesses total freedom. Therefore, there is no obstruction. Then we will be able to locate the real nature of "The endless sky does not prevent the clouds from drifting." At such a time we must open the eye of study, look at the Buddhas, and meet the Patriarchs. We must also meet our own self and the self of others. This is the principle of "ten answers for one question." This means that the one who asked a question became the one who gave ten answers.

Ōbaku said, "Monks should know that they originally possess continuous development. Otherwise they will be like the Great Master Gozu Hōyū, a disciple of the fourth Patriarch, who freely proclaimed the Dharma but overlooked the essence of continuous development. If you possess real insight you monks will be able to clarify the difference between correct and incorrect principles."

Ōbaku's "originally possess continuous development" is the right transmission from Buddha to Buddha, Patriarch to Patriarch. It is called the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and Serene Mind of Nirvana. In order to possess it as our own, we must know it. However, there are cases when we possess it even though we do not yet know it. If there had been no right transmission from Buddha to Buddha, we would not be able to even dream of it now. Ōbaku was the Dharma-heir of Hyakujiō but ultimately surpassed his master and the other descendants of Baso. During that era, no one was equal to Ōbaku and he alone clarified the Dharma among those on Mt. Gozu. Even Buddhas have yet to clarify it.

Zen Master Hōyū of Mt. Gozu was a disciple of the fourth Patriarch. He freely proclaimed the Dharma, which is far better than lecturing on the sūtras and abhidharma like Chinese and Indian scholars; but unfortunately, he neither knew nor comprehended continuous development. And if we fail to understand that point how can we analyse the distinction between right and wrong in the Buddhist Dharma? Otherwise, we will just be linguists and philologists. Therefore, knowing, practising, and enlightening the essence of continuous development is to go beyond the ordinary. When we have real practice, this will

surely be actualized.

Continuous development beyond Buddha is to see more and more Buddhas after becoming a Buddha. This is not the same Buddha seen by sentient beings. If we see the same Buddha as sentient beings, then we are not "seeing" Buddha, much less seeing continuous development beyond Buddha. The continuous development of Ōbaku is to go beyond present day people. Someone may be equal to or surpass Hōyū, but he is still the Dharma-brother of Hōyū. How can we know the essence of continuous development, when even the ten saints and three sages, etc. cannot get it? How can we utilize it? This principle is the key point of our study. If we know the essence of continuous development we can experience, attain, and become the man of continuous development beyond Buddha.

This was delivered to the monks at Kannondōri- Kōshōhōrinji on March 23, 1242. Transcribed during the summer training period of 1259 at Eiheiji by Ejō.

27. MUCHŪSETSUMU

夢中說夢

“Explaining a dream within a dream”

The manner in which all the Buddhas and Patriarchs appear is self-generated without origin; it has nothing to do with the opinions of old-fashioned and narrow-minded scholars. The virtue and continuous development of Buddhas exist in themselves, independent of time or space. They are not related to either eternity or instant flashes of time. It completely transcends the discrimination found in the world of ordinary people. Turning the wheel of the Law is also self-generating without origin. Therefore, it possesses unlimited merit and becomes an eternal beacon. This is “explaining a dream within a dream.” Seeing enlightenment within enlightenment, therefore, is explaining a dream within a dream.

The place where the dream within a dream is explained is the land and brotherhood of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. In the Buddha land and Buddhist brotherhood and in the practice and teaching of the Patriarchs there is enlightenment beyond enlightenment, i.e., explaining a dream within a dream. While we listen to this teaching do not think that we are not already in the Buddhist brotherhood. This is the turning of the wheel of the Law of Buddha. This wheel of the Law turns in all directions; hence, the great oceans, Mt. Sumeru, land, and all the Buddhas emerge. This is explaining a dream within a dream before any dreams occur. Every manifestation of the relative world is a dream. This dream is the clear radiance of a hundred grasses [i.e., all forms of existence]. When we have doubt we have perplexity; then in dreaming of grass, grass explains grass. In order to study this we must learn that grass, roots, stems, branches, leaves, flowers, fruits, lights, and colours are one great dream. However, do not misunderstand this – it is nothing more than an ordinary dream.

Therefore, when those who have not learned the Buddhist Way hear about explaining a dream within a dream, they foolishly think that things exist where they actually do not. It is like illusion covering illusion. However, it is not like that. Although there is “illusion in the midst of illusion” and “illusion that covers illusion” we should first of all study and practice the path to enlightenment.

Explaining a dream within a dream is all the Buddhas. All the Buddhas are wind, rain, water, and fire. To keep those names is to preserve them. Explaining a dream within a dream is ancient Buddhas. Ride this precious vehicle and go directly to the dojo. Going directly to the dojo is contained within riding the precious vehicle. Right or wrong, there are only dreams. [Nyojō said that] tightly bound or completely free, the wind blows freely on and on. At that time, the wheel of the Law and the world of the Great Wheel is immeasurable and unlimited. It turns in the tiniest speck of dust and works incessantly. Although this principle turns the wheel of the Dharma in both immense and minute things, still “a smiling face, but a heart full of resentment” remains.

[Explaining a dream within a dream] affects all places; the wheel of the Law turns in large and small things, and blows freely like the wind. Therefore, the entire unlimited earth as it is incessantly proclaims the Law. This relative world of cause and effect is the supreme possession of the Buddhas. We should know that both the teaching and explanations of the Buddhas are being proclaimed incessantly, and establishing themselves everywhere. Do not look for its coming or going; when it comes it comes, when it goes it goes. Just as a tangled wisteria is bound together with other vines, supreme enlightenment is entwined with supreme enlightenment. As enlightenment is unlimited, so are sentient beings; they are also supreme. Attachment is unlimited and liberation is unlimited. “The actualization of enlightenment is to give you thirty blows.” This is the proper explanation of a dream within a dream.

Hence, a rootless tree, a land without sun or shade, an echo-less valley, etc. actualize the explaining of a dream within a dream. Such conditions are not in the world of men or gods, and are not known by ordinary people. Who can doubt the enlightenment of a dream, since it does not belong to the world of doubt? Who can certify it, since it does not belong to the world of ordinary consciousness? Since we have supreme enlightenment like this we use the expressions “dreams as dreams,” “within dreams,” “dreams explaining,” “explaining dreams,” and “dreams within dreams.” If there is no dream within a dream, there is no explaining dreams; if there is no explaining dreams, there is no dream within a dream. If there is no explaining dreams, there are no Buddhas; if there is no dream within a dream, the Buddhas could not have appeared in the world or turned the marvellous wheel of the Law. This wheel of the Law is transmitted from Buddha to Buddha. It is the explanation of a dream within a dream. Within the explaining of a dream within a dream there are only supremely enlightened Buddhas and Patriarchs. Furthermore, the continuous development of the Dharma-body is explaining a dream within a dream. Here, the most important aspect of Buddha transmitting Buddha is not to be attached to our head, eyes, marrow, brains, body, flesh, hands, or feet. When we are not attached to those things we can say, “Freely give and freely take” – this is called mystery of mysteries, wonder of wonders, enlightenment of enlightenment, a head above heads.

Such behaviour is the essence of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. When studying this, ordinary people think of “head” as nothing unusual and not the “head” of various objects. If they cannot imagine it as the head of Vairocana Buddha, how can they imagine the head of the brilliant, radiant hundred grasses [i.e., all phenomena]? Moreover, they are unable to value their own heads.

From ancient times it is said that when foolish people hear the expression “head above heads,” they think it means we should stop chasing worthless things. It is natural to think that certain things are not necessary and thus to doubt the expression “a head above heads.” Actually this is a mistake. The actualization of explaining a dream within a dream is the same for ordinary people or saints. Therefore, ordinary people and saints live in explaining a dream within a dream, both yesterday and today. We should know that yesterday’s explanation of a dream within a dream is interpreted in a manner that is beyond ordinary consciousness. Thus, the explanation of a dream within a dream is the value of seeing Buddha. It is a pity that fools cannot see that the brilliant, shining hundred grasses proclaimed by the Buddhas and Patriarchs are dreams which are clearer than hundreds of thousands of moons and suns.

The “head” in the “head above heads” is the head of a hundred grasses, a thousand kind of heads, ten thousand heads, and the head which is the entire body. That head is the entire world, and the ten quarters of the universe. It is [Sensu’s] “one verse fits the head” and [Chōsa’s] “The head of a hundred-foot bamboo pole.” We must study and clarify the head above heads.

Therefore, that is why all the Buddhas with supreme and perfect enlightenment step out from the sūtras and become the head above heads and explain a dream within a dream. When these sūtras explain a dream within a dream, all Buddhas with supreme enlightenment emerge. All the Buddhas with supreme enlightenment proclaim this sūtra – it is decidedly “explaining a dream within a dream.” If the origin of this dream is not clear, the fruits of enlightenment will not be clear. As the proverbs say, “One stone makes a thousand ripples” and “Ten thousand shots, but only one bull’s-eye.”

Like this, we should know that there are four kinds of explaining a dream within a dream: 1) things as they are; 2) people as they are; 3) not things as they are; and 4) not people as they are. These principles have been known for a long time. That is, the daily explaining a dream within a dream is the real explaining a dream within a dream.

An ancient Buddha said, "For your sake I, together with all the Buddhas of the three worlds and the six Patriarchs, explain a dream within a dream." We must clarify this saying. The holding up of a flower and [Mahākāśyapa's] smile is explaining a dream within a dream; [Eka's] prostration and his attaining the marrow is also explaining a dream within a dream.

Speaking of the Way with one verse, and comprehension that is beyond words and explanations are nothing more than explaining a dream within a dream. The thousand hands and eyes [of Avālokiteśvara] work spontaneously and he has the ability to see and hear through his ears and eyes. The explaining of a dream within a dream present in our body and contained within the proclaiming of the Law of the dream, is both totally bound and completely free.

"Direct pointing" is explaining the dream; hitting the bull's-eye is explaining the dream. We use totally bound and completely free to evaluate all things with equanimity. At such a level surely we have accurate judgement and then explaining a dream within a dream emerges. If there is no evaluation and no equality, then equanimity cannot be actualized. However, if we attain equanimity, we can see equanimity. We must know that to attain equanimity is to be independent of physical things, to abandon evaluation, and to have no base in potentiality; although this world is empty, if we do not have equanimity we cannot study the nature of equanimity. Just as subjectivity is present in emptiness, objectivity is also active and seeks its own liberation – this is explaining a dream within a dream. It is the actualization of the body of equanimity within emptiness; it is the Great Way of evaluating equanimity. Regardless of whether it is in the subjective or objective world, either with emptiness or form, each thing must be harmonized in explaining a dream within a dream. There is nothing other than the total liberation of explaining a dream within a dream. A dream is the entire great earth and the great earth is equanimity. Similarly, when we turn the head we turn the brain – there is no separation. This is enlightening the dream within a dream and believing, receiving, respecting, and following it.

Shakyamuni Buddha said, "The bodies of all the Buddhas are golden, covered with a hundred joys, and beautifully adorned. Listening to the Law and its proclamation to all people is their continual good dream. They also dream of the prince who abandoned his palace and relatives, renounced luxuries, and began austere practice. Then he sat under the Bodhi tree in the Lion's Seat for seven days seeking the Way. Finally he attained the wisdom of all the enlightened ones and entered the supreme Way. He then arose and began to turn the wheel of the Law. This proclamation continues to all sentient beings throughout the four directions for unlimited kalpas. He proclaimed the wonderful Law of the world of enlightenment and worked to save all sentient beings. Later on, he entered parinirvana; it was like smoke disappearing or fire blowing out. Now, anyone who proclaims the supreme Law in this sorry world will succour many and attain the virtue described above."

After we study this saying of Buddha, we must completely master the significance and depth of the community of Buddhas. This is not an allegory or metaphor. Since the wonderful Law of all the Buddhas is nothing but Buddha transmitting Buddha, all dharmas present in dreams and enlightenment form reality. Within enlightenment there is resolve, practice, awakening, and nirvana; also within dreams there is resolve, practice, awakening, and nirvana. Dreams and enlightenment form reality – there is no large or small, superior or inferior.

However, some people in the past or present read this story about the prince who abandoned his palace and focus on the power of proclaiming the supreme Law and conceive of a dream which is greatly mistaken. People form such misconceptions because they have failed to clarify the Buddha's proclaiming of the Law. Dreams and enlightenment are one and form reality. Even if the Buddhist Dharma is a metaphor, it still forms reality. If it is not a metaphor, still the dream mentioned in the above story is the truth of the Buddhist Dharma. Shakyamuni Buddha and all the Buddhas and Patriarchs have resolve, practice, and enlightenment within a dream. Hence, the Buddhist Way which instructs and leads this world was formed in a dream.

"Seven days" is the attaining of Buddhist wisdom. "Turning the wheel of the Law to save sentient beings" has been carried out throughout unlimited kalpas. We cannot accurately gauge the real condition within a dream. "The bodies of all the Buddhas are golden, covered with a hundred joys, and beautifully adorned. Listening to the Law and its proclamation to all people is their continual good dream." It is clear that this good dream is all the Buddhas. There is an eternal Way of the Tathāgata, not just a dream of a hundred years. Proclaiming the Law for all people occurs in the present body; hearing the sound of the Dharma is accomplished through our eyes and mind. It occurs in our ancient home before time.

"The bodies of all the Buddhas is golden, covered with a hundred joys, and beautifully adorned." The good dream which is the body of all the Buddhas cannot be doubted, even in the present age. There is a principle of unceasing instruction of Buddha within enlightenment, but the actualization of the Buddhas and Patriarchs is surely within a dream dreaming. We must study so that we do not slander the Buddhist Dharma. When we do this the eternal Way of the Tathāgata instantly manifests itself.

This was delivered to the monks at Kannondōri-Kōshōhōrinji on September 21, 1242. Transcribed on March 23, 1243, by Ejō, chief disciple.

28. RAIHAITOKUZUI

禮拜得髓

“Making a prostration and attaining the marrow”

When we practice supreme and perfect enlightenment it is very difficult to receive instruction from a good master. It does not matter whether the master is a man or woman: The only requirement is attainment of the Way and accessibility. Nor does it matter if the master belongs to the past or present. [For example] a spirit of a wild fox was once changed into a priest of high virtue.^{1-EN} This is the true form of attaining the marrow of beneficial instruction. It is “karma never ceases” without thought of self or others.

After we have met a true master we must sever all old relationships, stop wasting time, and practice the Way earnestly with great effort. We must continue to practice regardless of how much or how little expectation we have. We should attend to this practice immediately with all our might. If we study like this those who slander the Law will not trouble us. The story about the Patriarch who cut off his arm and attained his master’s marrow [Eka] is not about someone else. We are already the teacher who has cast off body and mind.

Attainment of the marrow of one’s master and transmission of the Dharma is accomplished through sincerity and true faith. Sincerity and true faith do not come from either outside or inside. The Dharma is of far more value than our small body. Abandon the world and follow the Way. If we think we are of more value than the Dharma it will never be transmitted, received, or attained. Leaving aside all other teachings let us consider one or two examples of those who value the Dharma above all else.

We must value the Dharma above all else no matter what it is – a pillar, a stone lantern, Buddhas, wild foxes, demons, men or women. If such things possess the great Dharma and have attained their master’s marrow we must receive and maintain their Dharma in our own body and mind throughout endless kalpas.

We can easily gain a body and mind like the rice plants, hemp, bamboo or reeds that grow throughout the world. Yet it is very difficult to find the True Dharma.

Shakyamuni Buddha said, “When you meet a master who proclaims supreme enlightenment, do not be overly concerned with his social status or nationality, his appearance, his faults or his behaviour. He should be highly respected because of his wisdom so provide him daily with good food. Honour him with heavenly food and celestial flowers. Every day pay him homage with three prostrations, and keep all evil thoughts from arising. If you do such things surely there will be a way to enlightenment. Ever since I first developed the resolve for enlightenment I have continually practiced like that and attained supreme and perfect enlightenment right up to the present day.”

Therefore, you should ask trees and stones to proclaim the Dharma, seek out rice paddies and villages to hear their explanations, question round pillars, and study walls and tiles. Once Indra made a prostration to a fox and asked him about the Dharma. That fox was called a Great Bodhisattva. The fox’s action was independent of noble or ignoble karma.

However, foolish people who have never heard the Buddhist Dharma consider themselves great bhikkus and refuse to make prostrations to young people who have attained the Dharma. They say, “We have practiced for many years and refuse to make prostrations to those who began to study late in life and then attained the Dharma. Since we have acquired the title of master we cannot make prostrations to those without that title. We are in charge of regulations and should not make prostrations to ordinary monks just because they have attained the Dharma; we are senior priests and cannot make prostrations to laymen or women who have attained the Dharma. We are like the three sages and ten saints so we should not be required to make prostrations to nuns who have attained the Dharma. We are descendants of the Imperial family and will not make prostrations to ministers or retainers even if they have attained the Dharma.” Such foolish people, uselessly leave their fatherland and wander through other countries and never see or hear the Buddhist Way.

Long ago, Great Master Jōshū Shinsai of the T’ang Dynasty developed the resolve for enlightenment and began a pilgrimage. He said, “I will ask instruction from anyone with superior knowledge even if he is a child of seven, and will not talk with anyone who is inferior even if he is a hundred. Instead I will teach him.”

Asking a child of seven about the Dharma and making a prostration before him even though we are much older is very praiseworthy and the right minded attitude of an ancient Buddha. Also, when a monk who is seeking the Way in the Buddhist brotherhood meets a nun who has attained both the Way and the Dharma and makes a prostration and asks her about the Law it is an excellent illustration of true Buddhist study. It is like quenching a severe thirst.

Zen Master Shikan of China was a senior priest of Rinzaï. The first time Rinzaï saw Shikan coming he asked him to stop by. Shikan said, “All right.” Rinzaï said, “I was about to give you a blow but decided not to.” After this, Shikan become Rinzaï’s disciple. Later on, Shikan left Rinzaï and went to Matsuzan [to see the nun Ryōnen]. Matsuzan asked him, “Where are you from?” Shikan said, “From the road’s mouth [i.e., an undefiled place].” Matsuzan said, “Why don’t you cover that mouth?” Shikan was unable to reply. Then he made a prostration and become her disciple.

Another time Shikan asked her, “What kind of mountain is Matsuzan?” She said, “Its peak cannot be seen.” Shikan said, “What kind of people live on this mountain?” Matsuzan said, “They don’t have the form of men or women.” Shikan said, “Why don’t you turn into a man?” She said, “I am not the spirit of a wild fox so how can I change?” Shikan prostrated himself before her, resolved to seek enlightenment from her, and studied under her for three years.

Later on, after Shikan returned to the world (as a full priest) he told his disciples, “I received a half-full ladle from that old fellow Rinzaï and another half-full one from the old woman Matsuzan, making one full ladle. Now I am completely satisfied and seek nothing further.” Looking back on this old story we can see that Matsuzan, a top disciple of Koan Daigu, transmitted her master’s life blood and thereby become Shikan’s “old woman.” Rinzaï was the Dharma heir of Zen Master Ōbaku Kiun and possessed strength derived from diligent practice. That is how he become Shikan’s “old man.” “Old man” means father, “old woman” means mother. Shikan’s prostrations and seeking of the Dharma under Matsuzan is a high-minded illustration of Buddhist practice. It is an example of a monk’s integrity and the breaking down of all barriers.

The nun Myōshin was a disciple of Gyōzan. Once Gyōzan was looking for a suitable candidate for the monastery’s administrative chief. He asked the senior experienced monks to recommend a good person. Many opinions were offered and finally Gyōzan said, “The nun Myōshin from Waisu district is a woman, but she has a superior spirit and is the best qualified

1-EN See the chapter Daishugyo in Volume I.

person for administrative chief." All agreed and Myōshin was appointed to the position. At that time there were many excellent disciples under Gyōzan but no one was dissatisfied with the decision. Although her position was not the most important one she did her best and loved others as herself.

Once she was working in the administrative quarters and seventeen monks from the Shoku district came to see her master. They wanted to climb the mountain right away but it was too late and they had to spend the night at the administrative quarters. At night they began to discuss the famous story of the sixth Patriarch and the wind and flag. All of the seventeen monks gave their respective opinions but all were off the mark. Myōshin overheard the discussion and said, "It's a pity that the seventeen donkeys have worn out so many pairs of straw sandals on pilgrimages and still cannot even dream about the Buddhist Dharma." A little later Myōshin's attendant told them what his master thought about their discussion, but none of them were dissatisfied, or resentful about it. On the contrary, they were ashamed at their lack of attainment of the Way. They straightened up their robes, offered incense, made prostrations and sought her instruction.

She said, "Please come closer." But before they could come closer she shouted, "The wind is not moving, the flag is not moving, the mind is not moving!" When they heard that all of them reflected on their own hearts, then bowed to her in gratitude and become her disciples. Soon after that they returned to Seishu without even visiting Gyōzan. Truly Myōshin's level is not surpassed by the three sages and ten saints and her actions are those of one who transmits the right stream of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Therefore, when present day chief priests and top disciples lack understanding they should ask nuns who have attained the Dharma to come and instruct them. What good are elders who have not attained the Dharma?

Masters who instruct many people must have enlightened vision. Nevertheless, there are many foolish masters who are attached to body and mind and are laughed at by even worldly people, much less given recognition as interpreter's of the Buddhist Dharma. Also among lay people there are some who question the practice of making prostrations to those monks who possess the right transmission. They do not know the Buddhist Dharma, they do not study, they resemble animals, and are far from the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Yet if anyone is willing to devote his entire body and mind to the Buddhist Dharma surely the Dharma will give him help. Even fools in heaven and earth can recognize true sincerity. Can it be possible for the True Law of all the Buddhas to fail to establish harmony among all things? Even soil, sand, and stones possess the ability to feel sincerity.

In present day temples in Sung Dynasty China there are nuns who have become famous for their practice and attainment of the Dharma. They are appointed masters of famous monasteries at the Emperor's request and give many lectures in the Dharma Hall. The chief priest and all the other monks assemble in the Dharma Hall and listen to their proclamation of the Law. The question and answer session will be conducted in the manner of bhikkhus. That is an established practice. After someone has attained the Dharma, i.e., become a true ancient Buddha, we should not or think about past meetings with that person [before he became an ancient Buddha]. When we meet that person [after his enlightenment] it is on special and new ground and we should only think about the new circumstances. That is why a nun who transmits the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and has been honoured and instructed by arhats, the three sages and ten saints should receive our prostrations. What makes you noble just because you are man?

After all, universal emptiness is universal emptiness, the four elements are the four elements, and the five skandhas are the five skandhas; women are the same – attaining the Way can be accomplished by both men and women. Moreover, we must equally respect both attainments of the Dharma. Do not be concerned with the differences between men and women. This is a basic principle of the supreme and wonderful Buddhist Way. In China, there are also laymen who have not renounced the world yet still devote themselves to Buddhism. There are single people and couples living in huts practising clean and pure lives in the midst of the dirt and pain of this world. Yet all of these people are trying to clarify the same things as masters who have become monks and gathered together to study, make prostrations and receive instruction. It makes no difference if they are men, women, or beasts. Those who have not seen the Buddhist Dharma even in their dreams – and this includes hundred-year-old bhikkhus – cannot surpass laymen or women who have attained the Dharma. Still they simply bow to them as a host bows to his guest.

Anyone who practices and attains the Buddhist Dharma, even a girl of seven, will be the leader and compassionate father of all monks, nuns, lay people and sentient beings. In [the Lotus Sutra] the daughter of a dragon king became Buddha. She should be venerated, honoured, and respected like all the Buddhas and Tathāgatas. This is the ancient practice of the Buddhist Way. Those who do not know this and lack the right transmission are to be greatly pitied.

Written on one bright day in March, 1240, at Kannondōri-Kōshōhōrinji.

29. SANSUIKYO

山水經

"The mountain and river sūtras"

The present mountains and rivers actualize the Way of the ancient Buddhas. Both mountains and rivers maintain their true form and actualize their real virtue. They transcend time and therefore are active in the eternal present. Since their original self is revealed, they are detached from their manifestation. Mountains possess the virtue of being high and wide yet the movement of the clouds and the blowing of the wind are free and not restrained by the mountain.

The priest Fuyo Dōkai of Mt. Taiyō^{1-EN} said to an assembly: "The green mountains are always moving and a stone woman gives birth at night."

The mountain possesses complete virtue with nothing lacking; therefore, it is always safely rooted, yet constantly moving. We must study the virtue of this "movement" in detail. Simply because the movement of a mountain is not like the movement of a human being, do not doubt that it exists. Dōkai's "moving" contains the essence of moving. We must clarify the meaning of "always moving." "Always moving" means eternal. The movement of "always" is faster than the wind, but those living on the mountain neither realize nor know it. Living on the mountain is analogous to "When a flower blooms, spring exists everywhere." However, those who are not on the mountain are also unaware of its movement. Anyone who does not see the mountain for himself cannot realize, see, or hear it due to this principle. If anyone doubts the movement of the mountain it is because he does not understand his own movement. People move and take steps but they are unable to understand it. When we understand our own movement we can understand the movement of the mountain.

Just as green mountains are not animate or inanimate, so are we. If we realize that, we will not doubt the movement of green mountains. The green mountains must be seen in relation to the entire world. We must closely examine the movement of the green mountains and our own movement – forward and backward. We must also examine the forward and backward movement that existed before heaven and earth were joined and time began.

If movement ceases, Buddhas and Patriarchs cannot appear. If movement came to a dead end, the Buddhist Dharma could not have been handed down to the present day. Both forward and backward movement have never stopped, and they are not opposed to each other. The virtue of the flowing mountains is this movement. Green mountains study their own movement, the east mountain studies its movement across the water. Therefore, this is the proper study of the mountain. It is not necessary to change the mountain's body and mind; the mountain learns about itself as a mountain.

Do not slander mountains by saying they do not move or walk across the water. There is doubt about this due to our shallow views. Since our understanding is inadequate we are amazed to hear the expression "flowing mountains." "Flowing mountains" is not completely understood by everyone, especially those caught in shallow observations and superficial understanding. Hence, when we say "mountain," we designate it so because of its increasing virtue and its maintenance of life. It moves and flows. When the mountain gives birth to a mountain, Buddhas and Patriarchs appear from this principle and emerge in such a manner.

Enlightened vision is actualized in the mountains, grasses, trees, earth, stones, fences, and walls. Do not have any doubt about it; yet it is not movement or total actualization. Even if the mountain is adorned with the seven precious jewels we still do not see its true form. Even if the Buddhas and Patriarchs practice there, do not become attached to it. Even if it possesses the highest form of all the Buddhas' unsurpassed virtue, it still has not revealed its true state. Like this, each observation depends on the respective viewpoint of the observer, and lacks something. It is not the work of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, but rather only one small part of total observation.

One-sided or narrow observations are not permitted by Shakyamuni. Discriminating between mind and nature was never done by the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Looking for one's mind and nature is the activity of non-believers. Attachment to words and letters is not the way of liberation. Like this, we can find the state that transcends such narrow views; i.e., "the green mountains are always moving" and "the east mountain walks across the water." Study this in detail.

"A stone woman gives birth at night." The barren woman gives birth at "night." In general, there are male, female, and neuter stones. These compensate for any lack in heaven and earth – there is also a stone of heaven and a stone of earth. Worldly people may pay lip service to this, but few people really know about it. We must be able to understand the principle of giving birth. When a child is born, is it a transformation of the parents? We study the idea that to become parents of the child is the actualization of birth, but we should also carefully study the practice and enlightenment of the birth when the child becomes the parent.

Great Master Ummon Kyōshin said, "The east mountain walks across the water." The essence of this actualization of the Way is that all mountains are the "east mountain" and all those east mountains walk across the water. Therefore, the nine great mountains and Mt. Sumeru [of India] actualize themselves and attain practice and enlightenment. This is the "east mountain."

However, can we be sure whether or not Ummon transcended the activity of practice and enlightenment in the skin, flesh, bones, and marrow of the east mountain? In the present day Sung Dynasty there are many groups of careless people whose number is increasing, and those who possess the truth cannot do anything to prevent it. Some people say that "the east mountain walks across the water" and the story of Nansen's sickle^{2-EN} are completely incomprehensible.

They point out that those words related to normal cognition are not the Zen words of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Those words which are beyond comprehension are the sayings of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Hence, Ōbaku's use of the staff and Rinzai, s shouts are beyond comprehension. This is the great enlightenment that existed before time. All those skillful means used by our virtuous predecessors to cut off our entanglements are "incomprehensible." That is not the teaching of a real master and not the eye of proper study. Such people are too foolish to mention. In the past two or three hundred years there have been many evil people and fake monks. It is very pitiful that the Great Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs is perishing everywhere. The interpretations of those people are even inferior to those of Hinayānists and śrāvakas, and their ideas are more foolish than those of non-believers. They are neither laymen nor monks, human beings nor gods. They are more stupid

1-EN Fu-jung Tao-k'ai (d. 1118).

2-EN One day when Nansen was working outside, a monk asked him, "Which way to Nansen's?" Nansen lifted up his sickle and said, "I bought this real cheap." The monk said, "I'm not interested in how much your sickle cost. Which way to Nansen's?" Nansen said, "I've gotten a lot of use out of it."

than dumb beasts who learn the Buddhist Way. What false monks term "incomprehensible" is only incomprehensible to them and not to the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Do not avoid the path of the Buddhas and Patriarchs just because you yourself lack comprehension. You might not be able to understand it now, but that does not mean that it is incomprehensible. There are many cases of such inadequate understanding in present day Sung Dynasty China. I saw many such cases with my own eyes. It is a very sorry thing that they are unaware of the inadequacy of their cognition; they do not realize that the words of the Buddhas and Patriarchs transcend ordinary cognition. When I was in China they kept quiet even if I laughed at them. What they consider incomprehensible is simply due to their evil minds. Who taught them such a thing? Since they lacked a master who possessed the truth they naturally became children of non-believers.

We should know that the east mountain walking across the water is the bones and marrow of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. All types of water are actualized at the foot of the east mountain. Therefore, all the mountains go beyond the clouds and walk over heaven. The peak of the water is various mountains. Climbing up and down is to cross the water. The toes of the various mountains walk over the water and the water splashes beneath their feet. This movement is natural and practice and enlightenment emerge. Water is not strong or weak, wet or dry, moving or still, cold or hot, existent or non-existent, illusion or enlightenment. When it is solid it is harder than the hardest diamond; when it melts it is softer than the softest milk.

Therefore, that is why we should not doubt the actualization of the water's virtue. Now we should study and observe for a time the water in the ten directions of the universe. It is not the study of the water seen by men and gods, but rather the study of water seen by water. Since there is a practice and enlightenment of water's water, there is a method to search for the water's water. We should actualize the Way of meeting ourselves through ourselves; others should study others following the path that moves freely and transcends itself.

Generally, when we look at mountains and water they are seen in a variety of ways depending upon the circumstances; the gods see it as their adornment, not simply as water. We see it as something else, we see it as water. For them it is an adornment and for us water. Some people see water as a wonderful flower yet do not use it as a flower. Demons see water as a huge fire or thick blood. Dragons and fish see water as a palace or beautiful halls. Water can be seen in many ways – as the seven precious jewels, forests, fences, the pure and undefiled liberation of Dharma nature, the true body of man, bodily form and essence of mind, or as the water seen by human beings. Different standpoint, different interpretation. Like this, the view depends on the eye of the beholder. Let us investigate this a little further. Does looking at one object give many different views or does it occur by mistakenly thinking one object possesses various forms? We must consider this carefully.

Therefore, that is why practice and enlightenment are not limited to just one or two kinds but encompass thousands of forms depending on the condition and nature of enlightenment. Further, if we consider this statement more closely we will find that even if there are various types of water, it is as if there were no true or original water, and no various types of water either. The various types of water, however, go beyond all this and are not mind, form, karma, themselves, or other things. Water is simply water, totally detached.

Hence, water is not comprised of earth, water, fire, wind, space, consciousness, etc. [matter]; it is not blue, yellow, red, white, black, etc. [colour]; and it has no form, sound, smell, taste, sensation, perception, etc. [sensation]. Nevertheless, it is actualized in all those things. Consequently, it is very difficult to be able to clarify the nature of this present world and its palaces. Correct interpretation depends on the inner meaning of wind and space [emptiness]; it does not depend on ideas of oneself and others, and is far beyond superficial understanding. Do not limit your vision to some narrow range.

Shakyamuni Buddha said, "All dharmas are free and without attachment, abiding nowhere." We must know that all dharmas are free and without attachment; nevertheless, they maintain their true state. When human beings look at water they see only one kind of flowing. There are many kinds of flowing but human beings only see one kind. For example, land and sky are flowing, top to bottom, bends in a river flow, the deepest pools flow; above the clouds and at the bottom of the river all things are flowing.

In the Monshi it says, "Water ascends to heaven to make raindrops and descends to earth to flow in rivers." So-called descendants of the Buddhas and Patriarchs are not as wise as the non-believers who wrote that text, and it is shameful that they do not understand the principle of water. The point here is that water is not conscious of itself, but just manifests itself as it is.

"Water ascends to the heavens to make raindrops." We must know that water ascends, no matter how high it is, and makes raindrops. Raindrops change according to the circumstances; if someone says there is a place where water cannot go, it is just the teaching of Hinayānists or the false teaching of non-believers. Just as water penetrates flames it penetrates the mind of cognition and discrimination, and the enlightened wisdom of Buddha-nature.

"It descends to earth to flow in rivers." We should know that when water descends to earth it becomes rivers. If we can grasp the significance of "river" we can become sages. Foolish people out of the mainstream think that water is found only in rivers and oceans. This is not correct. Rivers and oceans are in the water. Consequently, water is not only in the rivers and oceans. When water descends to earth it takes the form of rivers and oceans. Again, since water forms rivers and oceans we should not study that there is no world or Buddha land in the water.

Even in one drop of water countless Buddha lands are actualized. Yet there is no water in the Buddha land, nor is there a Buddha land in the water. Where water exists it has no relation to past, present, or future nor to any particular world. Nevertheless, water is actualized as the absolute truth. Where Buddhas and Patriarchs go, water surely follows. Therefore, Buddhas and Patriarchs possess the body, mind, and thought of water. That is why "water never flows up" is not found anywhere in the Buddhist texts. Water flows everywhere – up and down, back and forth.

It also says in the Buddhist sūtras, "Heat rises, water flows downhill." What we must study is "up and down" i.e., the study of up and down of the Buddhist Way. Where water flows we think of it as down, but we should not say down before we see where it flows. Where heat rises is up. Although the world of existence does not actually correspond to the six directions, we use the four (five, or six elements) to tentatively divide the world in different directions. We cannot always say that heaven is "up" or hell is "down." Heaven and hell form the entire existence of the world.

However, when dragons and fish see water as a palace it is the same as human beings seeing a palace. No one sees a palace as flowing. If someone outside the palace tells the dragon or fish that it is flowing, they would be as surprised as human beings who hear the expression "mountains flow." Furthermore, the railing, stairs, and pillars of the palace are also flowing water. Quietly reflect on this principle. If we cannot separate ourselves from biased views, we cannot be separated from the body and mind of ordinary people, nor master the world of Buddhas and Patriarchs. We will not be able to master the world or palace of ordinary people. We may know what oceans and rivers are but dragons and fish do not. Do not foolishly think

that simply because we know what water is, other beings also know. Those who study the Buddhist Way and learn about water should not limit their study to the observations of humans. Study all aspects of water in the Buddhist Way. How should we study the water observed by the Buddhas and Patriarchs? We should ascertain whether or not there is water in the enlightenment of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Mountains are the home of the great sages throughout the past and present. Saints and sages live together deep in the mountains; mountains are their body mind. Saints and sages actualize mountains. We may imagine that even though there are a great number of saints and sages gathered in the mountains, they meet no one else there. Only the vital function of the mountain appears without a trace of the saints' and sages' presence. Looking at the mountains from this world, and looking at them while standing on one of them are completely different. This type of speculation or actual knowledge of "not flowing" differs from the observation of dragons and fish. Men and gods live in their own respective worlds, and other things doubt or are unable to doubt their views.

Hence, you must study the verse "mountains flow" as the Buddhas and Patriarchs do, and do not base your interpretation on amazement or doubt. One opinion says "it flows" another says "it doesn't flow." Without proper study there can be no wheel of the True Law of the Tathāgata.

An ancient Buddha said, "If we wish to avoid evil karma we must not slander the wheel of the True Law of the Tathāgata." This saying pierces skin, flesh, bones, marrow, body and mind, emptiness and form, trees, stones, rice paddies and villages.

Although mountains seem to belong to the country they really belong to those who love them. When the lord of the mountain is loved, virtuous men and women will live there. When saints and sages live on the mountain, the mountain is their possession, trees and stones grow truck, and the birds and beasts flourish. The virtue of saints and sages influences all things on the mountain.

We should know that the nature of mountains is like that of saints and sages. There are many cases of emperors visiting a mountain to bow before sages and seek the counsel of saints. On those occasions they respect those sages as their masters and prostrate themselves before them. Here social customs or status are not binding. No matter how great the power and virtue of the emperor, sages are not moved by it. Those who live in the mountains are quite separate from society. On one occasion, the Emperor Kō of China visited the hermit Kōsei on Mt. Kōdō and approached him on his knees and bowed his head to the floor to show his humility.

Shakyamuni abandoned his father's palace and went to the mountains. The king bore no grudges, was not resentful of his son's actions, and did not question the sincerity of those who taught the prince in the mountains. Shakyamuni's twelve years of severe practice took place almost entirely in the mountains and his enlightenment took place in the mountains. Real kings never try to control or destroy mountains. We should know that mountains belong neither to the world of human beings or gods. Do not approach this using only your limited human ability. If you do, how will you be able to fathom "the mountain flows" or "does not flow"?

From ancient times saints and sages have also lived on the water. When they live on the water, some catch fish, some catch disciples, some catch the Way. This is the ancient tradition of water. Moreover, we must catch ourselves, catch "catching." By catching, "catching" is caught through the Way.

Long ago, the priest Tokujō suddenly left his master Yakusan and went to live on a boat on the Katei River. Soon a sage [Kassan] who lived there became his disciple. This is an example of catching fish, catching disciples, catching water, and catching yourself. Kassan saw Tokujō and found Tokujō in himself; Tokujō could see him because he met himself.

Not only is there water in the world, there is a world of water with a world in it. This is not true just for water, but for all material things – there are animate worlds in clouds, wind, fire, earth, Dharma worlds, one blade of grass, and a staff. Where there is an animate world there is a world of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Study this principle well.

Therefore, water is the palace of the real dragon [enlightenment]. Water does not only flow: to think like that is to slander water. For example, if we choose a different perspective water does not flow. Water is its own true form. Water is the virtue of water and does not "flow." If we clarify this principle of the water's flowing or not flowing we can clarify all phenomena. There is a mountain hidden in precious jade and in streams, and in the sky and mountains. Study the mountain hidden in the depths of a mountain.

An ancient Buddha said, "Mountains are mountains, water is water!" These mountains are not the usual mountains. These mountains are the real mountains of the Buddhas and Patriarchs; therefore, study them. If we search for these mountains we can learn from them. Like this, mountains and water become saints and sages.

This was delivered to the monks at Kannondōri-Kōshōhōrinji on October 18, 1240. Transcribed on June 3, 1242, at Kippōji in the chief disciple's quarters by Ejō.

30. KANGIN

看經

"Reading of the sūtras"

In the practice and enlightenment of supreme and perfect awakening, some times we use the teaching of a master and sometimes we use the teaching in the sūtras. "Master" is the entire self of the Buddhas and Patriarchs; "sūtras" is the entire self of the sūtras. Therefore, we have the self of all the sūtras. "Self" is not some limited identity – it is active enlightened vision, and lively fists. Remembering, reading, chanting, copying, receiving, and possessing the sūtras together form the practice and enlightenment of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Nonetheless, it is difficult to come in contact with the Buddhist sūtras. In all the countries of this world even the name of the sūtras is rarely heard. Even among the Buddhas and Patriarchs and their descendants it is difficult to hear just the name. If you are not a Buddha or Patriarch you cannot see, hear, read, chant, or comprehend the sūtras.

Studying the Buddhas and Patriarchs gradually enables us to study the sūtras. Then the faculties of hearing, seeing, tasting, smelling, and the comprehension of the entire body and mind actualize hearing, receiving, possessing, explaining, etc. of the sūtras. Those who are only looking for fame or those who expound the doctrines of non-believers can never practice the Buddhist sūtras. Those sūtras have been transmitted by trees and stones and have become known in rice paddies and villages. They have been proclaimed everywhere throughout vast kingdoms and the entire universe.

The Great Master Yakusan Kudō had not given any Dharma talks for a long time. The general secretary of the monastery asked him, "All the monks are waiting to hear your compassionate teaching." Yakusan said, "Strike the gong and call an assembly." The general secretary did so, and soon all the monks gathered. Then Yakusan entered the Dharma Hall. He sat there silently for a time, then got up and returned to his quarters. The general secretary came after him and said, "O priest! You agreed to speak but left without saying even a single word. Why?" Yakusan said, "Sūtras have sūtra masters and abhidharma doctrines have abhidharma scholars.! Why should you wonder at the action of this old monk?"

What Yakusan wanted to say is that fists have masters of fists and enlightened vision has masters of enlightened vision. However, the general secretary should have asked Yakusan, "I don't wonder about your actions. By the way, what kind of master are you?"

Once Hōtatsu, a monk whose main occupation was the continual chanting of the Lotus Sutra, came to see the Patriarch Daikan [Enō] of Mt. Sōkei in Choshū. The Patriarch recited this verse:

"If the mind is deluded, the Lotus Sūtra turns us.

If the mind is enlightened, we turn the Lotus Sūtra.

No matter how long we chant, if we do not clarify self Words and letters obstruct the essence.

Thoughtless thought is true.

Conscious thought is false.

Abandon existence and non-existence

And always ride the white ox cart [the Way of Buddha]."

Therefore, if the mind is deluded, the Lotus Sūtra turns us; if the mind is enlightened, we turn it; and if we transcend illusion and enlightenment, then the Lotus Sūtra turns the Lotus Sūtra.

After hearing this verse, Hōtatsu was overjoyed and recited his own verse:

"Over and over, I chanted sūtras;

Now, one verse of Sōkei, s made me forget them all.

If we haven't clarified Shakyamuni's emergence in this world We cannot be liberated from transmigration.

There are sheep, deer, and ox carts;

Beginning, middle, and end are full of goodness.

Who knows that within this burning house [i.e., the body]

Is the original Dharma kingdom?"

Then the Patriarch said, "From now on call yourself the monk who has memorized the sūtras."

We should know that there is such a monk in the Buddhist Way. This is the ancient Buddha Sōkei's direct pointing. "Memorized" is not consciousness nor unconsciousness, existence nor non-existence. Throughout unlimited kalpas we must keep and memorize the sūtras day and night; from sūtra to sūtra there is nothing but sūtras.

The Honourable Prajñātāra, the twenty-seventh Patriarch of East India was invited by the king for a meal. The king asked him, "Everyone is proclaiming all manner of sūtras but you. Why?" Prajnatara said, "Forgive my poor words, but I will put it this way: When I exhale my breath is not affected by events or conditions; when I inhale I do not dwell in the world of conditioned form. Continually, I proclaim the sūtra of suchness; it has millions and millions of volumes, not just one or two."

The Honourable Prajñātāra sowed the seeds [of Zen practice] in East India. He was the twenty-seventh Patriarch descended from Mahākāśyapa. He transmitted the household effects of the Buddhas – their heads, enlightened eyes, fists, nostrils, staffs, mendicant bowls, robes, bones, marrow, etc. He is our Patriarch and we are his descendants. The essence of Prajñātāra's statement is that not only his breath is not affected by external conditions, but also that external conditions are not affected. Such external conditions as head and eyes, body and mind are not affected by external conditions.

"Not affected" here means "totally affected" [i.e., the identity of opposites]. Although exhaled breath is an external condition, it is not affected by external conditions. Although the meaning of exhale and inhale has previously been unknown for countless kalpas, it has now been made known for the first time through the expressions "not dwelling in the world of form" and "not affected by external conditions." In external conditions we have the opportunity to study "inhale." This occasion does

not exist in the past or future but in the external present.

The world of conditioned form is the five skandhas, i.e., form, perception, mental conceptions, volition, and consciousness. Do not dwell in the five skandhas; you are staying in a world where the five skandhas do not appear. The main point here is that the sūtras proclaimed number not just one or two but millions and millions. "Millions and millions" is a huge amount but also has another meaning. One breath in which we do not dwell in the world of conditioned form contains millions of volumes. However, this is not a large amount of wisdom or a liberated state. It transcends the possession or non-possession of knowledge and wisdom. It is simply the practice and enlightenment of the Buddhas and Patriarchs; it is their skin, flesh, bones, marrow, enlightened eyes, fists, head, nostrils, staffs, and fly whisks.

Once Great Master Shinsai of Kannon-in in Jōshū was asked by an elderly lady devotee who had made a large donation to read the entire Tripitaka. Jōshū came down from his seat and walked around it one time. Then he told the old woman's messenger, "I've finished reading the Tripitaka." The messenger returned to the old woman and told her what happened. The old woman said, "I asked him to read the entire Tripitaka. Why did he read only half?"

Now we can clearly see that both the entire Tripitaka and half the Tripitaka are the old woman's three sūtras [i.e., the three vehicles]. "I have finished reading the Tripitaka" is Jōshū's understanding of the sūtras. Generally, reading the Tripitaka is Jōshū's walking around his seat and the seat walking around Jōshū. Jōshū walks around Jōshū; the seat walks around the seat. Yet, the reading of the Tripitaka is not just walking around the seat, nor does the seat walk around.

There is another similar story. Great Master Jinshō of Mt. Daisai in Echu (his Dharma name was Hōsshin) was a disciple of Great Master Dai'e of Chokeiji. Once, an elderly woman disciple made a donation and asked him to read the entire Tripitaka. Daisai got up and walked once around his seat and said to the woman's messenger, "I have finished reading the Tripitaka." The messenger returned to the old woman and told her what happened. She said, "I asked him to read the entire Tripitaka. Why did he read only half?"

Here, we should not study Daisai's walking around his seat or the seat walking around Daisai. He was not trying to show the perfection [of Buddha's] fist and enlightened vision. His circle was the circle of the Dharma world. However, did the old woman possess the ability to understand it or not? "He read only half" is not sufficient, even if she transmitted it from her master; rather, she should have said, "I asked him to read the entire Tripitaka. Why did he come down so readily from his seat?" Even if she had said this unthinkingly, she still would be one who possessed enlightened vision.

Once, a minister invited the Patriarch Tōzan for a meal. The minister made a donation and asked Tōzan to read the Tripitaka. Tōzan came down from his seat and bowed to the minister. The minister returned the bow. Then Tōzan took him and they walked once around the seat. Tōzan bowed again, waited a short time, and then asked, "Do you understand?" The minister replied, "No, I don't." Tōzan said, "I have read you the Tripitaka. Why don't you understand?"

The meaning of "I have read you the Tripitaka" should be clear. We should not study that walking around the seat is to read the Tripitaka, nor should we study that reading the Tripitaka is the same as walking around the seat. We must listen carefully to the Patriarch's words.

Once, when my late master, an ancient Buddha, was living on Mt. Tendō a Korean pilgrim came to make a donation and to request that all the monks recite some sūtras for him. My master related the above story about Tōzan.

After finishing the story my master drew a circle in the air with his fly whisk and said, "Today I have read the Tripitaka for you." He threw down the fly whisk and left the hall.

We should carefully examine my late master's actions. They are beyond comparison. When he read the Tripitaka did he use one bright eye or just half? We must clarify the manner in which Tōzan and my master used enlightened vision and Buddha's tongue.

The Patriarch Yakusan Kudō usually did not allow sūtra reading. One day, however, a monk found him looking at an open book. The monk said, "O Priest! Usually you do not allow us to read the sūtras so why are you reading the sūtras yourself?" "I just need something to rest my eyes on." The monk said, "May I use the same pretence?" The master replied, "If you look at the sūtras you'll burn a hole in the leather cover."

The meaning of "I need something to rest my eyes on" is that Yakusan became the object itself. This means abandoning enlightened vision, abandoning the sūtras. The eye is obstructed and becomes the obstructed eye. There is an active obstruction behind the eye; we add one more skin to the skin covering the eye. With "obstruction" we can enlighten the eye and vice versa. Therefore, if it is not the enlightened vision sūtra we cannot gain the merit inherent in the obstructed eye. "Burning a hole in the leather cover" means the entire cow is skin. Its skin, flesh, bones, marrow, head, horns, and nostrils form its lively function. When we learn about the master the cow becomes enlightened vision. This is the meaning of resting the eye on some object. Here, enlightened vision becomes the cow.

Zen Master Yabu Dōsen said, "Venerating all the countless Buddhas gives us unlimited happiness. But is it superior to reading the ancient teachings? The sūtras are black characters on white paper. Open your eyes and look at them!" We should know that to venerate the ancient Buddhas and to read the ancient teachings possess the same virtue and happiness. There is no happiness and virtue beyond this. "Ancient teaching" is black characters on white paper, but who really knows the ancient teaching? We must study this principle carefully.

Once, one of the monks of Great Teacher Kōkaku of Mt. Ungo was reading a sūtra in his room. The master called out through the window, "What sūtra are you reading?" The monk answered, "The Vimalakīrti-nirdela Sūtra." The master said, "I didn't ask you about the sūtra you have in your hands. What sūtra are you reading?" The monk was suddenly enlightened.

Kōkaku's "What sūtra are you reading?" transcends time and is extremely deep; it cannot be put into words. It is like meeting a poisonous snake in the road; hence, the central question of the sūtra emerges. Whenever we meet a master he will be able to explain the Vimalakīrti Sūtra without mistake.

In general, reading the sūtras should be based on the method used by all the Buddhas and Patriarchs. They use their enlightened vision. At that time all the Buddhas and Patriarchs become Buddhas; they proclaim the Dharma and Buddha. If you do not read the sūtras like this, you will never see the head or face of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

In the present-day communities of the Buddhas and Patriarchs there are various occasions when the sūtras are read. For example, sūtras read for the benefit of all beings when requested by a lay devotee, the regular daily recitation, individual chanting by earnest monks, etc. Also, there is a special type of chanting for a monk's funeral.

After a lay devotee has come to the temple and requested the monks to chant the sūtras, this procedure should be followed: After the morning meal the head monk erects a sign board in front of the monastery and monks' quarters announcing the chanting. A cloth used for prostrations is placed in front of the image of Manjusri. At the proper time the gong in front of the monastery is struck either one or three times [i.e., one sequence or three sequences], depending on the head priest's instructions. After the gong is struck the head monk leads all the others into the hall and they take their seats facing front. All should be wearing their Kesas. Next the abbot enters the hall, makes a bow to the statue of Manjusri, and takes his seat. Then an acolyte brings the sūtras. These sūtras should be prepared in advance and arranged properly in the repository.

The sūtras should be brought in either a special box or tray. All the monks reverently hold up the sūtras and begin chanting. Then the guest-master brings the lay devotee to the hall. The devotee should pick up the censer, which has been previously placed at the temple entrance by an attendant monk. The sign for entering should be given by the guest-master. Then they enter from the south with the guest-master in front and the lay devotee behind. The devotee offers incense to the image of Manjusri and makes three prostrations while holding the censer. During the devotee's prostrations the guest-master stands at the upper corner of the prostration cloth, facing south with his hands folded across his chest. After finishing his prostrations the devotee turns to his right, faces the abbot and bows. The abbot remains seated, takes the sūtra in his hands, and makes a gassho. Then the devotee faces north and bows. After this, he walks around the hall beginning at the abbot's seat. The guest-master leads him around. Once again the devotee stands before the image of Manjusri, still holding the censer, and bows. While this is happening the guest-master stands at the entrance, facing north with his hands folded across his chest.

After making his bow to Manjusri the lay devotee follows the guest-master out of the monastery and walks around it one time. He enters again, makes three prostrations to Manjusri, goes to his assigned seat, and certifies the reading of the sūtras. His chair should either be next to the pillar to the left of Manjusri, or next to the southern pillar facing north. After the devotee sits down the guest-master bows and then takes his own seat. On some occasions a monk will chant as the lay devotee walks around the monastery. That monk's seat should be either on the left or right of Manjusri depending on the circumstances. Only the highest class incense such as jinko or senko, etc. should be offered. The incense should be prepared by the devotee. When the devotee walks around the monastery all the monks should place their hands in gassho.

Next, the donation should be made. The amount or kind of donation depends upon the devotee. Sometimes things like cotton, fans, etc. are offered. The lay devotee can make the offering himself, or it can be done by the secretary general, or an attendant monk. The offering should be placed before the monks and not given directly to them. All the monks should make gassho when it is offered. (Sometimes the donation is brought in before the morning meal. In that case the announcement board is struck and the chief monk brings the donation in. The merit of the devotee's offering should be written down and placed on the pillar to the left of Manjusri.)

When the sūtras are chanted in the monastery it should be done in a low voice, not a high one. On occasion, the sūtras are not read aloud; they are simply opened and the monks only look at the characters. In that case, we generally use such sūtras as the Diamond Sutra, several chapters of the Lotus Sūtra, or the Golden Light Sūtra, etc. A large quantity of those sūtras should be kept in the monastery.

Each monk should have his own copy. After the chanting is finished the sūtras should be put in the special tray or box carried by one of the monks. At that time, the monks should make gassho and chant the concluding prayer in a low voice.

If the sūtras are to be read outside of the monastery the general secretary can act as the devotee in the manner described above for handling the incense, making prostrations, walking, and arranging the donation. He must hold the censer in the prescribed manner. A monk may also request the sūtras to be read; in that case, he acts in the same manner as the lay devotee.

For the emperor's birthday, sūtra reading is done as follows: [The sūtra reading should begin one month prior to the birth date.] For example, if the emperor's birthday is January fifteenth then the sūtra reading should begin on December fifteenth. On that day there is no Dharma talk. In front of the image of Shakyamuni in the Buddha Hall two platforms should be constructed. They should face the east and run from north to south. Between the two platforms a stand for the sūtras should be placed. On the stand place one sūtra such as the Diamond Sūtra, the Ninno Sūtra, the Lotus Sūtra, the Suvarnaprabhāvāsottama-raja-Sūtra etc. Every day some small treat such as noodles, soup, or sweet cakes should be served to all the monks. The sweet cakes should be placed in a bowl with chopsticks, not a spoon. Eat the snack where the sūtras are being chanted and do not take it anywhere else. The food should be put with the sūtras and it is not necessary to prepare a special table. After finishing the snack all the monks should go to the lavatory and gargle. Then they return to their respective seats and begin to read the sūtras. They should read continuously from the morning meal to midday. When the drum is struck three times it signals the time for the midday meal, and marks the end of sūtra reading for that day.

From the first day a yellow sign board announcing the celebration of the emperor's birthday should be placed on the east side of the eaves in front of the Buddha Hall or the eastern pillar inside the Hall. The name of the abbot should be written on a small piece of red or white paper together with the year, month, and day of the celebration. The reading of the sūtras should continue in this way until the arrival of the emperor's birthday. The abbot gives a Dharma talk to mark the celebration. This is an ancient, established custom.

Sometimes an especially diligent monk will want to read the sūtras under his own initiative. Every temple should have a special room for sūtra reading. Those interested in sūtra reading should go there. Follow the rules for that kind of reading as laid down in the Shingi.

Once, Great Master Yakusan Kudō asked the novice Kō, "Which is more profitable – reading the sūtras or studying under a master?" Kō said, "Neither reading the sūtras nor studying under a master is of any value." Yakusan said, "You're pretty sharp. But if neither is of any value, how can enlightenment be attained?" Kō said, "I don't mean to say that no one can attain it, but neither the sūtras nor the teaching of a master can give the essence."

Some accept the essence of the teaching of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, some do not. Nevertheless, reading the sūtras and studying under a master are nothing but the everyday life of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

This was delivered to the monks at Kōshōhōrinji, Uji, Yamashiro, on September 15, 1241. Transcribed on July 8, 1245 at the chief disciple's quarters of Daibutsuji, Yoshida, Echizen, by Ejō.

31. SHOAKUMAKUSA

諸惡莫作

“Refrain from all evil”

An ancient Buddha said, “Refrain from all evil, practice all that is good, purify your mind; this is the teaching of all the Buddhas.”

This precept has been kept by all the Buddhas and Patriarchs in the past and present, before and after the seven Buddhas. It has been handed down from Buddha to Buddha. This precept is not only the possession of the seven Buddhas; it is the teaching of all the Buddhas. We must clarify this principle. The Dharma Way of the seven Buddhas is the sum total of all their actions. There is an essential spirit in the continuous transmission and bestowal. That spirit is the teaching of all the Buddhas, and their practice and enlightenment.

“All evil” means the evil nature of good, bad, and neutral. That nature is unborn. The nature of good and neutral is also unborn, undefiled, and with true form. These three elements possess diverse forms. “All evil” means that the evil in this world and others, in the past and present, and among men and gods is not always the same. Between the Buddhist Way and worldly life there is a big difference in the ways of evil, good, and neutral. Good and evil are time, but time is not good and evil. Good and evil are the Dharma, but the Dharma is not good or evil. Good, evil, and the Dharma are equal.

Nevertheless, when we study supreme and perfect enlightenment we listen to the teaching, we practice, and we bear the fruits of enlightenment; this is profound, vast, and marvellous. We learn about supreme enlightenment from our venerable elders or from the sūtras. The first words we hear are “refrain from all evil.” If we do not hear those words then it is not the Buddhist teaching, but the teaching of demons.

We should know that when we hear “refrain from all evil,” it is the True Law of Buddha. Yet “refrain from all evil” is not what ordinary people attempt to do in the beginning. Only after hearing an explanation of enlightenment can we understand the meaning of the words which are based on the words of supreme enlightenment. Those words are enlightened words, and words enlightened. Supreme enlightenment is contained in those words, and by listening to them we can attempt to continually refrain from evil. Where no evil is produced, the true strength of practice is actualized. This actualization covers the entire earth, all the world, time, and all dharmas. The measure of its actualization depends on the amount of refraining from evil.

Those who have reached the state of refraining from evil can dwell in the midst of various evils without committing any evil themselves. Since refrain from evil actualizes a certain amount of power, evil is restrained. Evil lacks the necessary requisites. It is the principle of sometimes holding, sometimes letting go. Those who arrive at this stage can clarify the principle that evil cannot break or taint them.

Simply by practising with our entire body and mind we can accomplish eighty or ninety percent of our task without any conscious restraint. If we practice with our entire bodies and minds, the power derived from the four elements and five skandhas emerges; the four elements and five skandhas are untainted. Within the present four elements and five skandhas there can be continuous practice. The power of the four elements and five skandhas of our present practice can remake the previous conditions of those elements. This practice is carried out in the mountains, rivers, earth, sun, moon, and stars; indeed the mountains, rivers, earth, sun, moon, and stars make us practice.

Enlightened vision does not only occur in an instant, but is constantly active at all times. Since enlightened vision is active at all times, it enables the Buddhas and Patriarchs to practice, hear the teaching, and bear the fruits of enlightenment. The Buddhas and Patriarchs have never defiled teaching, practice, and enlightenment; consequently, those things present no obstacles. The Buddhas and Patriarchs have never avoided teaching, practice, and enlightenment in the past, present, or future. When sentient beings become Buddhas and Patriarchs [by refraining from evil] the actions of other Buddhas and Patriarchs are not obstacles. However, we must carefully consider the principle of becoming a Buddha or Patriarch through the daily actions of walking, staying, sitting, and lying. When sentient beings become Buddhas and Patriarchs they are not broken or lost—it is simply body and mind dropping off.

Practice is accomplished through the law of karma. That is, it is not moved by karma, nor does it create new karma. When karma exists it causes us to practice. When the original nature of karma is illuminated we see true refraining, impermanence, and the karma that ceases and never stops because there is only detachment. If we study like this we will see that we are able to refrain from all evil. When this understanding is actualized we can completely refrain from all evil and cut off all delusions through Zazen.

Then from beginning to end, all our actions will be free of evil and evil karma will not arise from any condition. There is only non-creation of evil. It is not that evil is annihilated by conditions, but rather, there is simply non-creation of evil. If all evil is equal, then all dharmas are equal. Do not think that evil arises from certain conditions of cause and effect; if you do not realize that karma itself is non-created, you are to be pitied. The seed of enlightenment arises from the chain of causation, and vice versa.

There is no non-existence of evil, there is no existence of evil, there is no emptiness, and no form – there is only refraining from evil. Not refraining from evil becomes refraining from evil. For example, a spring pine, an autumn chrysanthemum, all the Buddhas, a pillar, a stone lantern, a fly whisk, a staff, and even we ourselves are not existent nor non-existent.

This kind of study enables us to actualize our koan, and vice versa. It must be studied both objectively and subjectively. Any regret or remorse we feel for creating evil, derives from the principle of refraining from all evil. This is the virtuous power of refraining from evil.

However, to think that we cannot refrain from evil is like heading north when we want to go south. “Refraining from all evil” is not just the donkey looking at the well, but also the well looking at the well, and the donkey looking at the donkey, human beings looking at human beings, mountains looking at mountains. Because such a principle exists, [i.e., the relationship between evil and its creation,] we must refrain from evil. Buddha’s true Dharma-body is like space, or like shadows, or like the moon reflected in the water. Since all things are refraining from evil, all forms are refraining from evil. It is like space, existing no matter where you point. It is like the moon reflected in the water; the water does not disturb the moon. This kind of refraining from evil is surely actualized.

“Practice all that is good.” “All that is good” is the good of the three natures [good, bad, and neutral]. Although good exists

within the nature of good, it does not mean that good has some previous, independent existence and is waiting to be accomplished. When good is done, it contains all good. Although good is formless, when it is done it attracts more good faster than a magnet attracts iron. Its power is stronger than the strongest wind. All the accumulated karma throughout the earth, mountains, rivers, world, and lands cannot obstruct the power of good.

However, the interpretation of good depends on various circumstances; good is evaluated according to people's experience. Similarly, the essence of the Dharma proclaimed by all the Buddhas of the three worlds is the same, yet the actual words used depend on the time and circumstance. Even though the life and quantity of Buddhahood varies according to the situation, the Dharma proclaimed is still that of non-discrimination.

Therefore, that is why the good contained in belief and the good of the Dharma are the same, even though they appear to be different. For example, "Keeping the precepts of the śrāvakas is the same as breaking the precepts of the Bodhisattvas."

Good is independent of the creation or cessation of karma. Although good is all dharmas, all dharmas are not good karma. Karma, arising, ceasing, and good have their own beginning and end. We should practice all that is good, but it should not be done consciously by ourselves or on the instructions of others. In the consciousness of self and others, there is knowledge and observation of self and others; therefore, each active enlightened vision causes the sun and moon to appear. This is to practice all that is good. When good is done at the proper time, enlightenment is actualized, but it is not the first or last actualization. This is called practice of all that is good.

Although practising all that is good is necessary, we must not think of it analytically, and our enlightened vision must not be based on conjecture. In addition, it must not be used in order to evaluate the Dharma. Analysis with enlightened vision differs from general observations.

"Good" is not existence, non-existence, emptiness, form, etc. – it is just "practice." No matter where or when it is actualized, it is "practice." "Practice" surely actualizes all that is good. The actualization of practice is the koan that is beyond creation, destruction, or karma. Entering, staying, leaving, etc. are just like that. The practice of just one small good covers all dharmas, all bodies, the ground of truth, etc. – this is practising all that is good.

Good karma is the actualization of enlightenment of practice. Although it is not possible to say that cause always precedes effect, both cause and effect are fulfilled and completed. Cause is usually thought of as preceding effect, but actually neither one comes before or after, due to the equality and identification of before and after.

"Purify your mind" is the self and purification of "refrain." There is a self of "your mind," and a refrain of "your mind." Also there is a mind, purification, and self of "practice." Therefore, we have "This is the teaching of all the Buddhas."

"All the Buddhas" are like the gods of total freedom. Even though they have some points in common, the gods of total freedom are not all the Buddhas. Cakravartin^{1-EN} kings have great power and freedom but are not all the Buddhas. We must clarify this principle. Those who do not study the nature of all the Buddhas only create suffering for themselves and other sentient beings, and they do not practice the Way of Buddha. "Refraining from" and "practising" mean "The donkey [evil] leaves, and the horse [good] arrives."

The poet Hakurakuten of the T'ang Dynasty was a lay disciple of Bukko Nyoman, who was the Dharma-heir of Kōsei Daijaku (Baso). When he was a high official in Kōshū he studied under Zen Master Dōrin of Choka.^{2-EN} Once Hakurakuten asked Dōrin, "What is the essence of the Buddhist Dharma?" Dōrin replied, "Refrain from all evil, practice all that is good." Hakurakuten said, "Even a child of three knows that." Dōrin said, "A child of three may know it, but even a man of eighty cannot do it." Hakurakuten bowed deeply.

Hakurakuten was a descendant of General Haku, and an outstanding poet. People say his work will endure forever, and he is sometimes considered to be another Manjusri or Maitreya. There is no one who has not heard of him; he has no equal in the literary world. Nevertheless, he was just a beginner in the Buddhist Way despite the fact that he was an old man. Furthermore, he could not even begin to dream of the inner meaning of "refrain from all evil, practice all that is good."

Hakurakuten thought that Dōrin was just like an ordinary layman after he heard Dōrin repeat such a common phrase; Hakurakuten failed to realize that the principle of refraining from all evil and practising all that is good has been transmitted from ancient times to the present in the Buddhist Way. Since he had never practiced Buddhism he lacked its power and such a thing occurred. Although this discourse seems merely to be concerned with warning against evil and encouraging good, it is really the actualization of "refrain."

Generally, in the Buddhist Dharma both what we learn from virtuous people and from practice is the same. It is perfect from start to finish. It is called marvellous cause and marvellous effect, or Buddhist cause and Buddhist effect. Cause and effect in Buddhism differs from the ideas of ijuku [a cause making a different effect], toryu [a cause making an equal effect], etc. If there is no Buddhist cause there can be no Buddhist effect. Dōrin understood this principle and therefore possessed the Buddhist Dharma.

Even if evil blankets the entire world with many layers and absorbs all the elements, it is still the detachment of refraining from evil. Since good is good from beginning to end, the nature, form, shape, and strength of practice emerge as such. Hakurakuten lacked this understanding; consequently, he could say, "Even a child of three knows that." He said that because he lacked the power of attainment of the Way.

Miserable Hakurakuten, why did you say such a thing? Because you failed to learn the Buddhist teaching it is doubtful whether you know anything about the ability or natural talent of a three-year-old child. If someone can truly understand a three-year-old child he will know all the Buddhas of the three worlds. If you do not know those Buddhas you can never understand a three-year-old child. Do not think that we know a child just because we have met him and vice versa.

If we can understand a speck of dust we can know the entire world; one who truly knows one dharma can understand all dharmas. And if one fails to understand all dharmas, how can he understand one dharma? One who has total perception can see all dharmas, and he can see one dharma such as a speck of dust and learn about the entire world.

Anyone who thinks that a three-year-old child is unable to say anything about the Buddhist Dharma and that all his talk is simple is very foolish. To clarify the great matter of life and death is the central problem of Buddhism. An ancient worthy said, "When you were first born into this world you could roar like a lion. That lion's mat is the virtue of the Tathāgata's turning of

1-EN Chariot kings who control the four continents.

2-EN Po-chu-i and Taolin (c. 740).

the wheel of the Law and proclaiming the Dharma." Another worthy [Enko Kokugon] said, "The coming and going of life and death is the true body of man."

Therefore, clarifying the true body and possessing the virtue of a lion's roar is truly a great event and not at all easy or simple. Hence, clarification of a three-year-old child's actions and words is a great matter, since it is the same as (yet different from) the actions and words of all the Buddhas of the three worlds.

Hakurakuten foolishly misunderstood the meaning of a three-year-old child's attainment of the Way, was not puzzled by it, and therefore said such things. Dōrin's words peal louder than thunder but still Hakurakuten could not hear them. When he said, "Even a three-year-old child knows that," he meant "A three-year-old child has nothing to say about attaining the Way." He did not hear the child roaring like a lion, not the master's turning of the wheel of the Law.

The master could not help feeling pity for Hakurakuten and said, "A child of three may know it but even a man of eighty cannot do it." We must carefully study that point about the three-year-old child, and also the eighty-year-old man being unable to practice it. The child's attainment is entrusted to you, but his words are not typical. The old man's inability to practice also depends on you; but he also is not a typical person.

It is necessary to have this kind of principle – profound thinking, correct explanation, and basic understanding – in the Buddhist Law.

This was delivered to the monks of Kannondōri-Kōshōhōrinji, Uji, on the evening of August 21, 1239. Transcribed on March 27, 1243 at the chief disciple's quarters by Ejō.

32. DEN-E

傳衣

“Transmission of the kesa”

The right transmission of the Kesa from Buddha to Buddha in China was only through the High Patriarch [Bodhidharma] of Shōrinji. He was the twenty-eighth Patriarch after Shakyamuni. In India, there were twenty-eight Patriarchs in the right lineage; in China, there were six. Altogether, in India and China, there were thirty-three Patriarchs. The Thirty-Third Patriarch, Zen Master Daikan, received the Kesa and Dharma secretly from the fifth Chinese Patriarch Zen Master Daiman on Mt. Ōbai at midnight and he protected it all his life. That kesa is still at Horinji monastery on Mt. Sokei.

Since then, every emperor in each generation welcomed that kesa to his palace and held a service for it. They protected and transmitted it as sacred. During the Tang Dynasty the emperors Chushu, Shukushu, and Daishu often held special services in the palace. These emperors issued an imperial edict and dispatched a special messenger to welcome the kesa both when it arrived and when it was returned. These emperors showed their great respect. Emperor Daishu once issued an edict when the Kesa was returned to Mt. Sokei saying, “Today I am sending general Ryū to Sokei to return the kesa with due respect. I declare it a national treasure. The general will take the Kesa back and install it safely in the temple; he will select a priest from among the monks to be in charge of the kesa –instructing him to care for the kesa and protect it from damage.” In the same manner, the emperors that followed declared it to be a priceless treasure more valuable than anything in the world. It was far superior to the famous jade of Benka [from the Chou Dynasty] which had been given to the emperor. That jade can not be compared to this treasure. Even the national seal of the emperor, which protects the country, does not possess equal value to the kesa.

Since the great Tang Dynasty all those who prostrated themselves before this Kesa surely had trust in the Buddhist Dharma. Anyone who did not have good karma from previous lives, could not now prostrate themselves before this kesa rightly transmitted from Buddha to Buddha.

We should be glad to be able to possess the skin, flesh, bone, and marrow of believing and receiving the kesa. If there is no belief and reception because of past bad karma, the seed of Buddha cannot be possessed. This is regrettable. Worldly people say that when we see a person’s deeds we can see what they are like. If we prostrate ourselves and venerate the Buddhist kesa it is the same as seeing Buddha. Therefore, hundreds of thousands of stupas will be built and people will venerate the Buddhist kesa. Even those in heaven or on the ocean will have a mind to respect it. Everyone, including kings, who turns the Wheel of the Law realizes the nobility of the kesa and respects it.

The most pitiful thing is that kings in past generations did not know there was such a valuable treasure in their countries. They were influenced by Taoist teachings, and many kings abandoned the Buddhist Dharma. During that period, priests did not wear kesas; they wore strange thin silk hats. Their teaching focused only on attaining prosperity and long life. This occurred in the Tang and the Sung Dynasties. The leaders were called “kings” but they were worse than common people.

We quietly observe that in our country the Buddhist kesa still exists. We can consider our country to be a Buddha-land of the kesa. The kesa is more important than Buddhist relics. Kings, lions, and human beings all have relics; however, kings, lions and human beings do not possess a kesa. Only Buddha possesses a kesa. We must deeply believe and receive this.

Foolish people in the present do not know how to respect the kesa although they know the important of relies. Few know how to protect it. This is because they neither heard about the kesa in the past nor had an opportunity to see the right transmission of the Buddhist Law. If we recall the time when Shakyamuni lived, we realize that it was only about two thousand years ago. The national treasures of both China and Japan pre-date that period. The Buddhist Law and Buddhist kesa are from a more recent period closer to our own generation. [In the Lotus Sūtra] it is said that the merit of the kesa spread throughout the farms and villages. It spread from one person to fifty; its merit was limitless. Other national treasures also have merit but the merit of the kesa is different from the others. The other treasures did not carry the right transmission, but the kesa does. Maintain the right transmission from master to disciple.

We should know that one can obtain the Way by listening to the four verses or even one word from the verses^{1-EN} Why did these verses and these words have such special miraculous power? Because it is the teaching of the Buddhist Dharma. The kesa and the nine kinds of robes had been rightly transmitted by the Buddhist Law. Its merit is not inferior to the those four verses, or any of its words.

Therefore, for two thousand years, all Buddhist trainees with determination and practice wore the kesa and protected it as the mind and body of Buddha. Others who were not so well informed about the right transmission of all the Buddhas did not venerate the kesa. Both Indra and the Dragon King were lay people but they protected the kesa.

However, some who shaved their heads and called themselves disciples of the Buddha did not know that the kesa should always be worn; moreover they did not even know the form, colour, material, or size of the kesa. They did not even know how to wear it or how to handle it. They could not even imagine the merit of the kesa. A kesa is the garment that can cut oil the sickness of our mind; it is the garment of liberation. The merit of the kesa is limitless. It is said that once a dragon suffered from three different kinds of severe fever. However, he was cured by the merit of the kesa. At the moment the Buddhas attained the Way, all of them wore a kesa. Since we are living in a country in the final degenerate days of the Law, we should not be deceived by false traditions but care – Fully determine the right transmission.

What other sect possesses the correct method of wearing a kesa that has been transmitted from Shakyamuni? Only the Buddhist Way [of Bodhidharma] has done so. When we meet this kesa is there anyone who can not venerate it? Even if we lose a day of our precious life we should venerate the kesa, and pray that we will have occasion to do so. Since we were born in a country with many fools, remote from that of Shakyamuni, to have opportunity to hear the True Law and to wear a kesa for even one day or one night, and to be able to learn one line of a Buddhist verse, is not due simply to having venerated one or two Buddhas; it is due to having venerated millions of Buddhas that we have such a joyful, virtuous occasion. Even if it is the result of our own meritorious acts, it should be honoured, loved, and respected. We should give thanks and gratitude to the Patriarchs who transmitted the Law. Animals do not forget to give thanks so why is it that human beings do not know the benefit of giving thanks? They are worse and more foolish than animals.

The merit of the Buddhist kesa can be known only through the Patriarchs, who have the right transmission from Buddha to

1-EN All things are impermanent; Life follows the law of destruction; Yet, birth and death are nothing but destruction; Here within lies the bliss of Nirvana.

Buddha. Others can not even dream of it, much less know the form, colour, or material of the kesa. If we long to trace the Buddhas, we should yearn for the kesa. Even after a billion generations, if this kesa can be correctly transmitted, the Buddhist Dharma will continue – its virtue is so great. Lay people say, "If former kings do not wear it, neither will we; if they did not do it, neither will we." The Buddhist Way is exactly the same. If it is not the kesa of the Buddhas, we will not wear it. If we do wear something else, what will we put on to practice the Buddhist Way or to venerate all the Buddhas? If we do not wear anything, we can not enter the Buddhist community.

Since the reign of Emperor Komei in the Eihei period of the late Han, many priests went from India to China, and some priests went from China to India. No one knows who these priests studied with; they simply studied under scholars of the abhidharma and sūtras. They never heard of the right transmission of the Buddhist Dharma, so they neither learned of the right transmission of the kesa nor met or heard of those who possessed the right transmission. None of them grasped the most important point of Buddhism. They thought that a kesa is just a garment; they could not even imagine that a kesa is an important and venerable object. What a pity.

One who rightly transmits the Way always transmits the Buddhist Dharma and kesa. A Patriarch without the Dharma and kesa has never been heard of in heaven or on earth. Therefore, the form, colour, material, great merits, body, mind, bone, and marrow of the kesa will be found in the right transmission. Various kinds of Hinayānists can never even dream of the meaning of the kesa. If we create the kesa without learning the right manner, it will not be the right transmission.

Our great teacher Shakyamuni Buddha transmitted supreme enlightenment of the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and the Buddhist kesa to Mahākāśyapa, since then there have been thirty-three Patriarchs up to Zen Master Daikan Enō of Mt. Sokei. The form, colour, and material have been directly transmitted up to the present day. Each of the Patriarchs of the five Zen sects, some of whom were in their forties and fifties, received and transmitted the manner of making and wearing the kesa and the way to follow the laws of their late masters. This right transmission from Buddha to Buddha was based on the tradition of the Buddha and has been passed along unaltered for generations.

The right transmission of the kesa according to Buddhist principle is as follows:

1. Kujō-e – Nine separate pieces of cloth, each consisting of three long and one short strips or four long and one short strips.
2. Jūchijō-e – Eleven pieces; three long and one short or four long and one short.
3. Jūsanzō-e – Thirteen pieces; three long and one short or four long and one short
4. Jūgojō-e – Fifteen pieces; four long and one short.
5. Jūshi chijō-e – Seventeen pieces; four long, and one short
6. Jūkujō-e – Nineteen pieces; four long, and one short.
7. Nijūchijō-e – Twenty-one pieces; four long and one short
8. Nijūsanzō-e – Twenty-three pieces; [our long and one short
9. Nijūgojō-e – Twenty-five pieces; four long and one short
10. Nihyakugojūjō-e – 250 pieces; four long and one short.
11. Hachimanshisenjō-e – 84,000 pieces; eight long and one short

These are the general kinds of kesa, but besides these there many other types; all are monks' robes. Sometimes lay people wear them. It is not enough to carry the kesa; it is necessary to wear it. Anyone who shaves his head and beard but does not accept a kesa, hates kesas, and does not wear a kesa is a non-believer.

Zen Master Hyakujo Daichi said, "Those who did not do good deeds in their previous lives will be loathe to wear a kesa and hate the right transmission of the Law. Once Buddha said, "Even if ordained lay people commit serious crimes and possess malicious ideas, if they respect the monk's kesa, all the Buddhas, and I myself, can predict that they definitely will attain future liberation in the three vehicles. If celestial beings, dragons, humans, and demons venerate the kesa, they can attain release through one of the three vehicles. Whenever demons, gods, or sentient beings possess a kesa or even just a piece of it, they will be able to attain nourishment. Even those sentient beings with aggressive malicious minds can develop a mind of compassion and purity through the power of the kesa's virtue. One may be caught in the midst of a battle, but if they venerate the kesa, they will escape unharmed.

Therefore we should know that the merit of the kesa is supreme. When we receive and accept this kesa it surely is a prediction of Buddhahood and non-retrogression. Not only Shakyamuni Buddha, but all the Buddhas said the same thing. So we should know that the form of all Buddhas is shaped by the kesa.

Therefore, Buddha said, "When people fall into evil ways they hate a monk's kesa." Therefore, anyone who has bad feelings about seeing a kesa has fallen into evil ways, and they should feel regret and repent. It is said in the Āgama Sūtras that when Shakyamuni Buddha left his palace for the first time and went to the mountains, the god of the forest appeared before him holding up a monk's kesa and told him if he accepted, respected, and wore it he would be protected from all evil and temptations. Shakyamuni accepted the kesa and wore it for twelve years.

A kesa is also called the cloth of happiness. If we wear it we will surely achieve the supreme stage. In this world a kesa is actualized for all time. The actuality of one moment is the actuality of eternity. The value of the kesa transcends time and space. If we accept this kesa it means that we accept the symbol of Buddha. Through this principle every Buddha accepted a kesa and, as a result, surely became Buddha.

The way to wear the kesa:

The usual way to wear a kesa is to leave the right shoulder exposed, although, occasionally, it is worn over both shoulders. The first method shows respect and is used when serving someone of higher position. The second method is used by those of higher rank.

The proper manner to wear a kesa is first to fold it and place it on the left shoulder so that the edges are folded front, back, front, back, on top of each other. This has never been seen or heard about by the Hinayānists and is not mentioned in their sūtras. The proper manner of wearing the kesa was surely accepted by the Patriarchs who transmitted the True Law. To

receive it is to receive the action of a Patriarch. The kesa of the right transmission of the Buddhas and Patriarch is a true transmission. The kesa was passed from previous Buddhas to later Buddhas, from past Buddhas to present Buddhas. The Way and the Buddha were transformed, it was the right transmission from past to present, present to future, from present to the past, from past to past, from present to present, from future to future, from future to present, and from future to past. It was the right transmission from Buddha to Buddha.

Therefore, after Bodhidharma came to China, for hundreds of years during the great Tang and Sung Dynasties, there were many scholars who perceived their karma and studied the precepts and sūtras and also many lay people who believed in Buddhist precepts. When they finally studied the real Buddhist Dharma, they abandoned the old kinds of kesa and accepted the kesa which was correctly transmitted. in the Buddhist Way.

We can find examples of this in books like Keitoku-dentō-roku, Tensho-koto-roku, Zenmen-zokutō-roku, Katai-futo-roku, and so on. Scholars of the precepts and sūtras who transcended narrow-mindedness realized the importance of the Great Way and the right transmission of Buddhas and Patriarchs; they too became Buddhas and Patriarchs. People today should learn about the Patriarchs of the past. When we accept a kesa, we should accept the kesa of right transmission and never take the wrong kind. What we call the right transmission of the kesa is the transmission originating from Shōrinji and Sōkei; it was received from the Tathagata and passed in an unbroken line. Therefore, the Way of Buddhism was directly transmitted, and the kesa and robe were bestowed from hand to hand. The Buddhist Way must be rightly transmitted through the Buddhist Way. Men of leisure will never get it; it must be actively sought. Attainment is better than one thousand views. Through these proverbs we can see that even if we have one thousand views or ten thousand descriptions of the Buddhist Way, it is not the same as experiencing the right transmission of the kesa. One who doubts this will be unable to even dream of the right transmission of the kesa and his doubt will grow deeper and deeper. The right transmission of a kesa is more important and reveals more of the Buddhist Way than to explain the sūtras. We should never forget this point. Reading the thousand volumes of sūtras a million times will not equal a single enlightenment. Buddha is the one who achieved the stage of Buddha through a kesa, and he cannot be compared with those who think that the teaching or precepts are the only way.

The merit of the kesa of the Patriarchs has been rightly transmitted for generations and its principle is being used in the present day. Those who have transmitted this kesa are Patriarchs who have experienced enlightenment and maintain the Law. They are superior to the ten sages and three wise men. Thus we should serve, venerate, respect, make prostrations, and receive their teaching. Those who receive the principle of the right transmission of the Buddhist kesa can see the Buddha and study the Buddhist Way. Those who do not receive this Dharma will be miserable. When a kesa is worn it becomes like an amulet of enlightenment, and we should honestly receive it as such. It is said that if you believe a single verse or a single phrase about a kesa, the merit of the kesa will be transformed into a brilliant light of the eternal Buddhist Way. When one teaching of the Dharma has been fully grasped, the same thing will happen. Our thoughts dwell nowhere and we have no existence; nonetheless the merit of the kesa becomes our being. A kesa has unlimited function and can not be said to dwell anywhere in particular. It is not "ours" or "someone else's." Anyone who possesses a kesa will have merit. A kesa can neither be made by ordinary people nor saints. Even the ten saints and three sages cannot master the deep meaning of a kesa. These who lack good karma will spend one, two, or even a limitless number of lifetimes without being able to see, hear, or know about a kesa. How can such people receive a kesa? When the kesa is worn on the body, some have obtained merit, some not. Those who have, will be overjoyed, those who have not should vow to do so. Throughout the great thousand worlds, only the disciples of the Buddhas and Patriarch transmit the Buddhist robe and kesa; gods and humans know this well. The style of the Buddhist kesa is transmitted only through the teaching of the Patriarchs and none other. Those who do not know this and do not feel sorry must be fools. Even if you master the 84,000 Samadhi dharanis but do not rightly transmit the kesa of the Buddhas and Patriarchs and clarify its meaning, you will not be a descendant of the Buddhas. Sentient beings in other lands hope to learn about the right transmission. The right transmission was brought to China but not, I am ashamed to say, to Japan. This is most regrettable. Truly, opportunity to meet the right transmission of the kesa and law of Tathāgata is due to the wisdom and virtue of one's past religious practice. In this final degenerate stage of the Law, many wicked people are not ashamed of not receiving the right transmission and are jealous of people who have. The things we possess and the place where we live originally do not belong to anyone. The only thing we should do is to transmit rightly that which has been transmitted rightly. That is the direct way to learn Buddhism.

We should know that the kesa is the body and mind of Buddha. It is also called the robe of transcendence, the robe of vast merit, the robe of endurance, the robe of no form, the robe of compassion, the robe of the Tathagata, and the robe of supreme and perfect enlightenment. This is the true meaning of kesa.

In the present great Sung Dynasty, the followers of the Vinaya sects are intoxicated with their own doctrines. They do not study teachings of other schools. The kesa, which was transmitted from India to China through the Han and Tang Dynasties to the present (Sung Dynasty), has been made to appear an insignificant accessory because of their narrow-mindedness. Such childish prejudice is shameful. Anyone with such a narrow-minded view of a kesa will lack true Buddhist dignity and manner. This occurs because they have not studied the proper manner of Buddhism.

It is obvious that the body and mind of Tathāgata was rightly transmitted only by the Patriarchs of our stream. If someone accidentally learns the manner of the Buddhist Way they will not destroy a kesa. Many have not clarified the meaning of the sūtras or heard the essence of the Buddhist Way.

To use inferior material to make a kesa is against the Buddhist Law. It destroys the Buddhist kesa. Disciples of the Buddha should not wear such kesas. Becoming attached to the material is to destroy the kesa. This is a pity. The perspective of Hinayānists is quite foolish; if you can go beyond such prejudiced views, the real kesa of Buddha will emerge.

Using silk to make a kesa was not mentioned by even one or two Buddhas. The teaching of all the Buddhas is that rags and other pieces of useless cloth are the best and purest materials to make a kesa.

The ten kinds of cloth used to clean up excrement were made from silk, cotton, or haku [a thin silk]. Some might object to using silk for such a purpose, but that is to misunderstand the Buddhist Way. If one does not like silk, they will not like other kinds of cloth. What is the reason for disliking silk? It is ludicrous to object to killing the cocoons to make silk; isn't cloth a living thing also? The distinction between animate and inanimate is the territory of ordinary people; if such a viewpoint is not abandoned, how can we know the Buddhist kesa?

Some believe that silk is created by an unnatural change, but that too is ludicrous. What in this world does not change? A few might believe such talk, but it is doubtful it can be seen. [People lack understanding because] they do not know the ear within the eye and the eye within the ear. Among cloth used for wiping excrement, some of it appears to be silk, some of it cotton; however, we call that cloth neither silk nor cotton – it is just a dirty rag. Since it is a dirty rag there is no silk or

cotton. Even if humans and celestial beings use dirty rags all their lives, we cannot call those things animate objects; even if pines and chrysanthemums become dirty rags, they cannot be called inanimate objects. They are nothing more than dirty rags. Dirty rags are not silk or cotton; once we know they are not related to ideas of beauty, a kesa of dirty rags will appear. If you are concerned with the distinction between silk and cotton, you will never be able to even dream about the significance of dirty cloths. You can use old cloth for a kesa your entire life, but if you don't understand the real material, there will be no right transmission of the Buddhist kesa.

There are various kinds of kesa material: cloth, silk, and leather. All are worn by the Buddhas and thus possess the virtue of Buddha. The essence of the right transmission has never been discontinued. We should know that those who have not cast off commonplace thinking, and take the Buddhist Dharma and teaching lightly are non-believers of the Buddhist Way and purveyors of false doctrine.

Some state that the Buddhist kesa is derived from the traditions of gods. If that is so we must pray that gods become Buddhas. Or they say, once, gods and humans were on close terms. Buddha proclaims the Law for celestial beings. The Way is not questioned by celestial beings. Such talk is indeed pitiful, and occurs because they do not have the right transmission of the Buddhist Dharma.

There is a big difference between the observation of the disciples of Buddha and celestial beings. Celestial beings come down to earth to hear the Law from the disciples of Buddha because their observation is inferior to that of the Buddhists. We should abandon the views of precept masters and śrāvakas. We should know that such ideas are Hinayānist.

Buddha said, "Even if you kill your father and mother, there is a way to repent. However, if you slander the Buddhist Dharma, there is no hope of repentance."

Narrow-mindedness and doubt are not the original teaching of Buddha. The Great "lay of the Buddhist Dharma cannot be handled by Hinayānists. The right transmission of Great Precepts of all the Buddhas has only been preserved by the Patriarchs.

Long ago at midnight on Mt. Ōbai, the Buddhist kesa was rightly transmitted to the Sixth Patriarch. This was truly the right transmission of the Dharma and kesa because the Fifth Patriarch knew well the man to whom he was giving the Law. If the Fifth Patriarch had been an Arhat, sage, saint, or a teacher of the abhidharma or sūtras, he would have given the transmission to Jinshū, not the Sixth Patriarch. However, Buddhas and Patriarchs always choose Buddhas and Patriarchs; it transcends the distinction between ordinary and saints—that is why the Sixth Patriarch became the Sixth Patriarch. We should know that the principle of the transmission from Buddha to Patriarch is to know oneself and others-do not take this lightly.

Later, a monk asked the Sixth Patriarch, "Was the kesa transmitted at midnight on Mt. Ōbai made from silk, cotton, or some other material?" The Sixth Patriarch replied, "It was not cotton, silk, or any other material."

We should pay attention to the Patriarch's words, "It was not cotton, silk, or any other material." To think that a kesa is made from cotton, silk, or some other material is to slander the Buddhist Dharma. How could such people comprehend the meaning of a kesa? Only those with a long history of good karma can know and understand it. Their kesas have nothing to do with silk or cotton—it is the standard of the Buddhist Way.

The venerable Ubakikuta [the third Indian Patriarch] was born wearing a kesa; when he became a monk it was transformed into a priest's robe. We should quietly ponder this. We should not run away before hearing this story, much less avoid the essence of the right transmission from Buddha to Buddha, Patriarch to Patriarch. Those who understand only letters will never realize or even imagine this. Truly, the Buddhist Way has countless manifestations, so why limit yourself to ordinary thoughts. There are the methods of samadhi and esoteric chants, but why do people overlook the treasure of the kesa?

This kesa is the one with the proper shape, colour, and size rightly transmitted by the Buddhas and Patriarchs; it is the correct type of kesa of all the Buddhas. It has always been like this, in the east and west, and in the past and present. One who can correctly distinguish between a true and false kesa is already beyond enlightenment. There may be some who venerate kesas other than those of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, but that is insufficient. Without the seed of good karma, how can there be the fruit of enlightenment.

Now, we have the golden opportunity to not only see and hear the Buddhist Dharma, but also to see, study, and receive the Buddhist kesa. This is the same as seeing Buddha, listening to his voice, witnessing His Divine Light, and using what He used. This is the single transmission of the Buddha-mind and the attainment of Buddha's marrow.

The transmission of the kesa

When I was training in Sung Dynasty China, I noticed that during morning Zazen the monk next to me would place his folded kesa on top of his head, put his hands in gassho, and silently chant a verse. I was so overjoyed at witnessing such a reverent act that my robe became wet with tears. I had read about this practice in the Āgama Sūtras but had never before seen it done. Seeing it done with my own eyes, I realized the importance of a kesa. I was ashamed at my ignorance and thought what a pity there was no one in my native land to teach me the proper method. How much time I wasted! However, all my suffering was rewarded by actually seeing a kesa being used. If a had remained in Japan, how would I have been able to learn the proper method of using a kesa from my precious fellow monks? Thinking back on that time, the mixture of pain and joy caused tears to flow ceaselessly.

Despite my many shortcomings, I then made a vow to do my best to transmit the right Buddhist Dharma to Japan to show my countrymen the Buddhist kesa transmitted from Buddha to Buddha. That was my sincere desire. Those disciples of Buddha who possess a kesa should venerate it ceaselessly day and night, and learn its true merit. Sometimes a verse or phrase can be learned from even a tree or stone. The merit of the rightly transmitted kesa is extremely difficult to encounter in this world.

During October of 1224, in Great Sung China, two Korean monks visited Keigenfu. One was called Chigen and the other Keiun. Both were experts on the sūtras and had an extensive knowledge of secular literature. Nonetheless, neither of them possessed a kesa or begging bowl; they were more like laymen than monks. That was a great pity. They had the appearance of monks, but not the style of a real monk. Korea is a small country like ours, and our priests probably make the same impression when they travel to a foreign country.

Shakyamuni Buddha wore a kesa for twelve years without removing it from his body. All his descendants should follow his example. Those who flatter gods, kings, and ministers to obtain fame and fortune should instead encourage the proper use of

the Buddhist kesa—then there will be great joy.

Written at Kannondōri-Kōshōhōrinji on October 1, 1240, by Śramana Dōgen who transmitted the Dharma from Sung China.

[Appendix]

The material we use to make a kesa must be pure. "Pure" means material donated by pure-minded believers, purchased in a market place, received as a gift from celestial beings, dragon gods, or even demons. It may be received from kings and ministers, and might even be leather.

The ten kinds of dirty rags that also may be used are:

1. Cloth chewed by cows.
2. Cloth chewed by rats.
3. Cloth that has been burned.
4. Cloth that has been used for menstruation.
5. Cloth that has been used during childbirth.
6. Cloth eaten by birds.
7. Cloth used to cover dead bodies.
8. Cloth used for religious services.
9. Cloth used by kings and ministers.
10. Cloth used to transport bodies.

These kinds of rags can be used to make a pure kesa.

Worldly people throw such cloth away, but followers of the Buddhist Way can use them. Be aware of the differences between worldly practice and the Buddhist Way. Therefore, that is why, once you search for pure cloth you will search for these ten kinds of cloth. When they are obtained, the difference between pure and impure will be clear. You can comprehend both mind and body. "When the ten kinds of rags are obtained, regardless of whether they are silk or cotton, the meaning of pure and impure will be clear. When a kesa made of such cloth is worn, do not foolishly think it is simply a garment of rags. It is a splendid adornment of the Buddhist Way. A robe may be made with finest material—silk, brocade, special cloth, gold or silver, or rare jewels – but if it is tainted with impure thoughts it is filthy. In this country and elsewhere, a pure kesa of the Buddhist Way is made from the ten kinds of dirty rags. It is not enough to go beyond dichotomies of pure and impure, enlightenment or illusion. Do not split things into form or spirit, gain or loss. Just receive and maintain the right transmission; this is the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Buddhas and Patriarchs always transmit this correctly. As Buddhas and Patriarchs, the right transmission is independent of the actualization of the body or the activity of the mind.

It is quite sad that the monks and nuns of our country have not had the opportunity to wear a kesa for so long. Now that they can do so, it is a happy occasion. Even lay men and women who receive the precepts should wear a gojō, shichijō, or kujō kesa, much less priests. Brahma and the other Indian gods, lewd men and women, and slaves should receive the Buddhist precepts and wear a kesa at once. Why don't priests and nuns wear the kesa? Even animals can receive the Buddhist precepts and wear a kesa, so why are disciples of Buddha so lazy to do so!

Therefore, anyone who becomes a disciple of Buddha – celestial beings, humans, kings, ministers, lay people, ascetics, slaves, or animals – must receive the precepts and rightly transmit the kesa. This is the direct path to Buddhahood.

When a kesa is washed, incense powder should be placed in the water. After it is dry, fold it and place it on a high shelf with incense and flowers placed in front. Make three prostrations, and place the kesa on top of the head. Put the hands together in gassho and chant this verse:

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Dai-zai-ge-da-pu-ku | The great garment of liberation |
| Mu-sō-fu-ku-den-e | The formless kesa of merit |
| Hi-bu-nyo-rai-kyō | Honour the teaching of the Tathāgata |
| Kō-do-sho-shu-jo | For the salvation of all sentient beings. |

Repeat three times, stand up, and put on the kesa.

道得

"Speaking of the Way"

All the Buddhas and Patriarchs speak of the Way. Therefore, when Buddhas and Patriarchs choose Buddhas and Patriarchs as their Dharma-heirs surely they question them to see if they understand how to speak of the Way. This questioning is done with the body and mind, with a fly whisk and staff with a pillar and stone lantern. If they are not Buddhas and Patriarchs they cannot be questioned nor speak about the Way since they lack its essence.

Speaking of the Way does not depend on others or on our own ability. By simply seeking the Buddhas and Patriarchs we will be able to speak of their Way. Within this speaking of the Way there is traditional practice and enlightenment which continues to be carried out and studied in the present. When Buddhas and Patriarchs practice and Buddhas and Patriarchs evaluate their speech, their speaking of the Way becomes the practice of three, eight, thirty, or forty years. It is continual speaking of the Way. One commentary says, "Twenty or thirty years of practice is accomplished through speaking of the Way." During all that time they practiced total speaking and attainment of the Way.

During such practice no time must be wasted. That is why observation based on enlightenment is always correct. Therefore, speaking of the Way in the present contains no doubt or error. The present speaking of the Way possesses the observation of the past. Observations of the past contain the present speaking of the Way. Consequently, observation and speaking exist in the past and present and there is no gap between them. Our present practice is based on speaking and correct observation of the Way.

When such practice is continued for months and years all past evil karma drops off. After it is cast off our skin, flesh, bones, and marrow are renewed and countries, land, mountains, and rivers drop off. Then dropping off becomes the ultimate goal and we try to arrive there. That arrival is the emergence of our real self; ultimately the right time of dropping off occurs and speaking of the Way is actualized suddenly without expectation. Even if there is no effort in our body and mind we can naturally speak of the Way. There is nothing strange or unusual in this speaking of the Way.

However, when speaking of the Way is attained we must clarify which things are not spoken nor attained. If we recognize the attainment of our speaking of the Way but fail to clarify these things which are not spoken nor attained, we will miss the original face, bones, and marrow of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Therefore, how can the speech of others and their attainment of the skin, flesh, or bones be equal to [Eka's] attainment of [Bodhidharma's] marrow by "speaking" with three prostrations and silently returning to his seat? The other disciples' attainment was nowhere near Eka's attainment. Here, Eka and the three other disciples each had a different experience of their master's teaching, and other beings will have still different ideas. Eka has a spoken word and a word that is not spoken; others also have a spoken and an unspoken word. There is a self and others in speaking and in not speaking of the Way.

Great Master Jōshū Shisai said to an assembly of monks, "You may stay in the monastery your entire life and concentrate on Zazen for ten or fifteen years without speaking, but that does not mean you are mute. None of the Buddhas can surpass you."

Like this, living in the monastery for ten or fifteen years watching frosts and blossoms come and go, we practice the Way diligently throughout our life, thinking about how much speech there is in continuous Zazen. Why do people think that the uninterrupted practice of kinhin, Zazen, and sleep in a monastery is mute? Although we are not sure where our life comes from, once we entrust ourselves to the Zen life we will not want to leave the monastery. Life in the monastery is the only life to lead. Concentrate on Zazen and do not worry about not speaking. "Not speaking" is the head and tail of speaking.

Continuous Zazen must be carried out for our entire life, not just a few minutes. If you concentrate on Zazen and do not speak for ten or fifteen years, all the Buddhas will recognize you. Truly, Buddha's vision cannot pierce its virtue, his power cannot move it, nor can he influence or destroy the merit inherent in continuous Zazen and not speaking.

What Jōshū said about "continuous Zazen without speaking" is not related to being mute or not mute. All the Buddhas say this. Not leaving the monastery for your entire life is to speak of the Way for your entire life. Concentrating on Zazen and not speaking for ten or fifteen years is to speak of the Way for ten or fifteen years. Through Zazen we can surpass a hundred thousand Buddhas, and they can surpass us through Zazen.

Therefore, that is why the life of speaking of the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs is not to leave the monastery for your entire life. Even if you are always silent you are still able to speak of the Way. Do not study that a mute person cannot speak of the Way. Speaking of the Way is not always not mute; even a mute person can speak of the Way. Surely, we can hear a mute person's voice and listen to his words. If you are not mute how can you meet or talk to a mute person? Nevertheless, there are mutes that we must meet and talk with. Study like this to find the meaning of "mute."

In the community of Great Master Shinkaku of Mt. Seppō there was one monk who made a hut in the mountains and went to live there. Many years passed and he let his hair grow and no one knew what kind of life he was leading. His life there was solitary and quiet. He fashioned a ladle from a branch and lived simply. Like this, the days and months passed and gradually his way of life became known to outsiders. One day, a monk visited his hermitage and asked, "Why did the first Patriarch come from the west?" The hermit said, "The river is deep and the handle of the ladle is long." The monk could not understand and left without making a bow or any gesture. He returned to Seppō and reported the hermit's answer. After hearing the story Seppō said, "What a strange thing. His answer was quite correct. This time I'll go and question him myself."

Seppō's point is that the hermit's answer was too good and therefore a little strange. However, Seppō: would go and see for himself.

After a while Seppō went to the hermitage with an attendant monk who brought along a razor. They arrived at the hermitage and Seppō said, "If you have attained the Way and are able to speak about it, why haven't you shaved your head?"

We must be careful about his question. It seems to mean that it is not necessary to shave your head if you have attained the Way. How about it? If that is attaining the Way, then it is not necessary to shave his head. Only those who listen to this question with a certain amount of understanding can grasp it.

1-EN Dōtoku is used throughout the Shōbōgenzō to mean an expression used by a master. It has the dual meaning of "speaking" or "utterance" and "attainment of the Way." In this chapter it is used in both ways.

After hearing Seppō's words the hermit washed his hair and appeared before him. Did he appear because he had attained the Way or because he had not? Anyway, Seppō shaved his head.

This story of cause and effect is truly the blooming of an udumbara flower. It not only shows us how to see, but also how to hear. It is not limited to the seven and ten stages of the Hinayānists nor the viewpoints of the three or seven sages. Scholars of the sūtras and abhidharma and those who denigrate supernatural power cannot even imagine it. Listening to this story is like meeting the Buddhas who have emerged in this world.

We should think over Seppō's "If you have attained the Way and are able to speak about it, why don't you shave your head?" Those who have not attained the Way, yet possess some level of understanding, must be surprised by this story and those who lack understanding will be indifferent. When Seppō spoke to the hermit he did not ask about Buddha, the Way, samādhi, or dharanis. He appears to be asking a question but actually he is revealing the Way through speech. We must clarify this in detail.

However, the hermit truly possessed ability, so when he was questioned about the Way he was not indifferent. He revealed his manner by washing his hair. This is an aspect of the Dharma that cannot be explained with even the wisdom of Buddha himself. His washing of his hair is a concrete manifestation of Buddha's body, the proclaiming of the Dharma, and the saving of sentient beings. If Seppō had not been the right man he would have thrown down the razor and roared with laughter. He was the right person, however, and possessed enough power to shave the hermit's head.

Truly, if the relationship between Seppō and the hermit had not been like that between Buddha and Buddha, this story could not have occurred. Also, if only one had been a Buddha or if they were not real dragons such a dialogue would have never taken place. The Black Dragon keeps his jewels under his jaw, but they can plucked out by those with real ability.

We should know that Seppō wished to look into the hermit's heart and the hermit wanted to see through Seppō. One spoke, one did not; one shaved and one was shaved. Therefore, that is why good friends who have attained the Way can naturally understand each other. Such people who can express themselves without speaking are like old friends. This type of mutual practice and study is the actualization of attaining and speaking about the Way.

This was written on October 5, 1242, at Kannondōri-Kōshōhōrinji. Recopied on November 2, of the same year by Ejō.

34. BUKKYO

佛教

“The Buddhist teaching”

The actualization of the Way of all the Buddhas is the Buddhist teaching. Since this is done by Buddhas and Patriarchs for the Buddhas and Patriarchs their teaching is rightly transmitted as the Buddhist teaching. This is the turning of the wheel of the Law. This turning of the wheel of the Law within enlightened vision is the actualization of all the Buddhas and Patriarchs and their nirvana. All the Buddhas and Patriarchs surely emerge in a speck of dust; one speck of dust in nirvana. The entire world emerges, the entire world of nirvana. One instant emerges, endless time emerges.

However, one speck of dust and one instant are without any lack of virtue. The entire world and endless time are not compensations for a lack of virtue or some other insufficiency. Therefore, all the Buddhas who have attained the Way in the morning and entered nirvana in the evening also do not lack any virtue.

If you think one day lacks sufficient virtue, then even a life of eighty years is not enough [for you]. An eighty-year life compared to ten or twenty kalpas is the same as one day compared to eighty years. It is very difficult to understand the difference between this Buddha and that Buddha. When we compare the virtue of an eighty-year life with one of endless time, there can be no doubt that there is no basic difference between them. Therefore, the Buddhist teaching is to teach; it is the total virtue of all the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Buddhas are high and vast, and the Dharma teaching is not narrow and small.

Truly, we should know that when Buddha is great, the teaching is great. When Buddha is small the teaching is small. Consequently, Buddha and his teaching cannot be measured by large and small, is not bound by designations of good, bad, or neuter, and is not limited to the teaching of self or others.

Some have said, “Shakyamuni transmitted a special teaching to Mahākāśyapa that was separate from the teachings and sermons in the sūtras. That teaching was the supreme vehicle of one mind which has been transmitted from generation to generation. Other teachings and discourses are used as expedients and mind is the real nature of truth. The transmission of one mind is a special transmission outside the scriptures. The three vehicles and the twelve teachings are not equal to the right transmission of one mind. The supreme vehicle of one mind is direct pointing to the heart of man, looking into one’s nature and becoming Buddha.”

Such a statement shows a lack of understanding of the Buddhist Dharma and inadequate utilization and dignity. Those who think like that, regardless if they are called elders or not, have not clarified or mastered the Buddhist Dharma or Buddhist Way. Why? Because they do not know the meaning of Buddha, teaching, mind, inside, or outside. They do not know about such things because they have not heard the Buddhist Dharma. They are called Buddhas but they do not know Buddha’s essence. They have not properly studied the meaning of coming and going and therefore cannot be called disciples of Buddha. People think that only “one mind” has been rightly transmitted because they do not know the Buddhist Dharma. Those who do not know or have not heard the one mind of the Buddhist teaching say that there is some other Buddhist teaching beside one mind because their minds are not part of “one mind”. Further, if someone says that there is “one mind” outside the Buddhist teaching it means that his Buddhist teaching is not the real Buddhist teaching. Such people transmit an erroneous version of “a special transmission outside the scriptures” since they do not know the meaning of “outside” or “inside”; consequently, their principles do not fit with their words. How is it possible for Buddhas and Patriarchs who individually transmit Buddha’s Eye and Treasury of the True Law fail to transmit the Buddhist teaching? Moreover, why would Shakyamuni formulate Dharma teaching that cannot be used as a basis for all Buddhist followers? Shakyamuni has formulated the basis of Dharma teaching through individual transmission so how can there be a Buddha or Patriarch who does not follow it? The supreme vehicle of one mind is nothing more than the three vehicles and twelve teachings, i.e., all the sūtras of the Mahāyāna and Hinayāna.

We must know that the Buddha-mind is the enlightened vision of Buddhas. It is a broken ladle, all dharmas, and the three worlds, i.e., mountains, oceans, earth, sun, moon, and stars. The Buddhist teaching is all the phenomenal world before us. “Outside” means “inside” and “coming inside.”

Since right transmission is the right transmission from self to self, there is a self within right transmission. Since one mind is rightly transmitted to one mind, there is one mind in the right transmission. The supreme vehicle of one mind is earth, stones, and sand. Since earth, stones and sand are one mind earth, stones, and sand are earth, stones, and sand. If we think like that concerning the supreme vehicle of one mind we are on the right track.

However, people who have a mistaken View of “a special transmission outside the scriptures” can never get the central point. Therefore, to believe that there is “a special transmission outside the scriptures” is to misinterpret the Buddhist teaching. That is a bad mistake. Anyone who talks like that should ask themselves if it is possible to say that there is a special transmission outside the mind? If we say “a special transmission outside the mind” it is just senseless words; such words can never make a transmission occur. If we cannot say that there is “a special transmission outside the mind” then surely we cannot say there is “a special transmission outside the scriptures.”

Mahākāśyapa is the Dharma-heir of Shakyamuni and master teacher of the Dharma; he transmitted The Eye and Treasury of the True Law and maintained the Buddhist Way. Anyone who thinks that the Buddhist Way was not transmitted like that has a prejudiced view of the Buddhist Way. Even if only one verse is transmitted, still the Dharma is transmitted. If one verse is rightly transmitted, mountains and rivers are rightly transmitted. This principle holds true in all cases.

Shakyamuni’s Eye and Treasury of the True Law and supreme enlightenment was only rightly transmitted to Mahākāśyapa, and no one else. The right transmission surely passed to Mahākāśyapa. Therefore, anyone who wishes to study the truth of the Buddhist Dharma in the past and present and wants to determine the correct teaching must study and practice under the Buddhas and Patriarchs. They should not go anywhere else. If someone lacks the correct standards of the Buddhas and Patriarchs it means that he lacks any kind of correct standards. Anyone who wishes to determine if a teaching is correct or not should use the standards of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. They are the true masters of the wheel of the Law whom we should consult. Only Buddhas and Patriarchs can clarify “existence,” “non-existence,” “emptiness,” “form,” and transmit them correctly. Therefore, make use of both ancient and present Buddhas.

Once a monk asked Haryō, “The spirit of the Patriarchs and spirit of the sūtras: Are they the same or different?” The master said, “When a chicken is cold it climbs a tree; when a duck is cold it goes into the water.”

We must study this saying, looking for the Patriarch’s interpretation of the Buddhist Way by seeing and listening to the

Buddhist teaching. The monk's question concerns the difference between the spirit of the Patriarchs and the spirit of the sūtras. Haryō's answer "when a chicken is cold it climbs a tree; when a duck is cold it goes into the water" seems to indicate a difference; however this "difference" is not the usual "difference" of most people. Therefore, that is why we should be aware of the special difference between them even though we realize it goes beyond limited views of same or difference. Consequently, we should not ask such questions about "same or different."

Once a monk asked Gensha, "Are the three vehicles and twelve teachings unnecessary? And what about the meaning of the first Patriarch's coming from the west?" Gensha replied, "The three vehicles and twelve teachings are all unnecessary". The monk's question, "Are the three vehicles and twelve teachings unnecessary? And what about the first Patriarch's coming from the west?" is based on the common assumption that the three vehicles and twelve teachings each represent a different aspect of the Buddhist teaching while the first Patriarch's coming from the west has a separate, deeper meaning. Those two things are not considered to be equal to one another. Therefore, how could the monk know that the 84,000 gates to the Dharma are equal to the first Patriarch's coming from the west? We must look into this more closely.

Why are the three vehicles and twelve teachings unnecessary? When they are necessary what kind of principle is behind it? If the three vehicles and twelve teachings are unnecessary is proper study of the meaning of the first Patriarch's coming from the west actualized? The monk's question was not a mischievous one.

Gensha said, "The three vehicles and twelve teachings are all unnecessary." This saying is the wheel of the Law. Where this wheel turns we find the Buddhist teaching. The point here is that the three vehicles and twelve teachings are the wheel of the Law of the Buddhas and Patriarchs and turn both where the Buddhas exist and where they do not; they turn both before and after the Patriarchs existed. There is great virtue in the turning of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. When the meaning of the first Patriarch's coming from the west appears all the wheels of the Dharma become "unnecessary." "All unnecessary" does not mean "not usable" or "broken."

This wheel of the Dharma only turns as the wheel of "all unnecessary." Do not say that the three vehicles or twelve teachings do not exist, just look for the occasion of "all unnecessary." "All unnecessary" becomes the three vehicles and twelve teachings. Since the three vehicles and twelve teachings [include everything] they are not simply three vehicles and twelve teachings. Therefore, the three vehicles and twelve teachings are "all unnecessary." Now let us outline the three vehicles and twelve teachings.

The three vehicles:

1) The śrāvaka vehicle. This is the vehicle of those who have attained the Way through the Four Noble Truths. The Four Noble Truths are: 1) all things are suffering; 2) the cause of suffering 3) the destruction of suffering; and 4) the Eightfold Path. To hear those truths leads to their practice and the transcending of birth, old age, sickness, and death and culminates in nirvana. When the Four Noble Truths are practiced suffering and the cause of suffering belong to the world while cessation and the Eightfold Path become the first principle. That is the view of abhidharma scholars. If practice is based on the Buddhist Dharma, the Four Noble Truths are transmitted from Buddha to Buddha and comprise one's individual status of enlightenment. Together the Four Noble Truths are the form of reality and Buddha-nature. Therefore, it is not necessary to mention concepts of "unborn" or "uncreated" etc., since the four truths are also "all unnecessary."

2) The pratyekabuddha vehicle. This is the vehicle of those who have attained nirvana through the twelve linked chain of dependent origin. The chain of dependent origin consists of: 1) ignorance; 2) action; 3) consciousness; 4) name and form; 5) creation of the six sense organs; 6) contacts; 7) perception; 8) desire; 9) attachment; 10) existence; 11) birth; and 12) old age and death.

The practice of this chain of dependent origin is based on the relationship of cause and effect in the past, present, and future and the distinction between observer and observed. However, if we study the relationship between cause and effect carefully we can see that both samsara and causality are "all unnecessary." We must know that if ignorance overtakes the mind, then action, consciousness, etc. will also overtake it. If ignorance is destroyed then action, consciousness, etc., will be destroyed. If ignorance becomes nirvana, then action, consciousness, etc., will also become nirvana. When [the wheel of] life is destroyed, we can say such things. Ignorance is one aspect of this truth, and the other links are exactly like it. We must know that the relationship between ignorance, action, etc., is like [Seigen telling Sekitō]. "I have an ax [i.e., the Buddhist Dharma] and I'll give it to you so that you can live in the mountains" and [Sekitō's reply] "I was about to leave and my teacher kindly gave me his ax which I gratefully received."

3) The Bodhisattva vehicle. This is the vehicle of those who attained the Way through the teaching, practice, and enlightenment of the six pāramitās and it is the actualization of supreme and perfect enlightenment. That actualization is not intentional nor unintentional, not originally existent, not newly or previously attained, not original action or non-action. It is nothing but the actualization of supreme and perfect enlightenment. The pāramitās are: 1) giving; 2) precepts; 3) observance; 4) effort; 5) contemplation; and 6) wisdom. These are all supreme enlightenment and not concepts like "unborn" or "uncreated." Giving is not necessarily first nor is wisdom necessarily last. It says in the sūtras, "A clever Bodhisattva knows that wisdom is first and giving last, while a foolish Bodhisattva thinks that giving is first and wisdom last." However, effort or meditation can just as easily be put first. Altogether there are thirty-six possible permutations of the six pāramitās; they are all interrelated and inseparable.

"Pāramitā" means "gone to the other shore." The other shore is not originally characterized by coming and going. "Gone" means "actualized," truth without error. Do not think that we arrive at the other shore after practice. We have practice on the other shore and therefore arrive there. That practice surely possesses the power to be actualized throughout the entire world of relativity.

The twelve teachings:

1) Sūtras (kaikyo), these contain the Tathāgata's explanations of the relative and absolute aspects of the objective and subjective worlds.

2) Geya (jūju), four to nine-word verses based on the sūtras.

3) Vyākaraṇa (juki), contain predictions of the attainment of Buddhahood by all sentient beings, even pigeons and swallows.

4) Gathās (geju), independent verses praising the Buddhist teaching.

5) Udāna (mumon jisetsu), are explanations not prompted by questions from his disciples.

- 6) Nidana (innen), are historical narratives illustrating the consequences of bad deeds and also deal with various precepts and prohibitions.
- 7) Avadāna (hiyu), allegories describing the world.
- 8) Itivrttaka (honji), contain the past lives of the Buddhas.
- 9) Jātaka (honshō), are concerned with the past lives of Shakyamuni Buddha.
- 10) Vaipulya (hōkō), are sūtras which deal with vast subjects.
- 11) Adbhutadharmas (mizou), describe the miraculous workings of the world.
- 12) Upadeśa (ronji), are discussions of doctrine.

These twelve teachings are forms of instruction for this world and given to help save all sentient beings.

It is not easy to hear the names of all the twelve teachings. We can only hear about these classifications when the Buddhist Dharma is widespread. If the Buddhist Dharma is not widespread, or almost extinct, such teachings cannot be heard. Only those who have seen the Buddha and have a long history of good karma can hear the twelve teachings. Once those teachings are heard supreme and perfect enlightenment will soon follow.

Each of the twelve may be called "sūtras" or classified as teachings. Each of the twelve contain all the others; consequently, we have 144 types of teaching. Since all the teachings involve all the others each one can be considered complete in itself. Nevertheless, it does not depend on amount or quantity. Each one of them are the enlightened vision, bones and marrow, everyday actions, divine light, adornment, and land of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. When you see the twelve teachings you see the Buddhas and Patriarchs; when you grasp the essence of the Buddhas and Patriarchs you can comprehend all the twelve types of teaching.

Therefore, that is why both Seigen's dialogue with Sekitō and Nansen's "resemblance does not always mean similar" are the twelve teachings. Also Gensha's "all unnecessary" is just like that. Ultimately, they all reduce to the Buddhas and Patriarchs, no one or nothing else; they existed before existence. At that time what was it? We should say "all unnecessary."

There is another form of classification called the nine teachings. They are: 1) sūtras; 2.) gathas; 3) itivrttaka; 4) jātika 5) adbhutadharmas; 6) nidana; 7) avadāna; 8) geza; and 9) upadeśa. These nine divisions possess nine interchangeable possibilities giving altogether eighty-one divisions. These nine divisions are each complete within themselves. If even one of the nine divisions lacks the virtue to be reduced to one division then there cannot be nine divisions. If each division has the virtue to be reduced to one division then each is complete. Therefore, we have eighty-one divisions. This division, my division, a fly whisk division, a staff division, and an Eye and Treasury of The True Law division.

Shakyamuni Buddha said, "I proclaimed the nine divisions of the Law corresponding to the ability of sentient beings. The divisions are the basis of entering the Great Vehicle and that is why those sūtras were proclaimed."

We must know that "I" is the Tathāgata. This is the emergence of his original face and body and mind. "I" is the nine divisions of the Law and vice versa. This verse also contains the nine divisions of the Law. Here Shakyamuni proclaims according to ability of sentient beings. Therefore, that is why the life, death, and daily activities of all sentient beings appear, and those sūtras were proclaimed. All sentient beings are transformed and enter the Buddhist Way. That is why the sūtras were proclaimed. Sentient beings correspond to Shakyamuni's nine divisions of the Law. "Correspond" means corresponding to others, to oneself, to sentient beings, to life, to "I," to "those." Sentient beings are surely "I," and therefore each of the nine divisions.

"The basis of entering the Great Vehicle" is to enlighten, practice, hear, and proclaim the Great Vehicle. We cannot say that sentient beings naturally attain the Way; that is only one part of it. "Enter" is the "basis"; "basis" means correct from head to tail. Buddha proclaims the Dharma, the Dharma proclaims Buddha. The Dharma is proclaimed by Buddha, Buddha is proclaimed by Buddha. Fire is proclaimed by the Buddha and Dharma; Buddha and Dharma proclaim fire.

The reason for proclamation is already presents with "those sūtras"; that is why they are proclaimed. It is impossible not to proclaim those sūtras – that is how they are proclaimed. "Proclaimed" means the entire universe, and the entire universe proclaims. This Buddha, that Buddha, both call those divisions "sūtras." This world and other worlds also proclaim those sūtras.

Therefore, "Those sūtras were proclaimed." Those sūtras are the Buddhist teaching. We must know that the vast and unlimited Buddhist teaching is not separate from a shippei or fly whisk. The vastness of the Buddhist teaching is revealed in a staff and list.

We must know that the three vehicles and twelve teachings are the enlightened vision of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. If we have yet to open our eyes how can we be called descendants of the Buddhas and Patriarchs? How can we transmit the True Eye of the Buddhas and Patriarchs? If we have not mastered the Eye and Treasury of the True Law, We cannot be Dharmahirs of the seven Buddhas.

This was delivered to a large assembly at Kōshō monastery on November 14, 1241, and redelivered at the same place on November 7, 1242.

35. JINTSU

神通

“Miraculous powers”

The “miraculous powers” of Buddhists are their daily actions of drinking tea and eating rice; all the Buddhas practice such powers continuously. There are six miraculous powers [supernatural sight, supernatural hearing, mind-reading, recollection of past lives, omni-science, perfect freedom], unified miraculous powers, transcendent miraculous powers, and supreme miraculous powers.

All of these are nothing more than doing what we must in the morning and doing what we must in the evening—Buddha and miraculous powers form one body. Thus, they arise together and Buddha is unaware of his powers; they perish together and Buddha is not tainted. Ascending or descending to and from heaven, sitting in the Himalayas with the trees and stones are the same – everything arises together with miraculous powers. All the Buddhas of the past are Shakyamuni Buddha’s disciples, and presented him with kesas and stūpas. At that time, Shakyamuni stated, “The miraculous powers of all the Buddhas are beyond comprehension.” Therefore we should know that the Buddhas of the past, present, and future are like that.

Zen Master Daii [Isan Reiyū], the Thirty-seventh Patriarch descended from Shakyamuni, was the Dharma-heir of Hyakujō Daichi. Without exception, all present day Buddhas and Patriarchs of the ten directions are his descendants and heirs. Once when Daii was lying down, Gyozan paid him a visit. Daii turned towards the wall. Gyozan told him, “I’m your disciple, so please stay where you are.” Daii started to get up any-way. As Gyozan was leaving, Daii called out his name and Gyozan stopped. Daii said, “I had a dream. Listen.” Gyozan leaned closer to hear. Daii told him, “Interpret my dream for me.” Gyozan brought a bowl of water and a towel for the master. Daii washed his face, and then sat down. Kyogen arrived on the scene and Daii announced, “We are displaying our miraculous powers – Hinayānists have nothing like this.” Kyogen said, “I was in the next room and overheard.” Daii asked, “Why don’t you say something?” Kyogen brought a cup of tea. Daii praised them both, saying, “You two possess miraculous powers superior to that of Śāriputtra and Maudgalyāyana.”

If we wish to learn the meaning of miraculous powers among Buddhists, we must study Daii’s words. Since this story is better than anything the Hinayana has to offer, those who master it are termed students of Buddha, and those who fail to grasp it are ignorant of Buddhism. This is the right transmission of miraculous powers and wisdom – do not study the miraculous powers of the non-believers of India, Hinayānists, abhidharma scholars, and the like.

When we study Daii’s miraculous powers, we find them to be unsurpassed, but a few points should be noticed. Namely, “lying down,” “turning towards the wall,” “getting up,” “calling out,” “interpreting the dream,” “washing up and sitting down”; also, Gyōzan’s “leaning closer to hear,” and “bringing water and a towel.” Thus Daii proclaimed, “We are displaying our miraculous powers.” We must study those miraculous powers. Patriarchs who have correctly transmitted the Buddhist Dharma never say, “interpreting the dream is washing the face”; such a viewpoint is decidedly supreme miraculous power. It is nothing like the powers of small-minded Hinayānists, and it differs from those of the ten saints and three sages. Those who learn inferior miraculous powers remain stuck at that level; they never attain the superior miraculous powers of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. The miraculous powers of Buddha are miraculous powers beyond Buddha. Those who learn such miraculous powers cannot be deceived by heretics and demons. Sutra scholars and abhidharma teachers never hear, receive, or believe in real miraculous powers.

Such scholars and teachers only learn about inferior miraculous powers, not the superior ones. All the Buddhas maintain and transmit superior miraculous powers. That is Buddhist miraculous power. If it is not Buddhist miraculous power, the bowl and towel cannot be brought, turning towards the wall cannot be done, and washing up and sitting down cannot occur.

The strength of superior miraculous powers covers and dominates the inferior miraculous powers; inferior miraculous powers are ignorant of superior miraculous powers. An inferior miraculous power is a single hair swallowing the great ocean, a speck of dust containing Mt. Sumeru, or the body projecting water and fire. The five miraculous powers [walking without touching the earth, mind-reading, all-seeing vision, prescience, passing through stone], the six miraculous powers, and so on are all inferior miraculous powers. Believers in those kinds of powers cannot even dream of real Buddhist miraculous powers. The five, six, etc., inferior miraculous powers are so called because they are stained by practice and enlightenment and are caught in space and time. They can be performed when one is alive but disappear at death; they are limited to oneself, not others. They can be used in this world, but nowhere else. Often they appear when not necessary, and vice-versa.

Superior miraculous powers are not like that. The teaching, practice, and enlightenment of all the Buddhas is actualized in their miraculous powers. It is not only present in the area of all the Buddhas, but occurs in the continuous development beyond Buddha. The miraculous powers of Buddha and their effects are truly incomprehensible. Miraculous powers are present before there “as a body, and their actualization is independent of past, present, and future. If there are no Buddhist miraculous powers, then the Buddha-seeking mind, practice, enlightenment, and nirvana of all the Buddhas could not occur.

The eternal ocean of the present unlimited Dharma world constitutes Buddhist miraculous power. A single hair not only swallows up the great ocean, but it also holds, actualizes, spits out, and utilizes the great ocean. When a single hair swallows or spits out the entire world do not think that it is merely one unified event and occurs nowhere else. A speck of dust containing Mt. Sumeru is the same. It spits out Mt. Sumeru, actualizes the present dharma world, and exists in the inexhaustible ocean. A single hair spits out the great ocean, a speck of dust spits out the great ocean – those things occur in an instant and take place in eternity. The hair and the speck of dust spit out an instant and an eternity. How is this accomplished? Through miraculous powers. Miraculous power produces miraculous power. Do not study that miraculous power appears or disappears in the three worlds of past, present, and future. All the Buddhas function freely within the sphere of miraculous power.

Layman Hō Unko was an outstanding disciple of the Patriarchs. He studied with Kōsei [Base] and Sekitō and learned from many other masters as well. Layman Hō once said, “Miraculous power! Marvellous activity! Drawing water and carrying firewood.”

We must thoroughly clarify this principle. “Drawing water” means to bring water in a container. Sometimes we do it ourselves, sometimes others do it for us. This is the activity of miraculous power Buddha. It can be known in being-time, yet miraculous power always remains nothing but miraculous power. Even if we are unaware of it, it cannot be abandoned nor eradicated; it always exists naturally. Even if the miraculous power of drawing water is not known, that miraculous power cannot be returned.

"Gathering firewood means picking up pieces of wood, like the Sixth Patriarch did long ago. Even when we are unaware that all of our activities from morning to night are miraculous powers, still miraculous power is manifest.

Truly, if we witness the miraculous powers and marvellous activity of all the Buddhas and Tathagatas, we will attain the Way. Therefore, the attainment of the Way of all the Buddhas is accomplished through the strength of miraculous power. Hence, instead of the inferior miraculous powers of the Hinayāna – e.g. projecting water from the body – we should study the great miraculous power of drawing water. The practice of drawing water and gathering firewood should not be abandoned. From past to present, and from one person to another this has been transmitted. It has not ceased for a moment; that is miraculous power and marvellous activity. It is great miraculous power far beyond the meagre ability of Hinayānists.

When Great Teacher Tōzan Gohan was Ungan's attendant, Ungan asked him, "What are your miraculous powers and marvellous activities?" Tōzan folded his hands on his chest and stood in front of him. Again Ungan asked, "What are your miraculous powers and marvellous activities?" Tōzan said, "Please take care of yourself," and left.

This story demonstrates the miraculous power of mutual understanding through words; it is like the miraculous power of a box and lid fitting together perfectly. We must know that miraculous power and marvellous activities are transmitted by Buddha's descendants, irreversibly, and possessed by the high Patriarchs without alteration. Do not believe miraculous powers to be the exclusive possession of non-believers and Hinayānists.

In Buddhism there are miraculous powers in both the upper and lower halves of the body. The present universe of the ten directions is like the body of half a monk. The water of the nine mountains and eight seas, the ocean of Buddha-nature, and the ocean of the Bodhisattvas flow from the top, middle, and lower sections of the body; it flows from the top, middle, and lower sections of the non-existent body. The projection of fire from the body is the same. Not only water, fire, wind, etc., are projected; Buddhas and Patriarchs also flow out of the upper and lower halves of the body. From the upper half of the body flows limitless time; from the lower half the ocean of Dharma-dhatu. The upper half of the body does not only enter the ocean of Dharma-dhatu – it spits out the entire world seven or eight times and swallows it two or three. The four, five, six, all, and unlimited great elements are projected and withdraw through miraculous powers. Swallowing and spitting out are miraculous powers. This great earth and universal space is swallowed up and spat out. It occurs through the strength of a speck of dust and a single hair. It is produced, supported, and returns above and beyond consciousness. How can the changing form of Buddhist miraculous powers, which transcend long and short, be measured with the intellect?

Long ago, a wizard possessing the five miraculous powers asked the Buddha, "Buddhas possess six miraculous powers. I have five. Which one do I lack?" Buddha said to him, "Wizard with the five miraculous powers." The wizard responded, "Yes?" Buddha said, "Why are you asking me for this extra miraculous power?"

We should clarify this story carefully. How does the wizard know that Buddhas possess six miraculous powers? Actually, they possess unlimited miraculous powers and wisdom. The wizard might say he sees six miraculous powers but there are more than just six. How can he even dream of seeing Buddha's other miraculous powers?

Even if the wizard sees Shakyamuni, he only sees Buddha's form; even if he sees Buddha's form, can we say he sees Shakyamuni, or vice-versa? Can we say the wizard sees himself? Study these tangled questions and cut through them. Trying to evaluate the six miraculous powers of Buddha is like trying to estimate your neighbours' treasures.

What is the meaning of Shakyamuni's question, "Why are you asking me for the extra miraculous power?" He did not say if the wizard possessed it or not. Even if he had, it is unlikely the wizard would have understood it. The five miraculous powers of the wizard are not part of the five miraculous powers of Buddha. Even if he utilizes all of his miraculous powers, how can the wizard penetrate the miraculous powers of Buddha? If the wizard penetrates just one of the Buddha's miraculous powers, he should be able to penetrate all of them. The wizard resembles Buddha in some ways and Buddha's actions have certain things in common with those of the wizard, yet their miraculous powers and actions are essentially different.

When the wizard asked about the extra miraculous power what kind of ability was he looking for? Buddha told him, "What do you lack? What do you need?" but the wizard couldn't get it. The miraculous powers of Buddha and the miraculous powers of others may be called by the same name, but they are totally different.

We have the following story:

Great Master Rinzai-in Eshō said: "An ancient worthy once taught: 'The Tathagata assumed bodily features in order to be perceived by people in the world. Even though they are empty sounds devoid of ultimate reality, he used provisional names such as the thirty-two and eighty marks to prevent us from falling into nihilism. This physical body is not the awakened body. No form is true form.'

"Some say, 'A Buddha possesses six miraculous powers. How marvellous!' All the celestial beings, gods, wizards, ashuras, demons, and other beings possess similar powers, but we don't call them Buddha's followers of the Way! Do not be deceived! When an army of ashuras fought with Indra, all 84,000 of them hid in a lotus root. Is that something holy? What I'm telling you monks is that such powers are obtained through karma or some other supernatural forces, and are unlike the six actual miraculous powers of Buddha: the ability to enter the worlds of form, sound, odour, taste, touch, and dharmas without being caught or deluded in any of those objects of cognition. Arriving at that level, the six faculties – form, sound, odour, taste, touch, and dharmas – are seen to be empty. Free of attachment, masters of the Way depend on nothing. Then, this deluded body, originally the product of the five skandhas, walks all over the world full of miraculous power.

"Followers of the Way! The real Buddha has no attributes, the True Law no form. Stop creating images and models out of illusions. Anything obtained through seeking is wild fox zen, not the real Buddha, but rather the delusion of non-believers."

This sermon of Rinzai tells us that the six miraculous powers of all the Buddhas cannot be grasped or even dreamed of by celestial beings, demons, or Hinayānists. The six miraculous powers of the Buddhist Way can only be transmitted individually by disciples of Buddha, not others. If the six miraculous powers of the Buddha had not been transmitted one to one, they could never be known. We must learn that one cannot be called a Master of the Way, unless there has been an individual transmission of the six miraculous powers of Buddha.

Zen Master Hyakujō Daichi said, "Eye, ear, nose, and tongue are untainted and free of attachment, independent of existence and non-existence. Sometimes it is expressed as the four verses, sometimes the four levels of practice, and sometimes as the six miraculous powers with no trace of the six sense organs. They are not obstructed by the existence or non-existence of things, and not dependent on intellectual comprehension. This is called miraculous power. Not being captivated by miraculous power is called 'no miraculous power.' Thus it is said, 'The Bodhisattva of no miraculous power leaves no trace.' That is the

mark of one who has continuous development beyond Buddha, is incomprehensibly wonderful, and is a true divinity.”

The miraculous powers of all the Buddhas are possessed by the one who has continual development beyond Buddha, is incomprehensibly wonderful, and is a true divinity. In other words, a “no-miraculous power Bodhisattva.” Not being dependent on intellectualizations and limited notions of miraculous powers, nothing can obstruct such a person. The six miraculous powers of the Buddhist Way are transmitted and maintained by all the Buddhas. There is not one Buddha who has not transmitted and maintained them; if there was, there would be no Buddhas. The six miraculous powers leave no trace in the six sense organs.

Concerning “no trace” an ancient worthy stated: “The miraculous activity of the six sense organs is the emptiness which is not emptiness; it is like a brilliant pearl whose light cannot be contained.”

“Cannot be contained” means “no trace.” When there is practice, study, and enlightenment with no trace, there is no functioning of the six sense organs. “No functioning” means functioning with thirty blows of the stick.

Therefore, that is why we must clarify the six miraculous powers. How could those who are not heirs of Buddhas ever even hear of this matter? They get caught up in externals and lose their place. The four levels of practice are fundamentals of Buddhism, but we never hear of the Tripitaka being rightly transmitted.

How can those who merely evaluate doctrines and seek out false teachings ever gain the fruit of enlightenment? Practitioners who are satisfied with minor attainments have not fully clarified things. Only those who have received the transmission of Buddha to Buddha do so.

The four levels of practice means “to receive and maintain the four verses.” Receiving and maintaining the four verses is not to be captivated by existence or non-existence nor tainted by the sense organs. “Not be tainted” means “undefiled”; “undefiled” means everyday mind, steady and harmonious.

In this manner, the six sense organs and the four levels of practice are rightly transmitted in the Buddhist Way. Therefore, the Buddhist Way is always accomplished through the six miraculous powers. That accomplishment enables a drop of water to swallow and spit out the great ocean, and for a speck of dust to hold and cast off the tallest mountain. Who can doubt it? This is what is known as miraculous power.

Delivered to an assembly at Kānnon-dōri-Kōshōhōrinji, November 16, 1241. Transcribed by Ejō in the attendant’s quarters at Kippōji, Eshū, on the first day of spring, 1243.

36. ARAKAN

阿羅漢

“The arhat”

All evil thoughts are consumed, passions are cut off, the merit of enlightenment is possessed, illusion is dispersed, and complete freedom of mind emerges. This is the Way of a great arhat. It is the ultimate state of those who learn the Buddhist Way, and the fourth stage of Hinayana practice—that is the Buddhist arhat.

“All evil” is like the broken handle of a ladle. Even though evil has been done for a long time, it is consumed and a real ladle appears in its original form instead. “The merit of enlightenment is possessed” is the appearance of the most important thing. “Illusion is dispersed” and not hidden anywhere in the ten directions of the universe. “Complete freedom of mind emerges” should be studied as “high is of itself high, low is of itself low.” Therefore, we have “walls, tiles, and stones.” “Complete freedom” is the total activity of mind. “Passions are cut off?” means that originally there are no defilements. Defilements obstruct defilements and cannot occur.

The spiritual power, wisdom, meditation, proclaiming of the Law, instruction, radiance, etc. of an arhat is far beyond comparison to the action of non-believers or demons. The sūtras say that arhats can see a hundred Buddha worlds. Such things cannot be seen by ordinary people. It is the principle behind “I thought foreigners had red beards, but now I know men who have red beards are foreigners.”^{1-EN} To enter nirvana is to enter our clenched fist [i.e., the actions of everyday life] and carry on our natural life. Therefore, it can be said that the serene mind of nirvana is impossible to avoid. To find the essence of the arhat is to become an arhat; if we have not yet found the arhat’s essence we cannot be true arhats ourselves.

An old sūtra says, “Today we have become true arhats. With the voice of the Buddhist Way we will proclaim the Law so that all beings will hear it.” The meaning of “all beings will hear it” is that all our actions should be the voice of Buddha. This is not just limited to Buddhas and their disciples. Anyone who possesses consciousness, intelligence, skin, flesh, bones, and marrow can make “all beings hear.” Consciousness and intelligence is said to extend to countries, land, grass, trees, walls, tiles, and stones. The falling leaves and blooming flowers, and the coming and going of life and death can also make others hear Buddha’s voice. “All beings will hear it” shows us that we should not just listen to words through our ears.

Shakyamuni Buddha said, “If my disciples call themselves arhats or pratyekabuddhas, yet have not heard or learned what the Buddhas have only taught the Bodhisattvas, they are not my disciples, nor arhats, nor pratyekabuddhas.”

“Taught to the Bodhisattvas” means “Only I and all the Buddhas of the universe know it” and “Only Buddha transmits Buddha.” Master this and then give instruction based on shohō jissō and supreme and perfect enlightenment. Therefore, what the Bodhisattvas and the Buddhas say is equal to what arhats and pratyekabuddhas say. The reason for this is that they hear and have learned that the Buddhas and Tathāgatas only instruct Bodhisattvas.

An old sūtra says, “In the sūtras of the śrāvakas there are those who are called arhats and have arrived at the level of Buddhas.” This saying is the certification of the Buddhist Way. It is not just the explanation of abhidharma scholars, but rather a rule of the Buddhist Way. We must study the principle of “Those who are called arhats have reached Buddha’s level” and “Those who have reached Buddha’s level are called arhats.” Outside the stage of an arhat nothing else exists. Furthermore, is there supreme enlightenment? Outside of supreme and perfect enlightenment nothing extra exists. Are there four kinds of practice and their effects? When an arhat accomplishes all dharmas it is the time for the unlimited Buddhist Way—it is “not mind, not Buddha, not things.” Even the eye of Buddha cannot see it. It cannot be described as some certain time among innumerable kalpas. We must learn the power that enables us to see with enlightened vision. Then we will see that even the smallest thing contains all things.

Shakyamuni Buddha said, “Some bhikkhus and bhikkhunis think they have already attained arhatood, reached their final incarnation, and obtained the goal of nirvana, and therefore do not seek supreme and perfect enlightenment. Such people are arrogant, and if they do not believe in supreme and perfect enlightenment there is no basis for calling them arhats.”

That is, if one believes in supreme and perfect enlightenment he can be called an arhat, and the Dharma can be transmitted. This direct transmission is the practice and enlightenment of the Dharma. Truly, attaining the stage of arhat-hood is not simply being in one’s final incarnation and entering into final nirvana. Seeking supreme and perfect enlightenment is the seeking of enlightened vision, Zazen facing a wall, and the opening of our eyes. Although the world is limitless, total and free activity emerges. Time is unchanging, yet uninhibited dialogues between masters and disciples appear. This is “seeking supreme and perfect enlightenment” – that is, seeking an arhat. That seeking is total perfection.

Zen Master Kassan Engo said, “After the people of ancient times attained enlightenment they entered the deepest part of the mountains, chose a cave covered with shrubs and bushes, and cooked their meals with mended utensils. They lived like that for ten or twenty years. They completely forgot the world of men and were happy to have left its dust far behind. People nowadays do not expect to lead such a life. They simply wish to remain anonymous, keep themselves hidden, and not do any more than necessary. They become old, little more than skin and bones. They live an enlightened life by themselves according to their individual ability. Old karma is cut off and ancient habits melt away. If they have some special power they try to pass it on to others, and work to establish relationships based on karma. They train themselves further, bearing much fruit.

“For example, it is like plucking one blade of grass in a wild field [finding just one person who seeks the Way]. Together [with that person] they have knowledge and attain liberation from life and death, living fruitful lives with gratitude toward the Buddhas and Patriarchs. However, such attainment cannot be kept to ourselves, even if we try. It is like the autumn frost which enables the spring fruit to grow. That practice benefits society and is utilized by those who seek it; it cultivates the world yet is not captivated by desires. How could someone with that kind of practice possibly become a worldly monk, clinging to rich people? If he did, his actions would offend both lay people and saints and by seeking wealth and fame his karma would lead him to hell. Those who keep the right practice will be able to lead a desireless life even if they are in powerful positions; also, even though they may not accomplish great deeds, their lives are those of true arhats.”

Therefore, that is why the monks described above are real arhats who have left the dust of the world behind. If you want to know the real form of an arhat you must understand this point. Do not listen to the mistaken teachings of Indian abhidharma scholars. Zen Master Engo of China is a Buddha and Patriarch and the Dharma-heir of the right transmission.

1-EN See the chapter Daishugyō in vol. I, p. 141.

Zen Master Daichi of Mt. Hyakujō in Koshū said, "The six sense organs – eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and consciousness – are each undefiled by all existent and non-existent dharmas. "This is called possessing a four-verse gatha^{2-EN} or the fourth stage of practice. When the six sense organs function and transcend self and others, the total dimensions of their merit cannot be measured. Therefore, the entire body is undefiled and all existent and non-existent dharmas are undefiled. Possessing a four-verse gatha means that each organ is undefiled. This is also called the "fourth stage"; that is, the stage of an arhat.

Therefore, the present actualization of the six sense organs is the arhat. To formulate and maintain this principle is to transcend defilement. This breaking through the barrier, and possessing a four-verse gatha is the fourth stage. From top to bottom the entire body is actualized and nothing remains.

We can express it this way: "When an arhat stays with ordinary people his entire teaching becomes obstructed by them. When he stays with saints his entire teaching becomes liberated. We must know that in every circumstance, arhats and all dharmas co-exist. If we certify arhathood, it covers everywhere." That is the fist which existed before K116 Buddha [the Buddha who existed before time].

This was delivered at Kannondōri-Kōshōhōrinji in Uji on May 15, 1242. Recopied on June 16, 1275, by Ejō.

2-EN For example, the famous All things are impermanent,
All dharmas are without self,
All things are full of suffering
Within the bliss of nirvana.

37. SHUNJŪ

春秋

“Spring and fall”

One day a monk asked Great Master Tōzan Gohon, “How can we avoid hot and cold?” Tōzan said, “Why don't you go somewhere that is neither hot nor cold?” “Where is a place that is neither hot nor cold?” Tōzan replied, “When it is cold, be completely cold; when it is hot, be completely hot!”

This story has been studied by many people in the past and we should also take it up in the present time. Buddhas and Patriarchs surely study it; those who study it are Buddhas and Patriarchs. All the Buddhas and Patriarchs of the past and present, in India and China, have actualized the original face of this study. That actualization is the koan of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

We must clarify the monk's question, “How can we avoid hot and cold?” We should examine closely the meaning of “hot” and “cold.” “Hot” is completely hot; “cold” is full of coldness. Hot and cold are only themselves; since they are only themselves, they arise from the head and are actualized from the eye [i.e., the root and essence] of hot and cold. Above the head and within the eye is the place where there is no hot and cold.

Tōzan said, “When it is cold, be completely cold; when it is hot, be completely hot!” This is to confront the essence of hot and cold. That is, when hot and cold arrive we must “kill” them; yet there is a place where they cannot be killed—cold is completely cold, hot is completely hot. Even if we try a million ways to avoid hot and cold, it is still hot and cold from top to bottom. Cold is the lively enlightened vision of the Patriarchs; hot is the warm skin and flesh of our predecessors.

Zen Master Join Koboku (also known as Priest Hōjō), the Dharma-heir of Priest Fuyo (Dōkai), said, “Some monks were discussing Tōzan's answer and one of them said, ‘That monk's question was given from a relative level and Tōzan's answer was given from an absolute level. However, the monk knew the sound of Tōzan's words and somehow entered Tōzan's level; consequently, Tōzan's answer had to stand on a relative level.’ If we understand in this way, we slander our holy predecessors and sink into falsehood. Haven't you ever heard [Kassan Zen'ne's] saying, ‘When we listen to the understanding of sentient beings, discrimination arises in our consciousness. It is like beauty gradually turning into ugliness right in front of our eyes.’ Generally, high-minded pilgrim monks who wish to clarify this must study the Eye and Treasury of the True Law of Tōzan. Do other Buddhas and Patriarchs teach the same thing? Do their words possess the same value? Now I will ask all of you, ‘Where is the place that is not hot or cold?’ Do you understand? Male and female birds nest in the castle tower and are kept in the golden hall.”

Join was in the line of Tōzan and a great master even among Patriarchs. He warned monks not to prostrate themselves before Tōzan because they would be discriminating between the relative and the absolute. If the Buddhist Dharma had been transmitted from a relative standpoint, how could it have been handed down to the present day? People who are as immature as wild kittens or coolies have not studied the essence of Tōzan's teaching. They misunderstand the heart of the Buddhist Law and mistakenly believe that Tōzan taught the five stages of the absolute and the relative.^{1-EN} This is totally inadequate and should not be listened to. The only thing we should concentrate on is Tōzan's Eye and Treasury of the True Law.

Zen Master Wanshi (Shōkaku) of Mt. Tendō in Keigenfu, (Dharma-heir of Tanka Shijun), said, “If we discuss Tōzan's story it is like two people playing a game of go. If one challenges the other's stone, his opponent will try to capture his stone. If he tries to avoid capture, his opponent will attack. If you understand this, you can understand Tōzan's saying. However, I'd like to add something to the story. If we look deeply there is no hot or cold. The ocean drains away and dries up; then it is easy to catch a giant sea turtle. Why do you use a fishing pole? That is very comical.”

What is the meaning of “two people playing go”? If we say “two people are playing go” it means we are a third party not actually playing. If we say such things then we must stop talking and directly face our opponent. Also we must understand that Wanshi's “tries to avoid capture” means “you are not me.” “His opponent will attack” means there is no separation between them. There is mud within the mud. If even a small part gets muddy we have to wash the entire thing. There is a jewel within the jewel. It illuminates others and illuminates ourselves.

Zen Master Engo (Kokugan) of Mt. Kassan (Dharma-heir of the fifth Patriarch Hōen) said, “A tray rolls across the jewels, jewels roll across the tray; the relative is in the absolute, the absolute is within the relative. No trace of the antelope's horns can be seen as it hides in the woods, and the bloodhound vainly runs across the forest.”

“The tray rolls across the jewels” is quite an unusual expression, never used before, although it is similar to the old saying, “Jewels do not roll across a tray in any special place. The antelope's horns are now visible and the forest runs around the bloodhound.”

Zen Master Myōkaku (Juken) of Shishōji temple on Mt. Secchō in Keigen-fu was in the line of Priest Chimon Kōso of Hokuto. He once said, “Tōzan's teaching is like a steep slope. Why is it necessary to discuss it from a relative or an absolute standpoint? A bright moon shines over the emerald palace, and Kanro's bark^{2-EN} reaches the sky.”

Secchō was in the third generation descended from Ummon. We may say that his practice was sufficient. Although “Tōzan's teaching is like a steep slope” seems to refer to some exalted level of teaching, actually it does not. This story about Tōzan and the monk is not based on direct or indirect teaching, or the emergence or non-emergence of Buddha, so why is it necessary to use expressions like “absolute” and “relative”? If we think we must use “relative” and “absolute” to solve this problem, we have not arrived at Tōzan's level or seen the main point of the Buddhist Dharma. We should put on a pair of straw sandals and start on a pilgrimage; abandon the notion of Tōzan's true teaching being the five ranks.

Zen Master Chōrei (Priest Shitaku) of Ten'ne in Tonkin said, “The absolute is within the relative, the relative is within the absolute. Transmigrating as a human for thousands of years, I wish to return [to a state of non-transmigration i.e., nirvana] but cannot make it. Rather, wild grass continues to grow and grow in front of the temple gate.”

This also uses the expressions “relative” and “absolute” but still manages to bring out the main point. We cannot say there is no main point; therefore, what is within the relative?

1-EN 1) The absolute within the relative; 2) the relative within the absolute; 3) the absolute alone; 4) the relative alone; and 5) the absolute as relative, the relative as absolute.

2-EN The dog Kanro is famous in Chinese literature for its diligence and patience.

Priest Busshō (Hotei) of Tanshū, who was in the line of Engo, said, "Tōzan attempted to show us the place where there is no hot or cold. Flowers bloom once again on a withered tree. [Those who do not understand this point] are as ridiculous as someone who tries to use his boat to mark the place where he dropped his sword. Such people are living among cold ashes [i.e., they have no understanding]."

This interpretation reveals a certain capability of being able to understand Tōzan's koan.

Zen Master Tandō Monjun of Rokutan said, "When hot, be completely hot; when cold be completely cold. Basically, hot and cold are not related. Master the entire world of hot and cold, then it will be like a boar-skin crown on the head of an old lord."

Let us ask, "What is the meaning of "not related"?" Answer quickly, quickly!

Zen Master Kassan Butto (Priest Shujun), Dharma-heir of Zen Master Taihei Bukkan Ego, said, "Many Zen people have lost the location of Tōzan's 'place where there is no hot or cold.' When it is cold, face the fire; when it is hot, go outside to cool off. Then we will be able to avoid hot and cold in our life."

Although Shujun was in the line of the fifth Patriarch Hōen, his words are those of a child. However, "Then we will be able to avoid hot and cold in our life" contains a kernel of understanding. Namely, one life covers all lives, and avoiding hot and cold is the dropping off of body and mind.

We have quoted a number of interpretations of Tōzan's koan from various masters of different eras, but none of them are even close to Tōzan's level. Since most of them do not know what hot and cold means in the Buddhas' and Patriarchs' everyday life, all they have is "going outside to cool off" and "facing the fire." This is a great pity. We should ask ourselves, "How should we study hot and cold when we live with an old Zen master?" It is shameful that the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs has been lost. Students should learn the real meaning and actual time of hot and cold, and then make their own interpretations and commentaries. If you cannot arrive at such a stage, you must look for your inadequacies. Worldly people can understand the sun and moon, and know about the phenomenal world. Saints, sages, and fools are so named because of their respective understanding. Never think that the hot and cold of the Buddhist Way is the same as the hot and cold of fools. That is what we must earnestly study.

This was delivered on two different occasions during 1244 as a memorial and exposition of Tōzan's wonderful teaching. A Patriarch said, "Many animals have horns, but one horn of a kirin [a magical beast] is sufficient."

葛藤

“Spiritual entanglement”

Only Mahākāśyapa transmitted the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and the Supreme Enlightenment of Shakyamuni Buddha on Vulture Peak. It was continually transmitted to the twenty-eighth Patriarch Bodhidharma. Bodhidharma came to China as the first Patriarch and transmitted the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and Supreme Enlightenment to the Great Teacher Shōshū Fukaku [Eka], who became the second Patriarch.

The twenty-eighth Patriarch came to the east as the first Patriarch of China, and the twenty-ninth Patriarch is the second Chinese Patriarch. This is the Chinese method of reckoning. The first Patriarch practiced under Prajñātāra from whom he learned the Buddhist Teaching and essence of the Way, and received the transmission. He inherited the inner root of the Buddhist teaching and passed it on to his descendants.

Generally, saints study in order to cut off the root of their spiritual entanglements but do not use their entanglements to cut off entanglements. Do they know how to use entanglements to transmit entanglements? It is rare to find anyone who knows that entanglements [cannot be separated] from the transmission of the Dharma. Few have experienced it or even heard it. How can it be possible for many people to experience it?

My late master, an ancient Buddha, said, “A gourd is really a type of wisteria; its tangles make it a gourd.”

Such a teaching cannot be found anywhere else in the past or present. My late master was the first to reveal such a teaching. The gourd’s intertwined vines are like Buddhas and Patriarchs seeking out Buddhas and Patriarchs, or Buddhas and Patriarchs confronting the Buddhas and Patriarchs. It is mind to mind transmission.

The twenty-eighth Patriarch said to his disciples, “The time has come for you to tell me what you have attained.” The disciple Dōfu said, “This is my viewpoint: Neither be attached nor not attached to words or letters. Utilize that condition freely.” Bodhidharma said, “You possess my skin.” Then the nun Sōji said, “This is my present understanding: After Ānanda saw the Buddha land of Aksobhya once, he never looked at it again.” Bodhidharma said, “You possess my flesh.” The third disciple Dōiku said, “The four elements are empty and the five skandhas are non-existent. In my view there is not one thing to be gained.” The Patriarch said, “You possess my bones.” Finally, Eka made three prostrations and without speaking returned to his seat. Bodhidharma said, “You possess my marrow.” Then Bodhidharma transmitted his Dharma and robe to Eka, designating him the second Patriarch.

We must study the first Patriarch’s words “you possess my skin, flesh, bones, and marrow”—these are the words of a Patriarch. Each disciple had a certain understanding and possessed some good points. Each of those points are the skin, flesh, bones, and marrow of the liberated body and mind; i.e., the skin, flesh, bones, and marrow of the body and mind that has dropped off. We should not listen to or study any Patriarch’s words with superficial understanding or discrimination. The Patriarch’s words are not “this” or “that” trying to describe the whole.

Nevertheless, those who lack the right transmission think that there is a difference between the levels of understanding of the four disciples and that there is a distinction in the first Patriarch’s “skin,” “flesh,” “bones,” and “marrow.” They think that the first Patriarch’s skin and flesh is farther away than his bones and marrow. Also, they believe that the second Patriarch was given the marrow because his understanding was the best. If we say such things we have not studied the Buddhas and Patriarchs nor received the right transmission.

We should know that the Patriarch’s skin, flesh, bones, and marrow have nothing to do with their relative depth. Even if there happens to be a difference in understanding, what the Patriarch said was, “You possess my... This means that the teaching in both “you possess my marrow” and “you possess my bones” can be used to instruct and lead people—there is no thought of sufficiency or insufficiency. They are like the holding up of the flower [of Mahākāśyapa] or the transmission of the robe [to Enō]. What the first Patriarch said was the same from the very beginning. Although what the Patriarch said was equal, the four interpretations are not necessarily equal. The four disciples’ interpretations may differ, but the words of the Patriarch are still the words of a Patriarch.

Often, the speaker’s intention and the listener’s understanding do not coincide. For example, when Bodhidharma spoke to his four disciples he meant “you possess me through your “skin.” If the second Patriarch has hundreds of thousands of disciples, there will also be hundreds of thousands of interpretations—there is no limit. In the present case there are only four disciples and therefore we tentatively have the four aspects of skin, flesh, bones, and marrow. If there had been someone else mentioned, there would have been yet another different interpretation.

When we speak to the second Patriarch we must be able to understand the meaning of “you possess my skin.” Even if there is “you possess my skin,” there still must be a transmission of the Eye and Treasury of the True Law of the second Patriarch, independent of possessing the skin, flesh, bones, or marrow.

In the case of Dōfu, Dōiku, and Sōji we must understand the meaning of “you possess my marrow.” Even if we possess just the skin we still must possess the Dharma. The body and mind of Bodhidharma is his skin, flesh, bones, and marrow. But remember, it is not that his marrow is deep or that his skin is superficial.

If we are able to open the eye of study and receive the seal of “you possess my skin,” we will have found the correct way to possess Bodhidharma. It is his entire skin, flesh, bones, and marrow, body and mind, body and body, mind and mind. He is a Patriarch who is completely a Patriarch; he is saying, “you possess my entire body.” When this Patriarch appears and speaks to hundreds of thousands of disciples he will say, “You possess my skin.” Every one of the disciples will probably make a distinction between the skin, flesh, bones, and marrow. If Bodhidharma had six or seven disciples studying under him he would have said “you possess my heart,” “you possess my body,” “you possess my Buddha,” “you possess my enlightened eyes,” “you possess my enlightenment,” etc. “You” sometimes means Bodhidharma, sometimes Eka. We must study in detail the principle of “possess.”

We must also be aware of the expressions “you possess me,” “I possess you,” “possessing me and you,” “possessing you and

1-EN 1 Kattō, “a tangled wisteria,” usually is used as a derogatory word to mean complicated teachings or wordy Zen; it is a synonym for illusion. However, in this chapter Dōgen urges us to use kattō to cut off kattō; use illusion to cut off illusion. Also, kattō symbolizes the relationship between Buddha and Buddha, inextricably bound together through the Dharma transmission.

me." If we look into the body and mind of the Patriarch and say his interior a and Patriarchs. If we possess the skin it means we possess the flesh, bones, and marrow. If we possess the bones and marrow it means we possess the original face of the skin and flesh.

The body of the entire universe is not only Bodhidharma's body; it is his skin, flesh, bones, and marrow. Therefore, we can say "you possess my robe" and "you possess my Law." Further, the words of both Bodhidharma and the disciples transcend universals and particulars; consequently, master and disciple learn together.

This mutual study and seeking of the Way between master and disciple is kattō, the spiritual and physical entwining of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. This forms the life of the Buddhas and Patriarchs; skin, flesh, bones, and marrow form the smile of Mahākāśyapa.

We must study further that the seed of this entwining has the ability to liberate us; it has branches, leaves, flowers, and fruit that wind together to form the plant. They are mutually bound to each other, although they seem independent; here Buddhas and Patriarchs are actualized and real form emerges.

Great Master Jōshū Shinsai said to an assembly of monks, "Mahākāśyapa transmitted the Law to Ānanda. To whom did Bodhidharma transmit the Dharma?" A monk said, "Everyone knows that the second Patriarch possessed the marrow of Bodhidharma's teaching. Why do you ask such a question?" The master said, "Don't slander the second Patriarch like that!" Then he said, "Bodhidharma stated that those on the outside get the skin and those on the inside get the bones. What do those who are in the innermost part get?" The monk asked, "What is the principle of attaining the marrow?" The master said, "You possess only the skin and this old monk does not depend on the marrow." The monk asked, "What is this marrow?" The master replied, "If you ask a question like that you won't even be able to get the skin."

Therefore, we should see that if we are not able to get the skin we cannot get the marrow. If we can get the skin we can get the marrow. We must clarify the principle of "If you talk like that you cannot even get the skin." In reply to the question "What is the principle of attaining the marrow," the master said, "You possess only the skin and this old monk does not depend on the marrow." Where we find the skin and do not depend on the marrow is the principle behind attaining the marrow. Therefore, we have a question like: "Everyone knows that the second Patriarch possessed the marrow of Bodhidharma's teaching. Why do you ask such a question?" When we look at Mahākāśyapa's transmission to Ānanda, we see that Ānanda's entire body was absorbed by Mahākāśyapa; they became one. However, at the time of transmission the face, eyes, skin, flesh, bones, and marrow cannot avoid being changed somewhat. Hence, Jōshū asked, "To whom did Bodhidharma transmit the Dharma?" When Bodhidharma decided to transmit the Law he was already the real Bodhidharma, and when the second Patriarch possessed the marrow he had already become Bodhidharma. This is the principle behind the intact transmission of the Buddhist Law up to the present age. If such a principle had not been present the Buddhist Dharma could not have been transmitted. We should study this principle carefully, comprehend it ourselves, and teach it to others.

"Those on the outside get the skin, those on the inside get the bones. What do those who are in the innermost part get?" Here "outside" and "inside" directly indicate the essence. When we say outside it means the skin, flesh, bones, and marrow are outside. When we say inside it means the skin, flesh, bones, and marrow are inside.

Therefore, that is why the four disciples of Bodhidharma studied the development of myriad kinds of skin, flesh, bones, and marrow. Do not think that there is no other development outside of the marrow. Other developments do exist.

The ancient Buddha Jōshū's address to the monks is the real Buddhist Way. Others such as Rinzai, Tokusan, Dai'e, Ummon, and others do not surpass him; on the contrary, they cannot even dream of his level. How can they begin to talk about it? Elders of the present age who lack understanding of the Dharma, also know nothing about it and if they hear such talk they will be totally surprised.

Zen Master Secchō Myōkaku said, "Jōshū and Bōkūshu are both ancient Buddhas." Therefore, the Way of ancient Buddhas is the experience of enlightenment in the Buddhist Dharma, and the understanding of one's own essence. Great Master Seppō Shinkaku said, "Jōshū is an ancient Buddha." Both of these Buddhist Patriarchs praised the ancient Buddha Jōshū. Now we know that ancient Buddhas transcend the development of past and present.

The principle of mutual entwining of skin, flesh, bones, and marrow is the standard of ancient Buddhas' use of the expression "you possess me." We must study and clarify this standard.

"The first Patriarch returned to the west." That is a mistaken interpretation. According to Sōun he met Bodhidharma on the way back to India, but how can that be true? How could he see Bodhidharma's actions? It is correct to say that after he entered parinirvana Bodhidharma's ashes were interred on Mt. Uji in China.

This was delivered to the monks on July 7, 1242 at Kannondōri-Kōshōhōrinji, Yamashiro, Uji-gun. Transcribed on March 3, 1243, at the chief disciple's quarters of Kippōji, Yoshida-gun, by Ejō.

39. SHISHO

綱書

“The seal of transmission”

Kannondōri-Kōshōhōrinji

All Buddhas surely transmit the Dharma to one another; all the Patriarchs have transmitted the Dharma to each other. This mutual pledge of enlightenment is the right transmission from master to disciple. Therefore, we have supreme enlightenment. If you are not a Buddha, you cannot receive the seal of enlightenment; if you do not possess the seal of enlightenment, you cannot be a Buddha. Who else besides Buddha can give the seal of enlightenment?

When the seal of enlightenment is received, there is the self-enlightenment with no master, and self-enlightenment of no self. That is why we say Buddhas transmit enlightenment and Patriarchs mutually pledge enlightenment. If you are not a Buddha you cannot clarify the essence of this principle. Even those people who are on the highest level or have the status of Buddha cannot easily grasp this, so how is it possible for scholars of the sūtras or abhidharma to conjecture about it? They may pretend to explain it but they have no real understanding.

Buddhas transmit to Buddhas, and only Buddhas can master the Buddhist Way. There is no place Buddhas are not. For example, stones transmit stones, jade transmits jade, chrysanthemums and pine trees transmit and hand down the seal of enlightenment. Each generation of chrysanthemums or pine trees passes its life to the next generation. If you cannot see this, you will never see the seal of enlightenment mutually possessed by all the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Even if they are confronted with the right transmission of the Way from Buddha to Buddha they do not question it. This is a great pity. They resemble Buddha but actually are not children or descendants of Buddha.

Once Sōkei [Enō] said to an assembly, “There are forty Patriarchs from the seven Buddhas to Enō, and from Enō to the seven Buddhas there are forty Patriarchs.”

This principle is the essence of the right transmission of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. The seven Buddhas have emerged throughout countless kalpas of the past and present. Nevertheless, the Buddhist Way and Buddhist transmission exist in the direct transmission from master to disciple of the forty Patriarchs. Therefore, that is why from the sixth Patriarch to the seven Buddhas there is the Buddhist transmission of the forty Patriarchs, and from the seven Buddhas to the sixth Patriarch there certainly is a transmission of forty Buddhas. The Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs is like this. If there is no mutual pledge of enlightenment between Buddhas and Patriarchs, there can be no Buddhist wisdom and no reciprocal understanding between them. If we lack Buddhist wisdom we cannot have faith or trust. If there is no reciprocal understanding between Patriarchs, we cannot have a pledge of mutual enlightenment.

We use the expression “forty Patriarchs” tentatively for those Patriarchs in this era. The transmission from Buddha to Buddha is ancient and profound, never retreating or turning, never stopping or cut off. This principle means that Shakyamuni Buddha attained the Way and transmitted it to Mahākāśyapa before the age of the seven Buddhas existed. Although it is said he attained the Way at the age of thirty, actually he existed before the time of the seven Buddhas; all the Buddhas simultaneously attained the Way at that time. That attainment of the Way occurred prior to, after, and at the same time as all the Buddhas.

Furthermore, that is the principle we must study in the transmission of the Dharma from Shakyamuni Buddha to Mahākāśyapa. If we do not know this principle we have not yet clarified the Buddhist Way. If we have not yet clarified the Buddhist Way we cannot know anything about the Buddhist transmission. “Buddhist transmission” means to be the heir of Buddha.

Once Ānanda asked Shakyamuni Buddha, “Whose disciples are all the Buddhas of the past?” Shakyamuni Buddha said, “All the Buddhas of the past are the disciples of me, Shakyamuni Buddha.” This is true for all the Buddhas. To venerate, transmit, and accomplish the Buddha transmission is the Buddhist Way.

In the Buddhist Way whenever the Dharma is transmitted, surely there is shisho, the seal of transmission.^{1-EN} If there is no Dharma transmission, people will automatically become non-believers. If there had not been a definite, certifiable transmission of the Buddhist Way, how could it have been transmitted up to the present day? Therefore, anyone in the line of Buddhist transmission must have received the seal of Buddha transmitting Buddha. Obtaining the seal of Buddha transmitting Buddha should be used to clarify the movement of the sun, moon, and stars and the attainment of skin, flesh, bones, and marrow. Sometimes a kesa, sometimes a staff, sometimes a pine branch, sometimes a fly whisk, sometimes an udumbara flower, sometimes a golden robe, sometimes a straw sandal, and sometimes a shippei is used to transmit the Dharma.

When a transmission occurs, the seal is made with blood from either a finger or tongue. It may be written with oil or milk. Either is acceptable. Both transmitter and receiver form the Buddhist transmission. Truly, the seal of transmission actualizes the Buddhas and Patriarchs and therefore the transmission of the Dharma is actualized. When such a transmission occurs Buddhas and Patriarchs bestow the Dharma freely without any motive or expectation. Where the Dharma transmission exists, Buddhas and Patriarchs exist.

The twenty-eighth Patriarch came from the west and the essence of the Dharma transmission of the Buddhist Way was heard for the first time in the east. Prior to that it was not known. Scholars of the abhidharma or teachers of doctrine never even thought about it. Even the ten saints or three sages cannot surpass that teaching. Students of the Tripitaka or reciters of secret chants cannot even begin to question it. It is shameful that although they are human beings and possess the ability to attain the Dharma as a birthright, they worry too much about obscure or minor teaching and know nothing about the Dharma or its occurrence. Hence, we must be very careful about the proper method of study and concentrate on developing a proper attitude for investigation.

When I was in Sung Dynasty China I had the opportunity to respectfully observe many seals of transmission. I saw several different types. One was the possession of the abbot Iichi who was invited to come to Mt. Tendō from his temple in Secchō Province. He was the former head (seidō) of Kōfukuji, and from the same home-town as my late master. My late master used to say, “If there is any question about enlightenment, ask the Seidō.”

One day the Seidō said to me, “It is interesting to look at ancient calligraphy. Have you ever seen any?” I said, “Only a few examples.” The Seidō said, “I have a scroll that happened to come into my possession. I’ll show it to you now.” Saying this,

1-EN This is a certificate of enlightenment and Dharma transmission written by a master and given to his disciple.

he brought out a seal of transmission. It was for the Hōgen line of transmission and was part of another old priest's possessions including his bowl and kesa. It was not actually Ichi Seidō's. On it was written, "The first Patriarch Mahākāśyapa was enlightened by Shakyamuni Buddha; Shakyamuni Buddha was enlightened by Kāśyapa Buddha."

When I saw that I became more determined and my belief in the right transmission of the Dharma from one to another was strengthened. I had not seen such a document before, but now I saw the necessity of protecting and preserving the Dharma-heirs of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. My deep emotion could not be expressed.

In the seal of transmission used in the Ummon line, I saw one after the elder Sōgetsu became the chief disciple on Mt. Tendō. On Sōgetsu's seal there was first the master's name and then a list of all the Buddhas and Patriarchs, ending with the new Patriarch. Therefore, there was a list of some forty Patriarchs descended from the Tathāgata included along with the new Patriarch. It is as if the Patriarchs transmit their Law directly to the new Patriarch. Mahākāśyapa, Ānanda, and all the others flow together in one stream.

Then I asked Sōgetsu, "O Priest, there are five different Zen schools. What is the reason for this? If there is only one right transmission from India why do such differences arise?" Sōgetsu replied, "There seem to be differences, but we should simply study in the same manner as the Buddha on Mt. Ummon. Why did Shakyamuni Buddha respect others? Because he knew that all human beings possess the means for enlightenment. Why did Ummon respect others? For the same reason." After I heard this I was able to get some understanding of the seal of transmission.

There are some priests of large temples of the Kosetsu District who are said to transmit the lives of Rinzai, Ummon, and Tōzan. However, many self-proclaimed descendants of Rinzai are self-centred and dishonest. They study under a renowned master and then ask for his portrait or a sample of his calligraphy. This is what they use as their standard of transmission. Worse than that, there are some priests, no better than dogs, who visit many different masters and ask them for a portrait or a sample of calligraphy. Like this, they acquire a large stock of such things. As they get older they bribe officials in order to receive support for establishing a new temple and then become its abbot, even though they have not received a seal of transmission from a true master. In turn, they pretend to transmit the Dharma to well-known people, kings, ministers, and close friends without actually possessing it. They only covet fame. It is disgraceful that such malicious deeds occur in this evil age. Among those people not one can even dream of the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Generally, samples of one's calligraphy or one's portrait are freely given to scholars, lay people, junior priests, merchants, etc. This can be seen in any of the annals of the various schools. Certain people who are unfit to receive the Law but are eager to gain profit from the Dharma transmission pester the master to give them a scroll. Those masters who have attained the Buddhist Way do not want to give them a scroll but sometimes resign themselves to the situation and write one. If they do so those masters are acting contrary to traditional practice; they are issuing only a simple certificate of one's being a disciple. Nowadays, it is the practice to give the Dharma transmission to anyone who has gained some power while studying under a master. Such a seal merely certifies that he has copied his master. The majority of monks have a tendency to stay with one master, listen to his lectures, live in the monastery, busy themselves with study, and try to clarify the Great Matter of life and death, hoping to receive the seal of transmission when actually they will not.

Once there was a monk named Den who was a descendant of Zen Master Butsugen Seion of the Ryumon Branch. This Den was in charge of the sūtras and possessed a seal of transmission. In the beginning of the Kajō period [c. 1215] the elder Kōzen, a Japanese, took care of Den who had fallen ill. Kōzen looked after him very carefully and Den, wishing to thank him, took out his seal of transmission, placed it before Kōzen, and made a prostration. This kind of thing—looking at the seal and making a prostration—is done rarely.

Eight years later in the fall of 1223, I first came to Mt. Tendō and the elder Kōzen kindly requested that the sūtra master Den show me his seal of transmission. On it was the following: The names of all the Patriarchs from the seven Buddhas to Rinzai were written; up to Rinzai there were forty-five Patriarchs. After Rinzai's name a large circle was drawn. Inside the circle the monk's name was written together with both their seals. After the name of the new Dharma-heir, the date was written. It seems that even such a distinguished master as Rinzai was not beyond producing such an inadequate seal.

My late master Tendō, the head abbot, was very strict concerning bragging about one's reception of the Dharma transmission. His community was a community of ancient Buddhas. He completely reformed the monastery. Nyojō himself never wore an elaborate kesa. Nyojō had received the Dharma robe of Dokai of Mt. Fuyo but did not wear it even for his installation ceremony. He never wore any kind of expensive robe at any time in his life. Both those who understood the meaning of his actions and those who did not praised and respected him as a man of true knowledge and insight.

My late master, an ancient Buddha, always admonished the monks by saying, "In recent years many use the names of the Patriarchs, boastfully wear Dharma robes, keep their hair long, and chase after titles from the emperor in order to become well-known. That is a great pity. How can anyone possibly save those people? What a shame that elders everywhere lack a mind for the Way and have no real study. Even among thousands of monks there is not one who really comprehends the true meaning of the seal of transmission, or Dharma transmission. This is a perversion of the Way of the Patriarchs." He admonished all the monks in this manner, but none felt any resentment towards him.

Therefore, that is why if you practice the Way with a stainless mind, surely you will find the seal of transmission. When you find it, that will be real study of the Way.

In the Rinzai school's seal of transmission the family name is written first and then there is certification that the person in question had studied under the master, entered the community, received personal instruction, been given the Dharma transmission, or whatever the case may be. Then there is a list of the past Patriarchs. The essence being that it is not important who was the first or last to transmit the Dharma, but rather it is essential to certify that one has real insight and knowledge of the inner teaching. That is the Style used in the Rinzai line. I have actually seen it and will reproduce it here.

"The Sūtra master Ryōha of Ibu has become my disciple. [Setsuan] Tokko studied under Priest [Dai'e] Shūkō of Kinzan. Kinzan was Dharma-heir of [Goso Hō] en of the Yogi Branch. [Hō] en was Dharma/heir of [Hokun Shu] zui of Kai'e. [Shu] zai was Dharma-heir of Yogi [Hō] e. Kaiser [Hō] e was Dharma-heir of Jimyo [So] en. [So] en was Dharma-heir of Fuzō [Zen] shō was the Dharma-heir of Fuketsu [En] shō. [En] shō was Dharma-heir of Nan'in [E] gū. [E] gū was Dharma-heir of Kōkei [Son] jō. [Son] jō was the outstanding Dharma-heir of the High Patriarch Rinzai."

This was written by Zen Master Bussho Tokko of Mt. Aiku and given to Musai Ryōha. When Ryōha was an abbot of Mt. Tendō, the novice Chikō secretly brought it to the monks' quarters and showed it to me. That occurred on January 21, 1224, and I cannot even begin to express how deeply impressed I was upon seeing a seal of transmission for the first time. It had the

grandeur of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. I offered incense, made a prostration, and then reverently examined it.

I will now explain how all this came about. In July of the previous year, Shikō, the general secretary of the monastery, was speaking privately to me in one of the buildings. I asked him, "Is there anyone here now who has a seal of transmission?" He said, "Evidently, the abbot here possesses one. If you ask him politely, he might show it to you." After hearing that, I thought about it constantly, day and night. The next year I entreated the novice Chikō to show it to me and he finally acceded after seeing my great sincerity. This seal of transmission was wrapped in white silk, and placed on red brocade with a cylindrical piece of jade on one end. It was about nine run in width and seven feet in length. Such a document is not shown to just anybody, so I was very grateful to Chiko. I immediately went to the abbot's room, offered incense, and made a prostration to show my gratitude to Priest Musai. Musai said, "It is very rare to have the opportunity to see a seal of transmission. Now you have arrived at real study of the Way." I was overjoyed when I heard that.

Later on, in the Hōkyō period [c. 1224] while visiting Mt. Tendai, Mt. Gate, etc. I arrived at Mannenji in Heiden. The abbot there was Gensu of Fukushū. After the elder Shūton retired Gensu was appointed and the monastery flourished. The first time I met him he talked about the traditions of the Buddhas and Patriarchs and he mentioned Dai'e and Gyozan. He said, "Have you seen my seal of transmission?" I said, "No. How could I have seen it?" Then he stood up and held out his seal of transmission. He said, "I do not show this to even my closest friends or long-time disciples. This is a Dharma rule of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. However, once when I was in the city visiting the governor I had the following dream. The Zen Master Hōjō of Mt. Daibai was holding a branch of plum blossoms. He said, 'If someone comes a great distance by boat in order to locate the "real man" do not withhold these flowers.' He then gave me the branch. I remember saying in the dream, 'If he hasn't come by boat I'll give him thirty blows.' Incidentally, this occurred less than five days ago; I now see you here. Not only that, you have come a long way by boat and my seal of transmission is wrapped in silk decorated with plum blossoms. This is what Daibai was saying in the dream. Since the dream came true I brought out my seal of transmission. Furthermore, I will not hesitate to give you my transmission if you really want it."

Although my joy was inexpressible at being offered his seal of transmission, I did not take it but only offered incense, made a prostration, and paid my respects. The attendant monk who was carrying the incense tray said, "This is the first time I've seen the seal of transmission." Secretly I thought that all this came about due to the magnanimity of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. How else could a foolish foreigner like me be able to see someone's seal of transmission? Tears of gratitude wet my sleeves. When this occurred we were alone in the section of the abbot's quarters where an image of Vimalakirti is enshrined. This seal of transmission was made of cloth with a plum blossom design; it was about nine inches high and eight feet long. The rod was made of yellow jade and had a brocade border.

On the way back from Mt. Tendai to Mt. Tendō I stayed one night in the guest quarters of the novice training hall of Goshōji on Mt. Ōbai. I dreamed that the Patriarch Daibai Hōjō appeared and gave me a branch of plum blossoms. We must always be sincere when we talk about the seal of transmission. This branch was about a foot long. Are these plum blossoms different from an udumbara flower? Asleep or awake the reality must be the same. Both when I was in China and after I returned to Japan I told no one about this.

The seal of transmission used in the Tozan Dharma line differs from that of Rinzaï or other schools. That which is kept in the inner lining of the robes of the Buddhas and Patriarchs is the seal of transmission, written with the blood from a fingertip of the High Patriarch Seigen, written by Sokei [lino] and bestowed to him. It was written with the blood of both Seigen and Sokei. Seals of transmission written during the time of the first and second Patriarchs were done in a similar fashion. "My child transmits my law," etc. should not be written on the seal. All the Buddhas of the past used the above form for the seal of transmission.

Therefore, we should know that the blood of Sōkei is mixed with the blood of Seigen and vice versa. Only the Patriarch Seigen received the seal of certification from Sōkei; no one else did. Those who understand this realize that the Buddhist Dharma has been rightly transmitted by Seigen only.

The seal of transmission:

My late master, the ancient Buddha, Priest Tendo said, "All the Buddhas have surely received the Dharma transmission. That is, Shakyamuni Buddha received the transmission from Kāśyapa Buddha. Kāśyapa Buddha received it from Kanakamuni Buddha. Kanakamuni Buddha received it from Krakucchanda Buddha. Like this, Buddha transmits Buddha continually, up to the present time. This is what we must believe in and receive. That is the proper way to learn Buddha."

Then I asked him, "Kāśyapa Buddha entered parinirvana before Shakyamuni Buddha was born in the world and attained the Way. How is it that the Buddhas of past aeons can transmit the Dharma to those in the present? What is the principle behind this?"

My late master said, "Your standpoint is that of sūtra scholars or Hinayānists, but not that of the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Our Buddha transmission is not at all like that." We have learned that Shakyamuni Buddha received the transmission after Kāśyapa entered parinirvana, but we should also learn that Kāśyapa Buddha transmitted the Dharma to Shakyamuni Buddha before he entered parinirvana. To think that Shakyamuni Buddha did not receive the transmission from Kāśyapa Buddha is the belief of non-believers. How can anyone who thinks like that have confidence in Shakyamuni Buddha? The transmission from Buddha to Buddha has continued to the present time with each Buddha preserving the right transmission. It is not like many different things put in a line, or gathered together. The transmission passes from Buddha to Buddha without alteration; do not be concerned with the length of time involved or the number of years spent in practice – only Hinayānists do that. If we contend that Buddhism began with Shakyamuni Buddha, it is only about two thousand years old with only forty or fifty generations. That is not an ancient transmission, but rather new. Do not study like that about the Buddhist transmission. Rather, study that Shakyamuni Buddha received the transmission from Kāśyapa Buddha and that Kāśyapa Buddha transmitted it to Shakyamuni Buddha. If you learn that, you will know the real transmission of the Buddhas and Patriarchs."

Thus, I learned about the real transmission of the Buddhas and Patriarchs for the first time and also cut off all my old mistaken views.

This was written by Samana Dōgen, transmitter of the Dharma from Sung China, on March 27, 1241, at Kannondōri-Kōshōhōrinji. Delivered to the monks on December 12 of the same year. Recopied at the chief disciple's quarters on February 25, 1242, by Ejō.

40. HAKUJUSHI

柏樹子

“The oak tree”

Great Master Jōshū Shinsai was the thirty-seventh Patriarch descended from Shakyamuni, the Tathāgata. He first developed the resolve to seek the Way at the age of sixty-one, left his home and began to study the Way. At that time he said, “If I meet a hundred-year-old man who is inferior to me, I will teach him; if I meet a seven/year-old child who is superior to me, I will ask him about the Way.” He made this vow and then left for the south to begin his pilgrimage.

One day he arrived at Nansen’s and Went to pay his respects. Jōshū entered the room to give his greeting and saw Nansen lying down. Nansen asked him, “Where are you from?” Jōshū replied, “Zuizo-in [the name of Nansen’s temple].” Nansen said, “Have you seen the zuizo [i.e., the glorious image of Buddha]?” Jōshū said, “No, I haven’t seen it, but I see a reclining Buddha.” Nansen sat up and asked, “Are you a master-less novice or not?” Jōshū said, “I have a master.” Nansen asked, “Who is he?” Jōshū said, “It’s early spring and still chilly but you look fine, honourable priest.” Nansen called the director of monks and said, “Take special care of this novice.”

That is how he came to study under Nansen. After that he did not go any- where else for more than thirty years and diligently practiced the Way. He never Wasted his time or did useless things. After he received the transmission of the Way he became abbot of Kannon-in of Jōshū and lived there another thirty years. As abbot he was very different from the typical priests of the time.

One day Jōshū said, “Smoke drifts only from the neighbouring kitchens and I haven’t eaten a manju or dango^{1-EN}1 since last year. The monks think little about their practice but complain much. There are no good people left in the town. When they visit the temple the first thing they ask for is tea; if there is no tea they get angry and leave.”

It is a great pity that no smoke rises from Jōshū’s kitchen and there is little food. There has been no food since last year. People only come from the village for tea; if they do not want tea they do not come. None of them bring tea as an offering. The monks want to see a sage, but no one wants to be one.

Another time, Jōshū said, “Out of all those who have renounced the world is there anyone who lives the way I do? I sleep on the earthen floor on a torn mat without a cover and with only a wooden pillow. No incense is offered before the Buddha-image; instead, there is the smell of manure chips.”

We can see from the above illustrations how poor Jōshū’s life was. We should all follow his example. Yet he had fewer than twenty monks studying under him since few can lead such a difficult life. The monastery was small and lacked proper facilities such as seats and washstands. There was no light at night and no charcoal for winter. It was a very severe life, especially for someone of advanced age. Nevertheless, all of the ancient Buddhas lived like Jōshū.

Once one of the temple officers wanted to replace a leg on a platform that had been broken some time before and had been patched with a piece of scrap wood, but Jōshū would not permit it. This is a very unusual anecdote.

Often there was not even a single grain of rice for the morning gruel, just light pouring through the window, and dust blowing through the cracks. Sometimes Jōshū himself picked nuts and berries to use for the monks’ food. All his descendants praise his austere life, and even though they cannot follow in his footsteps they long for such a life.

Another time, Jōshū told the monks, “I lived for thirty years in the south, doing nothing but Zazen. All of you should concentrate on Zazen in order to solve the great matter of life and death. If after three, five, twenty, or thirty years of practice you cannot gain the Way, cut off my head and use it for a lavatory basin.” He uttered such hard sayings as this. Truly, the practice of Zazen is the direct road to the Buddhist Way; look into Zazen for the truth. Later on, many people said that Jōshū was an ancient Buddha.

Once, a monk asked the Great Master Jōshū, “Why did the first Patriarch come from the west?” Jōshū said, “The oak tree in the front garden.” The monk said, “O Priest, you shouldn’t give such an objective answer.” Jōshū replied, “I didn’t.” The monk asked again, “Why did the first Patriarch come from the west?” Jōshū said, “The oak tree in the front garden.”

Although this koan originated with Jōshū, it was created by the entire body of all the Buddhas. Who is the master of this koan? We should know that the principle of “the oak tree in the front garden” and “Why did the first Patriarch come from the west” does not belong to the objective world. Furthermore, the oak tree is not the objective “self.” Because we have “O Priest, you shouldn’t give such a concrete answer,” there is the reply, “I didn’t”; how can the priest become attached to the priest? If he is not attached he becomes “I.” How can “I” be attached to “I”? If he is attached he becomes a human being. What stage of objectivity can be obstructed by “come from the west” since “come from the west” occurs in the objective world? However, do not consciously wait for an objective state of “come from the west” since it is not necessarily the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and Serene Mind—it is not mind, not Buddha, not things.

This “Why did the first Patriarch come from the west” is not a question nor does it indicate that both the monk and Jōshū shared the same viewpoint. When this question is given, not one person is seen, not can the questioner gain anything. The deeper we look into this question the more unfathomable it is. Therefore, our answer is incomplete, mistake after mistake piles up, and our speech is like an empty echo, is it not? Since there is no objectivity or subjectivity in “the oak tree in the front garden,” it is rooted in complete freedom.

We are not speaking in an objective sense, so therefore, this oak tree is not a usual type. Yet even if it is considered from an objective standpoint, Jōshū did not give an objective answer. That oak tree is not like the one that grows near the emperor’s tomb. Since our oak tree is not like that one [which cannot be cut down], it can turn to dust. Even when it becomes dust it cannot obstruct our thoughts or practice, and consequently, Jōshū said, “I didn’t give an objective answer.” How can it be shown to other people, since we ourselves are like the oak tree [without discrimination of objectivity or subjectivity].

A monk once asked Jōshū, “Does an oak tree have Buddha-nature or not?” Jōshū replied, “It has.” Then the monk asked, “When does the oak tree become Buddha?” Jōshū said, “It waits for the sky to fall to earth.” The monk asked, “When does it fall to earth?” Jōshū said, “It waits for the oak tree to become Buddha.”

We should pay attention to both the monk’s question and the Great Master’s answer. Jōshū “when the sky falls to earth” and

1-EN Kinds of sweet cakes.

"when the oak tree becomes Buddha" do not express an idea of mutual waiting. The monk was asking about "oak tree," "Buddha-nature," "becoming Buddha," "time," "sky," and "falling to earth." When Jōshū answered, "It has," it means the oak tree possesses Buddha-nature. In order to master this we must take the lifeblood of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. "An oak tree possesses Buddha-nature" is not usually said. Since it has been said, however, we should clarify it. Does the oak tree that possesses Buddha-nature have a high or low status? We should find out if it has a long or short life, how high it is, and to what genus and family it belongs. Are a hundred thousand trees the same or different? Is there an oak tree that becomes Buddha, an oak tree that practices, or an oak tree with an awakened mind? Do the sky and oak tree have a special relationship? The oak tree waits for the sky to fall to become Buddha; does this mean that the oak tree becomes the sky? Is the oak tree on the first or last step in the sky? We must study this in detail.

Now, let us question Jōshū "Since you are one with an old oak tree, you can talk like that, can't you?"

Generally speaking, "The oak tree possesses Buddha-nature" is not the outlook of non-believers or Hinayānists, nor the standpoint of scholars of the sūtras or abhidharma. Furthermore, how can such dry, lifeless people even express it? Only people like Jōshū can study and clarify it. Jōshū's "the oak tree possesses Buddha-nature" is concerned with whether or not oak trees obstruct oak trees, or whether Buddha-nature obstructs Buddha-nature. This expression is not mastered by just one or two Buddhas, and it is not necessary to have the appearance of Buddha in order to master it. Among the Buddhas some might give such an expression, but others might not. "Waiting for the sky to fall to earth" does not mean that such an event does not occur. Every time the oak tree becomes Buddha, the sky falls to earth. The roar when the sky falls to earth surpasses a hundred thousand peals of thunder. When the oak tree becomes Buddha, the hours of the day are turned upside down. The sky that falls to earth is not the sky seen by ordinary people or saints; there is another kind of sky only seen by Jōshū "Earth" is not the earth possessed by ordinary people or saints; it is a different kind of earth. Shade or light cannot go there, only Jōshū. The sun, moon, mountains, and rivers also wait for the sky to fall to earth.

Anyone who can talk about Buddha-nature surely becomes Buddha. Buddha-nature is the adornment of becoming Buddha. Furthermore, Buddha-nature co-exists simultaneously with becoming Buddha.

Therefore, that is why the oak tree and Buddha-nature are not a different sound or the same pitch. Yet no matter how we attempt to express it, it cannot be done. All of you must clarify this problem.

This was delivered to the monks at Kannondōri-Kōshōhōrinji, Uji-kun, on May 21, 1242. Transcribed on July 3, 1243, in the master's quarters by Ejō.

41. SANGAI YUISHIN

三界唯心

“The three worlds are only mind”

The Great Teacher Shakyamuni said, “The three worlds are only mind; outside the mind nothing exists. Mind, Buddha, and sentient beings are not three different things.”

This verse contains the teaching of Shakyamuni’s entire life. Those words were spoken intentionally; they had to be expressed. Therefore, the Tathāgata’s “The three worlds are only mind” is the actualization of the entire Tathāgata. The entire life of the Tathagata is expressed in one complete verse. “Three worlds” are the entire universe. Yet we should not say that the three worlds are “mind” since the three worlds clearly show themselves in all directions, yet remain three worlds.

We may mistakenly believe that the three worlds do not exist; nevertheless, we cannot separate ourselves from them. Inside, outside, centre, beginning, middle and end are all three worlds. The “three worlds” is the world seen as three worlds. If someone thinks the three worlds do not exist he is mistaken. Some may think the three worlds represent an old viewpoint [illusion] or a new viewpoint [enlightenment]. The three worlds are seen both as illusion and enlightenment.

Therefore, Shakyamuni the Great Teacher said, “The three worlds I see are not like the three worlds of ordinary people.” This is the correct viewpoint. The three worlds should be seen like that. The three worlds are not original or present existence, not newly made nor formed by karma, not beginning, middle, or end. There are three worlds detached from the world of suffering; these are the present three worlds. There is a meeting of the function of detachment and the function caused to be detached. Practice develops practice. The present three worlds are the three worlds we see. “Seeing” is seeing the three worlds. Seeing the three worlds is seeing the actualization of the three worlds, and the actualization of the three worlds seen—this is the actualization of reality. Through the three worlds resolve, practice, enlightenment, and nirvana arise.

This is “all things are my possessions.” That is why Shakyamuni said, “In the present three worlds all things are my possessions; all sentient beings within the three worlds are my children.”

Since the present three worlds are the possessions of Shakyamuni the entire universe is the three worlds, the three worlds are the entire universe. The present three worlds cover past, present, and future. The actualization of past, present, and future does not obstruct the present world. The actualization of this present world does not obstruct past, present, or future. “My possessions” means that the true body of man covers the entire ten quarters of the universe. “The entire universe is in the eye of a monk.” “Sentient beings” are the true body of the entire universe. Each sentient being exists as “being”; consequently, taken together they make up all sentient beings.

“All my children” is the principle of the emergence of the total activity of children. Surely, “my children” have received their bodies, hair, and skin from their compassionate father. Consequently, they should not harm themselves by separating themselves from the Dharma, or develop any insufficiencies. Then they can be actualized as children. Here, it is not father first, child second, nor child first, father second, nor is it simultaneous birth—this is the principle of “my children.” The father does not give the child life; he receives it himself as a child. The child does not take its life from the father, but simply receives it. It is not a case of father leaving and child emerging; it is not a measure of great or small, nor a comparison of old and young.

The relationship between old and young should be thought of as the relationship between Buddha and Patriarch. The father is young and the child is old, the father is old and the child is young, the father and child are old, the father and child are young. It is not that the child has learned that his father is old, and we cannot say that the father was not young once. We must carefully study the meaning of “old” and “young” in father and child. We must not be flippant. There is a father and child that emerge and disappear simultaneously as father and child, and a father and child that do not. Neither father nor child create any obstructions; therefore, both child and compassionate father appear. There are sentient beings with mind, and there are sentient beings without mind. There are children with mind and children without. Like this, “my children” and “children as me” become Dharma-heirs of the compassionate father, Shakyamuni. All sentient beings of the past, present, and future throughout the entire universe are all the Buddhas of the past, present, and future throughout the entire universe. The children of all the Buddhas are sentient beings; sentient beings are the compassionate father of all the Buddhas.

Therefore, that is why the flowers and fruits of a hundred grasses, and large and small rocks are the possessions of all the Buddhas. That is also why the forests and fields are places of peace, free from all suffering. We may talk about this, but the essence of this saying of Buddha concerns “my children.” He did not say “my father.” We must study this.

Shakyamuni Buddha said, “Buddha’s Dharma-body, bliss-body, and nirvana-body are never separated from the three worlds. There are no sentient beings outside the three worlds. Where else can Buddhas teach? Therefore I say, ‘Anyone who says there is a world of sentient beings outside the three worlds is quoting the writings of non-believers, and not the teaching of the seven Buddhas.’”

We must clarify that the Dharma-, bliss-, and nirvana-bodies of all the Buddhas form the three worlds. There is nothing outside the three worlds. There is nothing outside Buddha, nothing outside fence and walls. just as there is nothing outside the three worlds, there is nothing outside sentient beings. If there are no sentient beings, how can Buddha teach? Where the Buddhas teach, surely there are sentient beings.

We should know that only in the writings of non-believers is there a world of sentient beings outside the three worlds; it is not in the sūtras of the seven Buddhas. “Only mind” is not just “one” or “two,” not the three worlds, nor has it emerged from the three worlds. It contains nothing false and is both the possession and non-possession of thought, knowledge, cognition, and awakening. It is wall, tiles, and stones, mountains, rivers and earth. “Mind” is skin, flesh, bones, and marrow, Buddha’s holding up of the flower, and Mahākāśyapa’s smile. “Mind” is existent, non-existent, with a body, bodiless, existing before the body appears, and after it disappears. There are several kinds of bodily births: live, egg, by moisture, and spontaneous. Mind is also born in the same ways. Mind is blue, yellow, red, white; width, length, and form; the coming and going of life and death; rears, months, days, and minutes; dreams, illusions, and empty flowers; mist and shimmering air; spring flowers and the autumn moon; and all the actions of our daily lives. None of those things can be abandoned or thrown away. The reality of all forms is mind; only Buddhas transmit Buddha.

Great Master Gensha-in Soitsu once asked Great Master Jizō-in Shinō, “What is your understanding of ‘the three worlds are only mind’?” Shinō pointed at a chair and said, “What do you call this?” Gensha said, “A chair.” Shinō said, “Then you don’t know anything about ‘the three worlds are only mind.’” Gensha said, “I call this a bamboo tree. What do you call it?” Shinō

answered, "I also call it a bamboo tree." Then Gensha said, "Everywhere throughout the great earth it is impossible to find anyone who has attained the Buddhist Dharma."

The point of Gensha's "What is your understanding of 'the three worlds are only mind'?" is that whether you understand it or not, it is still the same 'three worlds are only mind.' In either case we can say that the three worlds are only mind. Shinō pointed at a chair and said, "What do you call this?" We must know that Gensha's "What is your understanding?" is the same as Shinō's "What do you call it?"

Is Gensha's "chair" a word used in the three worlds or not? Is it related to words used in the three worlds or not? Did the chair say it, or did Gensha say it? We should look into such questions and derive some insight from them.

Shinō said, "Then you don't know anything about 'the three worlds are only mind'." This saying is an example of Jōshū's eastern and southern gates which also can be western or northern gates. In addition, there are the eastern and western gates of Jōshū Province. Even if we understand that the three worlds are only one mind, we must also clarify "do not understand." The three worlds are only mind since there is a "three worlds are only mind" that transcends understanding or non-understanding.

Gensha said, "I call it a bamboo tree." This shows us a wordless word and timeless time. "I call it a bamboo tree." What else can it be called? Originally, everything is beautiful from all sides from the beginning, middle and end like the bamboo tree. Here, is "I call it a bamboo tree" concerned with "the three worlds are only mind" or not? If we grasp the meaning of "the three worlds are only mind" in the morning, it becomes a "chair," "only mind," or "the three worlds." If we grasp its meaning in the evening, it becomes "I call it a bamboo tree."

Shinō said, "I also call it a bamboo tree." We must know that this dialogue between master and disciple involves complete, mutual, and correct understanding. Nevertheless, we must determine whether Gensha's "I call it a bamboo" and Shinō's "I also call it a bamboo tree" are the same or different, right or wrong.

Gensha said, "Everywhere throughout the entire world it is impossible to find anyone who has attained the Buddhist Dharma." We must carefully digest this point. Gensha said, "I call it a bamboo tree" and Shinō said, "I also call it a bamboo tree." It is not clear whether or not either of them understood the meaning of "the three Worlds are only mind."

However that might be, let us question Gensha. You said, "Everywhere throughout the great earth it is impossible to find anyone who has attained the Buddhist Dharma." What do you mean by "the great earth"? This is what we must clarify and practice.

This was delivered to the monks at the peak of Zenjihō, Echizen, on July 1, 1243. Transcribed on July 25, the same year, in the abbot's quarters by Ejō.

42. SESSHIN SESSHŌ

説心説性

“Explaining mind, explaining nature”

When Zen Master Shinsan Somitsu was on a pilgrimage with Great Master Tōzan Gohon, he pointed at a temple and said, “Inside that temple there is someone explaining mind and explaining nature.” Somitsu asked, “Who is it?” Tōzan said, “If you ask such a question you will go directly to your death.” Somitsu asked again, “But who is explaining mind and explaining nature?” Tōzan said, “Life is found in the midst of death.”

Explaining mind and explaining nature is the root of the Buddhist Way. Buddhas and Patriarchs are actualized from it. If there is no explaining of mind and nature, there is no turning of the wheel of the Law, no awakening or practice, no simultaneous attainment of the Way by all beings, and no Buddha-nature in sentient beings. The holding up of a flower and blinking the eye, Mahākāśyapa’s smile, Eka’s prostrations, Bodhidharma’s entering China, and Enō’s reception of the kesa at midnight are all explaining mind and explaining nature. Holding a staff or putting the fly whisk down is also explaining mind and explaining nature.

In general, all the virtues of the Buddhas and Patriarchs are contained in explaining mind and explaining nature. Their everyday life is explaining mind and explaining nature; wall, tiles, and stones are explaining mind and explaining nature. It is the actualization of the saying: “When mind appears, all phenomena appear; when mind perishes, all phenomena perish.” This is the time of explanation of the mind and the time for explanation of nature. However, those who do not go into mind and nature are in the dark about explaining mind and explaining nature. They cannot fathom its profound and marvellous nature and therefore teach that it is not the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. They think that explaining mind and explaining nature is nothing more than a normal discourse on mind and nature, since they have not tried to critically understand the meaning and character of the great Way.

Later on, Dai’e Shuko of Kinzan said, “People nowadays like explanations of mind and nature to be profound and marvellous, so it takes them a long time to gain the Way. If we abandon both mind and nature, and forget about profound and marvellous speech, when the time comes those two subjective views will not arise and we will attain enlightenment.”

Such an understanding came about because Dai’e lacked the abundance and serenity of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. He thought that “mind” is just a faculty of discrimination; he did not know that such discriminatory thoughts are also contained in “mind.” That is why he talked like that. He did not know that “nature” is pure, deep, and serene and was unaware of existence and non-existence, and Buddha- and Dharma-nature; he could not even dream about the nature of suchness. Consequently, his view of the Buddhist Dharma was very one-sided. The mind obtained through the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs is their skin flesh, bones, and marrow. The nature possessed by the Buddhas and Patriarchs is a shippei and staff. Their profound enlightenment is a round pillar and stone lantern. Their marvellous Way is their field of knowledge and comprehension.

Becoming a Buddha and Patriarch, based on the truth of Buddhas and Patriarchs, occurs first through hearing the words “mind” and “nature” and then through explanation; it is attained through practice and enlightenment. We must strive to maintain and learn more about this profound study. If we study in this way we may be said to be true students and descendants of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. If we do not, it is not proper study of the Way.

Therefore, when we think we have attained the Way we have not; and we cannot say there is no attainment when we have not consciously attained the Way. In both of these cases misunderstandings arise. Even if we talk like Dai’e and say “forget about mind and nature,” we are still using one of the millions of ways to explain mind. “Abandon profound and marvellous speech” is just another form of profound and marvellous speech. If we lack proper study of this point and foolishly forget it, it will fly out of our hands and flee from our body.

How can those who are not liberated from narrow-minded Hinayanist thinking possibly arrive at the heart of the Mahayana? Furthermore, how can they make any progress on the Way? These people have never shared a meal with the Buddhas and Patriarchs. The meaning of study and practice under a master is the experience of the body and mind of “explaining mind and explaining nature.” We must also study it before and after we obtain a body. There is nothing else besides this.

Once, the first Patriarch Bodhidharma said to the second Patriarch, Eka, “Cut off your analysis of the external world and stop the working of your mind. Keep your mind like fences and walls; then you can enter the Way.” The second Patriarch had heard many different explanations of mind and nature but had never attained enlightenment. One day he accidentally stumbled across the meaning of his master’s words and told Bodhidharma, “For the first time, your disciple has cut off all the karma that bound him.” The first Patriarch had already perceived that Eka had truly attained enlightenment and did not question him further. Later on, Bodhidharma said, “Aren’t you attached to your detachment?” Eka said, “No!” Bodhidharma said, “Tell me what it’s like.” Eka said, “I’m just using my everyday mind and no words can describe it.” Then Bodhidharma said, “That is the essence of mind transmitted by all the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Now that you have attained it preserve it well.”

Some people discredit this story, while others praise it. This is just one of the many stories concerning the first and second Patriarchs. In the beginning, the second Patriarch explained mind and nature, but it did not mesh with the explanation of the first Patriarch. After a time he acquired merit which enabled him to attain the Way of the first Patriarch. Foolish people think that the second Patriarch was unable to gain enlightenment because he was attached to his explanations of mind and nature, and that after he abandoned his explanations he finally attained enlightenment. Such people have never studied the saying: “Keep your mind like fences and walls; then you can enter the Way.” That is why they think like that, and are unable to distinguish between various methods of study.

Such things happen because people seek ascetic practice, rather than the enlightenment-seeking mind and practice of the Buddhist Way; therefore, their practice is completely worthless. Instead, they should follow a virtuous master or the sūtras, and then they can make progress.

In order to master one aspect of the Buddhist teaching in the present, we have to build on all the failures accumulated in the past. After many failures we finally become skillful. Hearing the teaching, practising the Way, and attaining enlightenment occurs in this way. We may have failed hundreds of times in the past to master explaining mind and nature, but we can turn it into mastery in the present. Often when people first begin to practice the Buddhist Way they feel it is too difficult; then they abandon it and seek a different path. If we do that we will never be able to attain the Buddhist Way. We must completely understand the real meaning of Buddhist practice from start to finish. The principle behind failure and eventual success is

difficult to understand.

In Buddhism, both the initial resolve for enlightenment and attainment of perfect enlightenment are the Buddhist Way – it exists throughout the beginning, middle, and end of our practice. For example, when someone walks ten thousand ri, one step includes one thousand ri, just as a thousand steps include one thousand ri. Although there is a difference between the first step and the one thousandth step, they both are contained within one thousand ri and are the same.

However, very foolish people think that when we study Buddhism we do not arrive at the Buddhist Way until our study is completed. This occurs because such people do not know that proclaiming, practising, and enlightening the Buddhist Way are all complete within themselves and contain all aspects of the Way. They say that only those who are lost in illusion need to practice the Buddhist Way and attain great enlightenment. They do not know that even those who are not in illusion practice the Buddhist Way diligently and attain great enlightenment.

Although explaining mind and explaining nature prior to attaining enlightenment also contains the Buddhist Way, enlightenment is manifested through explaining mind and explaining nature. We should not study enlightenment as something that occurs only when unenlightened people are awakened to great enlightenment. Both people in illusion and enlightened people have great enlightenment; unenlightened people and those who are not in illusion also have great enlightenment.

Hence, explaining mind and explaining nature is the direct path to the Buddhist Way. Since Dai'e Shūkō failed to master this, he said that explanations of mind and nature should not occur. This is not the principle of the Buddhist Dharma. Yet, in present Great Sung Dynasty China, he is considered to be an unsurpassed example.

The Great Teacher Tōzan Gohon was a Patriarch among Patriarchs who mastered the principle of explaining mind and explaining nature just as it is, and nothing else. All the Patriarchs in every direction who have not attained this principle and have never heard such a dialogue cannot understand Tōzan's "Inside that temple someone is explaining mind and explaining nature," spoken when he and Somitsu were on a pilgrimage.

The story has been carefully transmitted by the descendants of Tōzan as an example of his special method of teaching. People from other schools cannot dream of seeing or hearing it, much less understand it. Only Tōzan's descendants rightly transmit it. If we do not have the right transmission of this principle, how can we arrive at the root of the Buddhist Way? The principles of "inside," "outside," "someone," and "there is" all point toward explaining mind and explaining nature. "Inside" and "outside" are explaining mind and explaining nature. We must clarify and practice this principle. There is no explaining without nature, and no mind without explaining. "Buddha-nature" is the explaining of the whole; yet "no Buddha-nature" is also an explanation of the whole.

When we study "Buddha-nature" we must study both aspects of possessing and non-possessing Buddha-nature; otherwise, it will not be total study of the Way. If we study the nature of "explaining," and then believe and accept it, we become descendants of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. However, if we think that the mind moves and nature remains stable, or that nature remains pure and still while form changes, it is the View of non-believers. Studying, practising, and clarifying mind, and nature in the Buddhist Way differs from the methods of non-believers.

In the Buddhist Way, explaining mind and explaining nature exists whether or not there is man, and whether or not there is mind and nature. We may explain mind and nature, but actually there is no explanation of mind or nature. We must study the explanation of mind and nature where there is or is not a man; if we do not, it means we have not arrived at the place of explanation of the mind. We should study explaining the mind with no man, no man explaining the mind, explaining the mind with a man, and with this man explaining the mind.

Rinzai insisted that there was a "true man of no rank," but he did not say that there is a "true man with rank." Real study and understanding has not been actualized here; it is still incomplete. Explaining mind and explaining nature is the explanation of the Buddhas and Patriarchs and therefore, it can be met through the ear and eye. Previously, Somitsu said, "Who is it?" In order to actualize this understanding he used such an expression. "Who is it?" is the inner essence of explaining mind and explaining nature. Hence, how we use the expression "Who is it?" shows our understanding of explaining mind and explaining nature. This kind of explaining mind and explaining nature is not known by those in other places because they not only mistake the "son for the burglar," but also the "burglar for the son."

Tōzan said, "If you ask such a question you will go directly to your death." Students in other branches who hear this think that someone was explaining mind and explaining nature, that Somitsu asked, "Who is it?" and that because of his question he will go directly to his death. "Who is it?" means I have not seen or had direct knowledge of that man; consequently, anything I say about him will be nothing but a dead expression. However, this is not true. Few people know about the real explaining mind and explaining nature.

Tōzan said, "Life is found in the midst of death." "In the midst of death" is not the "death" of "go directly to your death," nor is it the "who" in "Who is it?" "Who" is the man said to be explaining mind and nature. We should learn that it is not necessary to expect total death. Tōzan's saying, "Life is found in the midst of death" means there is someone who is explaining mind and explaining nature. Furthermore, this is only one part of total death. Life is total life, but there is no manifestation of changing into life. There is nothing but total and complete dropping off of life.

Generally, among Buddhas and Patriarchs such explanations of mind and nature occur and we must study them carefully. Also, through the death of "total death" the actualization and attainment of life can emerge.

We must know that from the Tang Dynasty to the present there are many who have not clarified the Buddhist Way of explaining mind and explaining nature, who do not know its teaching, practice, or enlightenment, and who have distorted ideas and opinions. Such people must be led to the truth in both the past and future. We must say to them, "Explaining mind and explaining nature is the essence of the seven Buddhas and all the Patriarchs."

This was delivered to the monks of Kippōji, Echizen, Japan, during 1243. Transcribed January 11, 1244, in the chief disciple's quarters by Ejō.

43. SHOHŌJISSO

諸法實相

“The real form of all things”

The actualization of the Buddhas and Patriarchs is to clarify real form. Real form is all dharmas. All dharmas are the form of suchness, the nature of suchness – the suchness of body, the suchness of mind, the suchness of the world, the suchness of clouds and rain; the suchness of moving, standing, sitting, and lying, the suchness of sadness and happiness, movement and calm; the suchness of a staff and hossu, the suchness of holding up a flower and smiling; the suchness of transmitting the Law and receiving enlightenment, the suchness of studying and practising the Way, the suchness of the pine and bamboo.

Shakyamuni Buddha said, “We must thoroughly clarify the ‘real form of all things’ which is only transmitted from Buddha to Buddha. ‘All things’ [all dharmas] are the form of suchness, the nature of suchness, the body of suchness, the power of suchness, the creation of suchness, the origin of suchness, the effect of suchness, the fruit of suchness, the result of suchness, the suchness of everything beginning to end.”

The Tathāgata’s expression “everything beginning to end” are true words of the real form of existence, a fine saying of a great teacher. It is the study of unity because to study means to unify.

“Only Buddha transmits Buddha” is the real form of all things; the real form of all things is only Buddha transmits Buddha. “Only Buddha” is real form, “transmits Buddha” is all things. If the expression “all things” is heard and comprehended, we only need to study it once, not many times. The expression “real form” should not be studied as either “space” or “nature.” “Real” is “only Buddha”; “form” is “transmits Buddha.” “Thoroughly” is “only Buddha.” “Clarify” is “transmits Buddha.” “All things” is “only Buddha”; “real form” is “transmits Buddha.” “All things” have already become all things and are thus termed “only Buddha.” “All things” have become true form and are thus called “transmits Buddha.” Therefore, all things are of themselves all things with the form and nature of suchness. Real form is truly real form with the form and nature of suchness. When “Only Buddha transmits Buddha” and Shakyamuni appears in the world, the real form of all things is a proclamation of the Law, an expression of practice and enlightenment. That proclamation must be “thoroughly clarified;” “clarify” means “thoroughly.” Because there is no beginning, middle, or end, it is the form of suchness with the nature of suchness. Therefore it “completes” the beginning, middle, and end.

“Thoroughly clarify” is the real form of all things. The real form of all things is the form of suchness. The form of suchness is thorough clarification of, the nature of suchness. The nature of suchness is the thorough clarification of the substance of suchness. The substance of suchness is the thorough clarification of the power of suchness. The power of suchness is the activity of suchness. The activity of suchness is the thorough clarification of the cause of suchness. The cause of suchness is thorough clarification of the production of suchness. The production of suchness is the thorough clarification of the effect of suchness. The effect of suchness is the thorough clarification of the result of suchness. The effect of suchness is the thorough clarification of the states from original awakening to ultimate enlightenment.

“The states from original awakening to ultimate enlightenment” are the actualization of suchness. Hence, there is no cause and effect relationship. The effect of the cause is precisely the effect of the effect. Regardless if this effect is obstructed by form, nature, substance, and power or not, still the form, nature, substance, and power of all things is unlimited, unbounded suchness. Whether form, nature, substance, power, etc., are assimilated or not with cause, production, effect, and result, they are all perfectly complete.

The form of suchness is not one form; the form of suchness is not one suchness, unlimited and unbounded, it is the suchness which cannot be expressed or measured. No numbers can adequately define it – the measurement of all things and the measurement of real form must be a measurement of themselves. This is because only Buddha transmits to Buddha the thorough clarification of the real form of all things, the thorough clarification of the real nature of all things, the thorough clarification of the real substance of all things, the thorough clarification of the real power of all things, the thorough clarification of the real activity of all things, the thorough clarification of the real cause of all things, the thorough clarification of the real production of all things, the thorough clarification of the real effect of all things, the thorough clarification of the real result of all things, and the thorough clarification of the states from original awakening to ultimate enlightenment.

Because there is this type of principle, in the Buddha land of the ten directions, only Buddha transmits Buddha without exception. The relationship between “Only” and “transmit” is like the body existing as one reality, and enlightenment of form as form, nothing extra. That is, body and nature are not seen as two separate things.

Therefore, Shakyamuni said, “I and all the other Buddhas of the ten directions know this well.” Thus, the right time of thorough clarification and the right time of knowing this well are equal facets of being-time. If there was some difference between Shakyamuni’s “I” and the other Buddhas of the ten directions, how could the statement “and all the other Buddhas of the ten directions” have been made? Since there are no Buddhas in the present instant, the ten directions become the present instant. Here, “To meet the real form of all things” means “flowers enter spring,” “human beings meet spring.” The moon illuminates itself, people come into contact with themselves, and people see fire [fire sees people]. This is the principle of meeting and seeing.

Therefore, to study the real form of real form is to transmit the Law from Buddhas and Patriarchs to Buddhas and Patriarchs. It is to receive all things of all things. In order for only Buddha of “only Buddha” to be correctly transmitted, transmits Buddha of “transmit Buddha” must be correctly passed on.

Therefore, there is life and death, coming and going; there is awakening, practice, enlightenment, and nirvana. Through awakening, practice, enlightenment, and nirvana, we can clarify, experience, grasp, and act upon life and death, coming and going, and the true body of man. This the life blood of opening the flower and bearing fruit; it is the bones and marrow of Mahākāśyapa and Ānanda. The wind, rain, water, and fire of the form of suchness is clarification; the blue, yellow, red, and white of the nature of suchness is clarification. From substance and power, ordinary beings can become saints; from effect and result, one can transcend the Buddhas and Patriarchs; from cause and production, one can transform dirt into gold; from effect and result, one is transmitted the Law and receives a kesa.

The Tathāgata said, “I explain the characteristics of real form.” Consequently we must have practice of real form, hearing of real nature, and enlightenment of real substance. We must thoroughly study and clarify this. The essence of this is “a bead rolls across a tray, the tray rolls across the bead” [i.e., one unified existence].

The Buddha who illuminates the sun and moon said, “The principle of the real form of all things has already been proclaimed

for you.”

Study this expression and you will realize the importance the Buddhas and Patriarchs place on this proclamation. Buddhas and Patriarchs open and proclaim the principle of real form together with the eighteen worlds [of matter and spirit]. Before there is body and mind, after there is body and mind, while there is body and mind, all factors such as nature, substance, power, and so on, proclaim true form. If we do not clarify real form, if we do not proclaim real form, if we do not comprehend real form, if we do not transcend real form, we are not a Buddha or Patriarch but a demon and beast.

Shakyamuni Buddha said, “The supreme enlightenment of all the Bodhisattvas is contained in this Lotus Sūtra. The gate of skillful means has been opened and true form revealed.”

“All the Bodhisattvas” are all the Buddhas. There is no difference between all Buddhas and all Bodhisattvas. One group is not senior or junior, superior or inferior. This Bodhisattva and that Bodhisattva are not two different persons, they are not self and other, and not beings of the past, present, or future. To become Buddha, we need to the bearing of a Bodhisattva. In the initial stage of seeking we become Buddha; in the final stages of the highest enlightenment we become Buddha. There are Bodhisattvas who have become Buddha billions of times. Any one who says that we can abandon practice after becoming Buddha shows that he is still a worldly ignorant of the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

“All the Bodhisattvas” are the original patriarchs of “all the Buddhas.” “All the Buddhas” are the original masters of “all the Bodhisattvas.” This supreme realization of all the Buddhas – regardless if it is enlightenment of the past, enlightenment of the present, enlightenment of the future, enlightenment before there was a body, enlightenment after there is a mind – beginning, middle, and end is contained in the Lotus Sūtra. Relatively and absolutely all things are contained in it. At the right time, this sūtra becomes the enlightenment of all the Bodhisattvas.

“Sūtra” is not animate or inanimate, nor is it created or uncreated. By enlightening Bodhisattvas, human beings, and real form, this sūtra is enlightened and the gate of skillful means opened. The gate of skillful means is the not excelled virtue of the activity of Buddha. All things exist just as they are in the everlasting world of form. The gate of skillful means is not a mere device, but a thorough study of the universe, a method of examining the real form of all things. Even though the gate of skillful means is manifest and the universe is consumed by the universe, if all the Bodhisattvas do not appear, we can still pass its borders.

Seppō said, “The entire earth is the gate of liberation, but many refuse to enter.” Therefore, we should know that even though this gate is open in all lands and in all worlds, it is not easy to pass in and out, and few make an effort to do so. Regardless of how hard we try or don’t try, we cannot make many people pass in and out of this gate. Those who go through fall into error; those who try to go out get stuck. What should we do? If we try to pull others through the gate, it just recedes farther in the distance. If we try to bring the gate to others, we cannot find the way to pass in and out.

“The gate of skillful means has been opened” indicates the correct real form. “Indicates the correct real form” permeates all time – it continues through beginning, middle, and end. The principle of opening the gate of skillful means at the right time is to open the gate of skillful means throughout the entire universe. At the right time, if we perceive the entire world, we will witness many heretofore hidden things. Each aspect of the universe that is revealed enables the gate of skillful means to be opened. Accordingly, all the gates of skillful means are open, but we can see only those gates, out of the infinite number, that are actualized as our original face. Such elegant mastery arises from the power of the Lotus Sūtra.

“Indicates the correct real form” are the words of the real form of all things that announce and bring to realization the entire world. The principle of the real form of all things is revealed to all manner of people and is manifest in everything.

Therefore, that is why the supreme enlightenment of the forty Buddhas and the forty Patriarchs belongs to this sūtra. “Belongs to this sūtra” is “this sūtra’s possession.” The meditation cushion and the raised platform become supreme enlightenment and are contained in this sūtra. The holding up of the flower and the smile, and making a prostration and obtaining the marrow belong to this sūtra; this sūtra possesses them completely. [Everything is] “the gate of skillful means has been opened and true form revealed.”

However, there are ignorant people in Sung China who, not understanding basic principles, can not grasp the essence of Buddhism. They vainly try to explain “real form” with reference to their study of the sayings of Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu. Believing that the teaching of those sages is the same as the Great Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs and that the “Three Teachings are One,” they make such wild assertions as the Three Teachings [Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism] form a tripod and if one leg were missing, it will collapse. This is too foolish to even consider. Anyone who talks in such a manner cannot have heard the Buddhist Dharma.

Buddhism originated in India. Shakyamuni lived for eighty years and proclaimed the Dharma for fifty, teaching men and gods. He taught all sentient beings and lead them all into the Buddhist Way. Thereafter the twenty-eight Indian Patriarchs correctly transmitted the Dharma. The teaching flourished and became widely venerated. Even heretics and demons became followers. The number of those who became Buddhas and turned into Patriarchs is too great to be counted. Those Indian Patriarchs never sought out the Confucian or Taoist teaching of China, nor stated that Buddhism lacked something. If the “Three Teachings are One”, then when Buddhism appeared in the world, Confucian and Taoist teachings should also have appeared simultaneously. However, the Law of Buddha declares “In Heaven and Earth I am alone am the only honoured One.” Consider this point carefully; never forget it. “The Three Teachings are One” – this is worse than the babbling of a child and such talk will destroy the Buddha Dharma. Nonetheless, so many people hold such views – even teachers of gods and emperors. Buddhism in China is now in steep decline. My late master, the ancient Buddha, was greatly concerned about this sorry state of affairs.

Such misguided people are essentially Hinayānists and non-believers. For more three hundred years they have not known that there is a real form. Most people only study the True Law of the Buddhas and Patriarchs to extract themselves from the endless cycle of samsara. Others have no idea why they learn about the True Law of the Buddha and Patriarchs. They think study merely consists of practising in a temple. It is a great pity that Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs has been abandoned. Those few worthies who are actually following the Way deplore this condition. Do not listen to the senseless talks of such fools. Pity them instead.

Zen Master Engo said, “The coming and going of life and death is the true body of man.”

Study this saying, know yourself, and experience the Buddhist Dharma.

Chōsa said, “The entire universe of the ten directions is the true body of man. The entire universe of the ten directions is

permeated by our divine light.”

Since none of the senior monks of present-day Sung Dynasty China understand the necessity of studying this expression, nobody takes it up. If someone were to bring it up, he would be met with red faces and abject silence.

My late master, the ancient Buddha, said, “Present day senior monks are unable to illuminate either past or present, and lack understanding of the principles of the Buddhist Dharma. If they cannot grasp the basics, how can they comprehend the nature of the entire universe? As a matter of fact, they haven’t even heard about such things.”

After I heard this, wherever I went, I questioned senior monks closely, but never received a real answer. What a pity so many vainly pass their days in total ignorance.

One day Zen Master Oan Donge told the Honourable Tokki, “If you want to attain deep understanding easily, awaken the mind and keep one’s thoughts centred on Buddha throughout all the hours of the day. With nothing but Buddha in mind, you will suddenly attain the unattainable; it is like great space, vast and formless. Unify front and back, combine absolute and relative, forget the distinction between intuition and analysis, and harmonize past, present, and future. Arriving at that state, one becomes an all-knowing, non-acting man of the Way.”

Although this was spoken with the full-force of Oan’s experience, it only reveals the shadow of things as they are. When front and back are unified, is this the Buddhist Dharma? What is this front and back? He said that what the Buddhas and Patriarchs experience is vast and formless, but what function does vast and formless have? If we think about it, we realize that Oan has never known, seen, obtained, or struck that “space.”

“Awaken the mind and keep one’s thoughts centred on Buddha.” There is a principle that mind is immovable so how can it be awakened throughout all the hours of the day? It is not certain that mind appears throughout all the hours of the day? If all the hours of the day do not appear within the mind, how can the mind be awakened? How can one’s thoughts be centred? Are thoughts movable or immovable? Can they be centred or not? What moves? What does not move? What does “thought” mean?

Is thought present throughout all the hours of the day? Or are all the hours of the day inside the mind? Or is it independent of both? He said if we are intent throughout all the hours of the day, we can attain understanding easily, but what actually do we easily attain? Is “easily understood” an expression of the Buddhas and Patriarchs? In the Buddhist Way there is no talk of “easy to understand” or “difficult to understand.” Thus Nangaku and Kōsei followed their masters and diligently practiced the Way for many years.

Despite the fact that he said one “suddenly attains the unattainable,” Oan himself cannot even dream of seeing the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. With such inferior ability, how could he easily understand the ultimate? It is safe to assume that he has yet to clarify the Great Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. If the Buddha Dharma was as he said it was, how could it have been transmitted to the present day?

Although Oan’s understanding is weak, we would he hard pressed to find any senior monk among all the monasteries here and abroad with equal ability. In fact, many consider Oan to be by far the best master. However, it is not at all certain that he penetrated the Buddhist Law. On the contrary, it can he safely said that he was a hanger on, nothing more than an ordinary monk. Oan had some ability to fathom others’ characters; most senior monks lack even that modest talent. This is a result of not being able to “see” themselves. Although Oan’s study of the Way was incomplete, it surpasses the study of present day elders. Oan had an opportunity to hear the right words, but he failed to listen to them correctly and experience their full dimensions. If he was like that in the past, is it possible for him to be self-enlightened now? None of the senior monks in present day China are able to properly evaluate Oan, so their actions are totally inadequate. Thus they cannot understand the true form of the Buddhas and Patriarchs expressions, nor discern what is, and what is not, the words of Buddhas and Patriarchs. Among all the senior monks and elder leaders of the past two or three hundred years, not one has seen the Way or known real form.

One night my late master Tendo, the ancient Buddha, recited this verse:

“Tonight, Tendo possesses a calf and holds the real form of Buddha’s golden face.

You may want to buy them, but they have no price;

A single cuckoo sings above the clouds.”

The honoured ones of the Buddhist Way call this “real form.” Those who do not know the Buddhist Dharma and who have not studied the Buddhist Way can not call it “real form.” I heard this verse one night in the spring of 1236, while the sound of the great temple bell reverberated three times.

[The procedure for “entering the master’s room” was as follows:] After taking my zagu and putting on my kesa, I left the monks hall and confirmed that the sign announcing that the master’s room was open was displayed. First, I walked with the rest of monks to the Dharma Hall; then passing to the west of the hall, I proceeded up the steps of the Jakkō Hall and then up another flight of steps to the Daikōmyōzō. The abbot’s quarters are located in this hall. I walked past the large screen to the incense stand where I offered incense and made a prostration. I assumed there would a line of monks waiting to be admitted to the master’s room but no one else was around. In front of the master’s door a bamboo screen was hung, and I could hear the sound of his Dharma talk. Just then Sokon the head monk arrived and offered incense and made a prostration; I glanced inside the screen. I saw that it was full of monks standing on all sides listening to Nyojō’s talk. I slipped in behind the crowd and listened respectfully.

The master was discussing a story about Zen Master Hojo of Mount Daibai. All the monks shed tears as he related how that master wore a mugwort robe and subsisted on pine needles. Nyojō then talked about Shakyamuni Buddha’s hard training on Vulture Peak. This too brought tears to our eyes. He told us, “The training period of Mount Tendō will soon be upon us. Since it will be held in spring when it is not too cold or too hot, it is the best time for Zazen. Why don’t you want to sit more and more?”

Then he chanted the verse previously quoted. He struck his chair sharply with his right hand as a signal for all assembled to enter the inner chamber of his room. Then he told us about the cry of a cuckoo that was so shrill it shattered mountain bamboo. There was no other talk. All the monks were still with deep respect.

This style of “entering the master’s room” is not done elsewhere; only my late master, Tendō, the ancient Buddha, carried it

out properly. When the master gives an informal talk, monks gather around the abbot's chair and the screen. When a different set of monks come to enter the room, those who have finished file out quietly. The remaining monks stay in the same position, maintaining the proper attitude so all the monks can observe the master's manner and hear his talk. Such a procedure is done no where else; no other elders can do it this way. Depending on the circumstances, some want to enter first while others want to enter last. Do not forget that each person has a different attitude.

It is now 1243 and eighteen years have flown by since then. From Mount Tendo to here, how many mountains and rivers have I crossed? Still the real form of my master's beautiful words and marvellous expressions are etched in the bones and marrow of my body and mind. Even now, I can clearly recall the wonderful experience of "entering the room." That night the light of the new moon covered the temple grounds and cuckoos continuously sang – it was a still beautiful night.

Great Master Gensha-in Soitsu was once talking to his disciples when he heard a swallow chirp. "Discussing profoundly real form, the Good Law is now being proclaimed!" As Gensha got down from his seat, a monk said "I don't understand." Gensha shouted, "Get out! I can't believe what you just said."

Most people believe that Gensha's "Discussing profoundly real form" refers to the real form heard in the chirp of a swallow. This is not the case. When Gensha was speaking he heard the voice of a swallow – neither Gensha nor the swallow was consciously listening deeply to real form. It did not arise from either of them – listening deeply to the real form just happened at the right time.

Let's clarify this story further. We have "giving a talk," "hearing a swallow chirp," "discussing profoundly real form," "the Good Law is now being proclaimed!" "getting down from the seat," "a monk said, 'I don't understand,'" and "Gensha shouted, 'Get out! I can't believe what you just said.'" "Although I don't understand" is not the real form of Gensha's teaching, it is the life blood of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, the bones and marrow of the Eye and Treasury of the True Law.

We should know that even if the monk said "I understand," or "I can explain it," still Gensha would have said, "Get out! I can't believe what you just said." Gensha's expression was not related to whether the monk understood or not.

Truly, not only this monk but everybody has the possibility of actualizing the real form of all things, correctly penetrating the life-blood of the Buddha and Patriarchs, and accurately studying real form. All of those in the line of Seigen actualize all these things.

We should know that real form "Is that which flows correctly through the transmission from master to disciple"; "all things" is the thorough investigation of only Buddha transmitting Buddha; only Buddha transmitting Buddha is the true form of reality.

Delivered to an assembly of monks at Kippōji, Echizen, Japan, September 1243.

44. BUTSUDŌ

佛道

“The Buddhist Way”

Sōkei [Daikan Enō] the ancient Buddha once told an assembly of monks, “From Enō to the Seven Buddhas of the Past there have been forty Patriarchs.”

When we study this expression we find that from the seven Buddhas of the past to Enō there have been forty Buddhas. The number of Buddhas and Patriarchs are always calculated like this. That is, seven Buddhas equals seven Patriarchs, thirty-three Patriarchs equals thirty-three Buddhas. That is Sōkei’s point. This is the Buddhist teaching of the right transmission – only those with the right transmission can correctly calculate the right transmission.

From Shakyamuni Buddha down to Sōkei there are thirty-four Patriarchs. All of the transmissions between Buddhas and Patriarchs resemble that of Mahākāśyapa and the Tathāgata. Just as Shakyamuni Buddha studied under Kāśyapa Buddha, so do disciples study under masters in the present day. Therefore, the Eye and Treasury of the True Law has been transmitted continually. The true life of the Buddhist Dharma is only conveyed through right transmission. Because the Buddhist Dharma is rightly transmitted, the transmission continues.

Therefore, the merit and essence of the Buddhist Dharma is transmitted intact. From India to China it is thousands of miles, and more than two thousand years have passed since Buddha’s era. People who do not study this principle call the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and the Serene Mind of Nirvana the “Zen Sect.” To them, Patriarch means “Zen Patriarch” and scholar means “Zen Master.” They call themselves “Zen priests” and “Zen followers.” This is due to their misperceptions – they see the branches and leaves but not the root. In India and China, from the past to the present, there has never been a thing called the “Zen Sect.” Anyone who uses that term is a devil trying to destroy the Buddhist Dharma. The Buddhas and Patriarchs detest such people.

In the Rinkankoroku of Sekimon it states: “Bodhidharma initially went from Ryo to Gi and settled at Shōrin on Mt. Sū. There he did nothing but sit facing the wall. He was not doing ‘zen.’” For many years ordinary people were unable to understand the reason for his behaviour, and decided that he was learning ‘zen,’ a type of meditation. But how can that alone be sufficient for sainthood? Historians of that era grouped ‘zen’ with the other kinds of meditation practices that aimed at making the body and mind like a withered tree and dead ashes. However, saints do not ‘start’ or ‘stop’ meditation and are never separate from their awareness. We use the I Ching to interpret yin and yang but we ourselves are not actually apart from the forces of yin and yang.”

The Twenty-eighth Patriarch descended from the First Patriarch Mahākāśyapa. From Bibashi Buddha, Bodhidharma is the Thirty-fifth Patriarch. The seven Buddhas and the thirty-five generations have never been calculated merely on the basis of zen meditation as a means of enlightenment. Hence, our predecessors said, “zen meditation is just one of the standard practices; how can it alone account for sainthood?”

Our predecessors’ words reveal the essence of the Patriarchal School and must be proclaimed. These days in great Sung China it is rare to find anyone like that. In the Great Way of the right transmission of the Buddhas, those who use the expression “Zen Sect” have never seen, heard, or even dreamed of the true Buddhist Way. One who designates his or her own teaching the “Zen Sect” is not part of the Buddhist Dharma. Who began using the term “Zen Sect”? Know that such an expression is the work of demons, and anyone who speaks like that is not the heir of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Once in front of millions on Vulture Peak, the World Honoured One held up an udumbara flower and blinked. Everyone remained silent except for Mahākāśyapa who smiled faintly. The World Honoured One said, ‘I possess the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and the Serene Mind of Nirvana, and a special kesa. I now bestow them upon Mahākāśyapa.’

What the World Honoured One transmitted to Mahākāśyapa was the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and the Serene Mind of Nirvana. He gave Mahākāśyapa nothing else but this, and said nothing about transmitting a “Zen Sect.” When he bestowed the kesa to Mahākāśyapa he did not state that it was the kesa of the Zen Sect. The World Honoured One never used the expression “Zen Sect” any time during his life.

When Eka asked Bodhidharma to accept him as a disciple, Eka was told, “The supreme marvellous Way of all the Buddhas requires constant diligence, hard practice, and patient effort. If you approach it with inferior virtue, shallow-mindedness, and self-conceit nothing will be accomplished. The Dharma seal of all the Buddhas is not a thing to be obtained from others. The Tathāgata transmitted the Eye and Treasury of the True Law to Mahākāśyapa.”

Here Bodhidharma reveals the supreme and marvellous Way of all the Buddhas, the Eye and Treasury of the True Law, and the Buddha Dharma Seal. No one in his time used the term “Zen Sect,” nor was there any reason for doing so. This Eye and Treasury of the True Law occurs through the direct, face-to-face transmission of raising the eyebrow and blinking. It occurs through the body, mind, bone, and marrow; it has been handed down before and after there is a body and transmitted both inside and outside the mind.

When the World Honoured One met Mahākāśyapa, when the First Patriarch met the Second Patriarch, when the Sixth Patriarch met the Fifth Patriarch, when Seigen met Nangaku – there was no talk of a “Zen Sect.” When and who started to use that term? Many students of Buddhism do not deserve to be called scholars; those who have shattered the Law and stolen the Dharma are perhaps the ones who started all the trouble. Although the Buddhas and Patriarchs never permitted such expressions, some of their followers carelessly employed those terms and disparaged the true heirs. They make it sound as if there is some other law besides the Dharma of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. If there is another path it must be one of non-believers. As descendants of the Buddhas and Patriarchs we must study their bones, marrow, and true face. When we study the sayings of the Buddhas and Patriarchs it must be done properly, not in the manner of non-believers. To be born a human being is a precious opportunity based on the merit of practising in the past. Promoting the teaching of non-believers is not the way to repay our great debt to the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Recently in Great Sung China, the expressions “Zen Sect,” “Dharma Sect,” “Buddha-mind Sect,” and so on are used indiscriminately, causing great confusion. This happens because people have neither heard nor received the Eye and Treasury of the True Law or the Great Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Once the Eye and Treasury of the True Law is understood, how can it be called anything else? Consider this:

Great Teacher Sekitō Musai of Mt. Nangaku lectured an assembly of monks, “Our Dharma gate was transmitted from the

previous Buddhas; nothing was said about zen meditation, effort, and the rest of the pāramitās rather we developed the enlightened vision of Buddha.”

Know that all of the Buddhas and Patriarchs who received the right transmission of the Seven Buddhas of the Past say, “Our Dharma gate was transmitted from the previous Buddhas” not that “Our Zen Sect was transmitted from the previous Buddhas and the Way is now manifest.” Buddhism is more than just the pāramitās – the enlightened vision of Buddha must be developed. We do not reject the practice of the pāramitās, but insist on the development of the enlightened vision of Buddha. Concerning this, Shakyamuni said, “I possess the Eye and Treasury of the True Law.” “Our” means “I possess”; “Dharmna gate” equals “True Law.” “Our,” “I possess,” “my marrow,” means “you have received and attained.”

Great Teacher Musai was the true disciple of the High Patriarch Seigen, and the only one to receive his inner teaching. Musai was ordained by Sokei the ancient Buddha. Thus Sokei the ancient Buddha was his Patriarch-father, and Seigen his brother-master. Among all the disciples only Sekito Musai inherited the Patriarchal Seat of the Buddhist Way. The right transmission was passed to him alone. The actualization of each one of his expressions is that of an ancient Buddha beyond time. It must be the enlightened vision of the Eye and Treasury of the True Law – nothing can equal it. Those who do not know that, mistakenly compare Musai to Kōsei Daijaku [Base]. Therefore we should realize that if the Buddhist Way transmitted from the previous Buddhas is not just zen meditation, how can something be designated a “Zen Sect?” It is a serious mistake to use such an expression. Only foolish people who lack proper knowledge think that our method is a teaching like that of the Hosso or Sanron sects; if it cannot be pigeon holed they cannot evaluate it. The Buddhist Way is not like that; there is nothing called a “Zen Sect.”

However, ignorant people of the present day do not know the ancient Ways and lack transmission from the previous Buddhas so they incorrectly contend that there are live sects. This will lead to the natural collapse of Buddhism. My late master the ancient Buddha Tendō Nyojō was the only one who grieved over this. Perhaps such a state of affairs is inevitable, but nonetheless the Dharma can be attained.

My late master the ancient Buddha ascended the lecture platform and told us, “People these days state that Ummon, Hagen, Igyo, Rinzai, and Soto have distinct characteristics. This is not the teaching of the Buddhist Law or the Way of the Patriarchs.”

This type of expression has not been actualized for a thousand years – only my late master could make such an utterance. Those words are rarely heard anywhere through the universe; they can only come from the exalted seat of the Dharma. Among a thousand monks seeking the Way is there one who listens with real hearing and sees with real sight? How can they hear with their entire body and mind? Even those who attempt to do so cannot grasp, hear, enlighten, believe, and cast oil” my late master’s body and mind. That is a great pity.

In Great Sung China, my late master was considered to be just another senior monk. Didn’t anyone have clear vision? A few thought him to be the equal of Rinzai and Tokusan, but they have never truly seen either my late master or Rinzai. Prior to making prostrations to my late master, I intended to study the essence of the live sects, but after meeting him I learned that the term “Five Sects” only causes confusion.

Therefore that is why during the heyday of Buddhism in Sung China, the expression “Five Sects” was not used. The ancients never attempted to establish new schools by differentiating various streams. Only when Buddhism began to degenerate did people start using the term “Five Sects.” They lacked sufficient study and proper practice of the Way. Those who wish to really study the Buddhist Way avoid the term and indeed strike it from their minds. If it is not possible to distinguish five sects how can we differentiate Rinzai’s sangen, sanyo, shiryoken, shinshoyo, nyutai, Unmon’s sanku, Tōzan’s goi, and Furyō’s judoshinchi?

The Way of Shakyamuni does not consist of such trifles, nor is it a pile of concepts. Those things do not actualize the Way. Bodhidharma and Sokei never mentioned them. It is a shame that monks in this degenerate age, who have never heard the teaching and cannot open the enlightened eye of the body and mind, make up such things. Descendants of the Buddhas and Patriarchs never talk like that or use loose speech. Recently, those who do not attempt to study the entire Buddhist Dharma, do not clarify the Way with their entire life, and have only partial understanding are proud of what little learning they do have and create such terms as “Zen Sect.” Once this practice is established, those that follow will overlook the roots of the teaching. The will to learn the ancient ways is lost and monks simply want to mix with lay people, even though lay people themselves denounce that kind of behaviour.

King Bun of Shu asked Taikobo, “Although a lord may appoint sages as his ministers, good results are rare. On the contrary, the situation in the country deteriorates and the government verges on collapse. Why is this?” Taikobo replied, “You may appoint sages, but if they are not fully employed, you appoint them in name only.” The king said, “What is the main problem?” Taikobo told him, “Actually the king appoints those with worldly reputations as wise men, not real sages.” The king asked, “What do you mean by ‘worldly reputations as wise men?’” Taikobo said, “Real sages do not seek out names for themselves; by appointing those who have cultivated worldly reputations, the king makes a sage out of an ordinary person, a wise counsellor out of a fool, a loyal minister out of a traitor, and a trusted official out of a thief. This is what happens when a king selects and promotes those without real qualifications, only worldly reputations. He is surrounded by evil advisors who mislead him and eliminate faithful ministers; those with false honour will advance to prominent positions, the country will be thrown into disorder and the government collapse.”

Even ordinary people deplore the collapse of their country; the descendants of the Buddha should grieve even more for the collapse of the Buddhist Dharma and Buddhist Way. The reason for such disasters is that people follow the base actions of the world. If we solicit the praise of worldly, we will never attain true wisdom. Real wisdom illuminates past and future. Those who are praised are not necessarily sages and saints; nor are those who are slandered necessarily sages and saints. It is not always true that those who are slandered by worldly are wise, nor that those who are praised by them are fakes. If sages are not employed, the country suffers; if fools are appointed, the country grieves.

The term “Five Sects” in use now occurs because of the confused state of society. Many follow worldly teachings, but few can recognize them for what they are. Those who can transform the profane are called saints; those who follow the world are called fools. How can those who follow the world come to know the True Law? How will they be able to become Buddhas and Patriarchs? The Buddhist Dharma has been transmitted from Patriarch to Patriarch since the Seven Buddhas of the Past. Why did the scholars of India make up five divisions and create their own schools? Patriarchs whose essence is in the real life of the Buddhist Dharma never distinguish five kinds of teaching. To study that there are live sects in Buddhism is not the way to become the true heir of the teaching of the Seven Buddhas of the Past.

My late master told an assembly of monks, “Lately the “lay of the Patriarchs has been abandoned; demons and beasts

abound. They continually babble about the different teachings of the Five Sects. This troubles me no end."

Therefore, we can presume that the twenty-eight Indian Patriarchs and the twenty-two Chinese Patriarchs never mentioned anything about the five sects. All true Patriarchs act like that. Those who distinguish five sects in accordance with their individual standpoint just create turmoil and lead people astray – they totally lack understanding. If everyone only promoted their own ideas' how could the Buddhist Way have been transmitted to the present day? If Kāśyapa and Ananda established their personal views as the true teaching the Buddhist Dharma would have perished in India.

If everyone creates their own teaching, who can discern true teaching from the false? How can we tell what is the Buddhist Dharma and what isn't? If this problem is not clarified nothing can be pointed out as the Buddhist Way. The term "Five Sects" did not exist when the Patriarchs were still living. Those Patriarchs now called founders of the sects are in nirvana; it is their students who erroneously established branches without their master's approval. This is certain and everyone should be aware of it.

Zen Master Daien of Mt. Daii was the disciple of Daichi of Hyakujo. They lived on Isan at the same time, but no one talked about the "Igyō Sect" Buddha Dharma. Hyakujo never discussed the Igyō Sect on Isan. Neither of them used the term. That term is false. Even if the term was used by his disciples for convenience sake, they should not have used the name "Gyo." If Isan wished to do so he would have named it himself; however, he would never do such a thing and neither would have his predecessors. End never said "Sōkei Sect," Ejō never said "Nangaku Sect," Baso never said "Kōsei Sect," Daichi never said "Hyakujo Sect." Isan would certainly not act differently from Sōkei, nor, of course, can Isan be considered superior to Sōkei.

What Daii said about words and phrases is not the same as what Isan said. It should be "Isan Sect" and "Daii Sect" rather than "Igyō Sect". There is no precedent for using the term "Igyō Sect". If the term "Igyō Sect" is to be used it should have been established when they both were still living. If they did not use it when they were alive, how can it be used now? If there was no such expression during their lifetime, it is counter to the teaching of the Patriarchs to use it at present. Such use will bring misery to the descendants, and that certainly was not the intention of Zen Masters Daii and Gyōzan. It is not the right transmission from a right teacher; it is the evil talk of wrong-doers. That kind of nonsense should never be broadcast in the world.

Great Master (Rinzai) Eshō abandoned the practice of lecturing on the sūtras, and became the disciple of Zen Master Ōbaku. He tasted the stick of his master on three occasions and received altogether sixty blows. Later he visited Daigu and attained enlightenment. He settled at Rinzai-in in Chinshū. Although he did completely clarify the heart of Ōbaku's teaching, still he never said one word about his teaching being the Buddhist Dharma of the Rinzai Sect, nor did he instruct his disciples to do so. However, some of his wayward followers ignored his admonitions, and began using the term "Rinzai Sect". Since they misrepresented the life of the Great Teacher Eshō, and mistook the words of Shakyamuni, they used that expression. Just before his death, Rinzai said to Zen Master Sanshō Ennen "After I die do not let my Eye and Treasury of the True Law perish." Ennen said, "How could I let your Eye and Treasury of the True Law perish?" Rinzai said, "If someone questions you about it what will you say?" Ennen shouted "Katsu!" Rinzai said, "Who would have thought that my Eye and Treasury of the True Law would perish with this blind jackass."

Speaking thus, the Way was transmitted. Rinzai did not say "Do not let my Zen sect perish," "Do not let my Rinzai Sect perish," or "Do not let my Sect perish"; he simply said "Do not let my Eye and Treasury of the True Law perish." We must clearly know that in the Great Way of the Right Transmission of the Buddhas and Patriarchs terms like "Zen Sect" and "Rinzai Sect" are never used. Never say "Zen Sect." "Perish" is one element of the Eye and Treasury of the True Law; it was transmitted in that manner. "My teaching will perish with this blind jackass" means Rinzai surely knew who would transmit his Law. Among all Rinzai's disciples Sanshō was the best, none of the others could compare with him. His position was clearly recognized. The relationship between Rinzai and Sanshō is that of Buddha to Patriarch. The modern transmission from Rinzai to Sanshō is the same as the ancient one on Vulture Peak. Thus, the term "Rinzai Sect" must not be used.

Great Teacher Kyoshin of Mt. Ummon studied under Chinsonshuku. Ummon was an heir of Ōbaku, and transmitted the Dharma of Seppo. Ummon never called the Eye and Treasury of the True Law the "Ummon Sect." His students, who did not understand the names "Igyō" and "Rinzai," started using the expression "Ummon Sect." If the Great Teacher Kyoshin had wished to establish a sect, he could not have been considered one who has attained the body and mind of the Buddhist Dharma. To apply the word "sect" to his teaching is like calling the emperor an outcast.

Zen Master Dai Hogen of Shoryo-in was Dharma-heir of Jizō-in, and a spiritual descendent of Gensha-in. This is no mistake. "Dai Hōgen" was the title he received from the emperor. Because of that title, people began calling the Eye and Treasury of the True Law the "Hōgen Sect". Not one word among thousands can justify this. Nevertheless, his disciples used the term "Hōgen Sect." If Hōgen were alive today teaching the Buddhist Way, he would immediately prohibit that practice. Alas, since Zen Master Hogen has passed away, no one can cure that disease. Even one-thousand years after his death, anyone who truly wanted to venerate Hōgen would not use the expression "Hōgen Sect." That would be true veneration of Zen Master Hōgen. Ummon, Hogan, and many others are the spiritual descendants of the High Patriarch Seigen; they possess the bones of the Way and marrow of the Law.

The Great Teacher the High Patriarch Gohon was the Dharma-heir of Ungan; Ungan was the successor of Great Teacher Yakusan. Yakusan transmitted the Law of Great Teacher Sekito, and Sekito was the sole heir of the Patriarch Seigen. There were no other disciples. Seigen was the only one. The right life of the Buddhist Way that remains in China is due to the complete transmission of Seigen's teaching by Sekito.

The High Patriarch Seigen lived during the same era as the ancient Buddha Sōkei; Seigen incorporated Sōkei's teaching into his own. When his master was still alive, Seigen was sent out into the world, and was seen and heard by all. That was the right transmission among right transmissions; he was a Patriarch among Patriarchs. Neither Sokei or Seigen was superior or inferior; they were equally pre-eminent.

When the ancient Buddha Sokei was about to enter paranirvana and was revealing his final teaching, Sekitō appeared before him and asked, "Who will be our teacher after you leave us?" The ancient Buddha said, "Ask Seigen."; he did not say, "Ask Nangaku." Therefore that is why, the Eye and Treasury of the True Law of the ancient Buddha was rightly transmitted only to the Patriarch Seigen. Nangaku's level of attainment was high, but not like Seigen's. The ancient Buddha selected Seigen as the best among many. The son attained the father's marrow, and became the right and lawful heir of the Patriarchs.

The Great Teacher Tozan was the fourth generation Dharma-heir of Seigen's line. He rightly transmitted the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and opened the eye of The Serene Mind of Nirvana. There is no other transmission, no other sect than this. The Great Teacher never used the expression "Soto Sect" in any of his Dharma talks. In his community there were no knuckle

heads or Dilettantes no one in his right mind would say "Tōzan Sect" much less "Sōtō Sect."

The term "Sōtō Sect" is perhaps a combination of the names "Tōzan" and "Sōzan." If that is the case, then Ungo's and Doan's names should be included. Ungo especially was a teacher of gods and men, and was superior to Sōzan in many ways. Hence, the expression "Sōtō" originated with fake, corrupt disciples who considered themselves to be on the same high level; they established the name "Sōtō Sect". They are drifting clouds obscuring the brilliant sun.

My late master said, "Nowadays, there are many self-appointed teachers who sit in the Lion's Seat and instruct men and gods. However, none of them have truly experienced the principles of the Buddhist Dharma." Such people create the expression "Five Sects", attach themselves to worlds and phrases, and act as enemies of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Also, the followers of Zen Master Ōryū Nansen have founded an "Ōryū Sect" even though many realize that it is a misnomer. When Shakyamuni was in the world, he never said anything about a "Buddha Sect," a "Vulture Peak Sect," a "Jetavana Sect" an "Our Mind Sect," or a "Buddha Mind Sect." Is there any phrase among all of Buddha's words that refers to a "Buddha Mind Sect"? Why do people of the present day use that expression? Why would Shakyamuni call his teaching a "Mind Sect"? How can "sect" be applied to "mind"? If there is a "Buddha Mind Sect" then there must be a "Buddha Body Sect," a "Buddha Eye Sect," a "Buddha Ear Sect," a "Buddha Nose, Tongue, etc., Sect" as well as a "Buddha Marrow Sect," a "Buddha Bone Sect," "Buddha Foot Sect," a "Buddha Land Sect," and so on. Since such things do not exist, neither does a "Buddha Mind Sect."

Shakyamuni Buddha revealed the real form of all Forms throughout the Buddha Land of the ten directions. When he proclaimed the Dharma, he never mentioned anything about establishing a sect. If there is something called a sect within the Dharma of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, it must exist in the Buddha-land. If it exists in the Buddha-land, Buddha must have proclaimed it. If he did not proclaim it, it is not found in the Buddha-land. Patriarchs do not use the term, and have no need for it. Even ordinary people are puzzled at the attempts to establish sects and all the Buddhas have prohibited it. It is ridiculous to try. Avoid using the term, and say nothing about the "Five Schools" of Buddhism.

Some years ago, a young novice known as Chiso compiled a selection of the sayings of the Patriarchs and arbitrarily divided the teaching into five streams in his book *Eyes of Gods and Men*. That book lead astray many scholars, both experienced and inexperienced. It is not the "Eyes of Gods and Men"; how can it contain the virtue of the Eye and Treasury of the True Law?

Eyes of Gods and Men was compiled by Chiso in December, 1188, at Mannenji on Mt. Tendai. Even if a work is outdated, it should be heeded if it is in accordance with the Way. However, the book's premises are specious and foolish. Since he had no eye for study and practice, how could he see the Buddhas and Patriarchs eye to eye? He is not a perceptive commentator, but a foolish partisan. He merely gathered the words and phrases of ordinary people, not the sayings of real practitioners. He knew nothing.

Chinese scholars created sectarian names for the sake of comparison. However, the continual transmission of the Buddhas' and Patriarchs' Eye and Treasury of the True Law remains intact free of comparison or dilution. Despite the fact that Buddhism should be like this, present-day elders use the expression "sect" for selfish purposes, and are unconcerned with its effect on the Buddhist Way. The Buddhist Way is not one's own little way; it is the Buddhist Way of all the Buddhas and Patriarchs; the Buddhist Way is the Buddhist Way itself. Taikobo once said to King Bun, "The world was not made for a single person; it was created for everyone." That is clear to worldly people and they often say it. Descendants of the Buddhas and Patriarchs must not establish individual sects based on misguided ideas. That is an unmitigated evil; followers of the Buddhist Way should never act like that. If there are sects, surely the World-Honoured One would have used the term. Yet he never talked about his "sect" so why did his descendants do such a thing after his parinirvana? Does someone know a better way for liberation than Shakyamuni? There is no merit in building up one's sect. Opponents of the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs do so, and make it impossible to know who Buddha's heirs really are. Without narrow-mindedness, reflect on past and present day scholars. Our practice should not differ a hair from that of the World-Honoured One when he was alive; Our teaching should not deviate an iota from his. If we accomplish that, there will be happiness; if we do not go astray we will be Buddha's true heirs. Throughout all of our countless incarnations we should vow to serve Buddha, see his form, and hear the Dharma.

However, to act contrary to the instructions of the World Honoured One when he was in the world, and to start calling one's teaching a sect is not the behaviour of a real disciple of the Tathagata or Patriarchs – it is a worse sin than committing the grave faults. If the supreme enlightenment of the Tathagata is not respected, and one boasts of one's own sect as the best, it means tradition is ignored and nothing is known about the ancient teaching. There is disbelief in the virtue of the World Honoured One's existence and no Buddhist Dharma.

Therefore that is why, the right transmission of true Buddhist study never looks for or listens to the term "sect". From Buddha to Buddha, Patriarch to Patriarch, there must be a right transmission of the Eye and Treasury of the True Law of Supreme Enlightenment. The Dharma possessed by the Buddhas the Patriarchs is transmitted by all the Buddhas; there is no other Dharma. This principle is the bones and marrow of the Dharma.

Delivered to an assembly of monks at Kippōji, Echizen, Yoshida-gun, on September 16, 1243. Transcribed by Ejō, late at night, on October 23, 1243.

45. MITSUGO

密語

"Secret teaching"

The Great Way which is preserved and maintained by all the Buddhas actualized in the koan, "You are like that, I am like that and each of us preserves the virtue and shares in the enlightenment of our predecessors.

Once an official made a donation to Great Master Kōkaku of Mt. Ungo and asked, "Shakyamuni possessed a secret teaching but Mahākāśyapa did not conceal it. What was the secret teaching of Buddha?" Ungo said, "Shōsho [the man's name]!" "Yes," replied the official. Ungo then said, "Do you understand?" "No," said the official. Ungo said, "If you don't understand, that is Shakyamuni's secret teaching, if you do understand it is Mahākāśyapa's not concealing it."

Ungo was the fifth generation Dharma-heir of Seigen. Ungo was a teacher of men and gods and one of the world's greatest and most virtuous masters. He instructed both animate and inanimate worlds. As the forty-sixth Buddha descended from Shakyamuni he proclaimed the Dharma for all Buddhas and Patriarchs. It is said that when he lived at Sambō-an he received his meals from the celestial beings; however, after he transmitted the Dharma and attained the Way he went beyond such manifestations of holiness.

"Shakyamuni possessed a secret teaching but Mahākāśyapa did not conceal it. "This is the transmission and original face of the forty-sixth Patriarch. It was not gained from another person and did not come from outside. Yet it was not possessed originally nor newly acquired.

This secret teaching is not only possessed by Shakyamuni but by all the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Therefore, anyone who is a teacher to the world must surely possess a secret teaching. And if there is a secret teaching "Mahākāśyapa did not conceal it." We must study the principle that if there are a hundred thousand teachers of the world there must be a hundred thousand Mahākāśyapas. When you study do not try to comprehend everything at once; consider everything in detail over and over, hundreds or thousands of times, just as you would when cutting a very hard material. Do not think that it is easy to gain understanding after listening to an explanation.

Now Ungo himself is honoured as a Buddha and has both Shakyamuni's secret teaching and Mahakasyapa's not concealing it. Shosho was called and answered standing "Yes" but do not think that that is the "secret teaching."

Ungo said to Shosho, "If you don't understand, that is Shakyamuni's secret teaching; if you do understand it is Mahākāśyapa's not concerning it." Such an understanding must be developed by continuous practice and study of the Way. "If you do not understand, that is the secret teaching of Shakyamuni." After hearing this, Shōsho stood there silently but it does not necessarily mean that he could not understand. We should not say that he did not understand "not knowing." We must study the principle behind "if you don't understand" and try to discern its central point. We must practice diligently. Furthermore, "if you understand" does not necessarily mean "understanding."

There are many ways to study the Buddhist Dharma ; the two key expressions, however, are "understanding the Buddhist Dharma" and "not understanding the Buddhist Dharma." If you have not met the right master you will not even know that there are such key expressions. People foolishly think that there is a secret teaching that cannot be perceived by the faculties of seeing or hearing. Since we have "if you understand" we should not say "Mahākāśyapa did not conceal it" because there is also an "if you don't understand" that "Mahākāśyapa did not conceal." "Not conceal" does not mean that everyone can see or hear it. We should rather study the "not concealed" that we already have—that is, the proper time when there is no place that is not concealed.

Therefore, we have not studied the secret teaching as something related to a world not known through the senses. Even at the time when we do not understand the Buddhist Dharma, it is still one part of the secret teaching. This is surely possessed by, and possesses Shakyamuni.

However, those who have neither heard nor learned the teaching of a right master will not be able to even dream of this principle even through they may be lecturing as an abbot of a large temple. Such people say, without any basis, that Shakyamuni had a secret teaching i.e., the holding up of the flower and winking before the great assembly on Vulture Peak. Therefore, using words to describe the Buddhist teaching is very superficial—they only express letters or forms. "Without speaking he held up the flower" is the occasion of Buddha's secret teaching, yet millions could not understand it [that day on Vulture Peak] and it became a "secret teaching" hidden from them. The meaning of "Mahākāśyapa did not conceal it" is his smile. When Shakyamuni held up the udumbara flower it was not hidden by Mahākāśyapa. This is the real secret teaching which has been directly transmitted from master to disciple. People who think like that when they hear such an explanation are many and they exist throughout China. That is a great pity, and it has caused the way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs to decline. Those with real insight should closely examine such misunderstandings.

If we think that Buddha's teaching with words is superficial, then "holding up the flower and blinking the eye" is also superficial. If we think that Shakyamuni's words only contain letters and forms, then we are not students of the Buddhist Dharma. Those who think they know that words are just names and forms, do not know that Shakyamuni's words are not bound by letters or forms. Those people are not liberated from the body and mind of ordinary people. The Buddhas and Patriarchs, who have totally cast off body and mind, use words to proclaim the Dharma and turn the wheel of the Law and many benefit from seeing and hearing it. Those who have faith and follow the Dharma will be influenced by both the spoken and wordless Buddhist teaching.

Sentient beings see "holding up the flower and blinking" as just "holding up the flower and blinking," do they not? They should not be different from Mahākāśyapa, and must be on the same level as Shakyamuni. All sentient beings should be the same [as Mahākāśyapa] – they all begin with the same awakening of the mind, they walk the same path, and live in the same country. They see the same Buddha and hear the same Dharma, albeit with or without Buddhist wisdom. After one Buddha is seen, progressively more and more Buddhas are seen. In each community of the Buddhas there are billions of sentient beings. Each of the Buddhas penetrate "the holding up of a flower and blinking of the eye" on the same level. What they see is bright, what they hear is clear. There is an eye of the mind and eye of body, and there is an ear of the mind and an ear of the body.

How should we understand Mahākāśyapa's smile and what should we say about it? If it is like what we said above, it is the "secret teaching." However, this "secret teaching" is not hidden so the whole matter is quite foolish.

Later on, Shakyamuni Buddha said, "I possess the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and the Serene Mind of Nirvana. I now bestow it to Mahākāśyapa." Does this expression use words or is it wordless? If Shakyamuni disliked words and liked to hold up flowers, then the words should have preceded the holding up of the flower. Mahākāśyapa surely understood Shakyamuni's words and all the sentient beings surely heard it. If they had not, then we would not be able to use it now.

In general, we can say that Shakyamuni has a secret teaching, a secret practice and a secret enlightenment. However, foolish people think that others cannot know someone's secret or that a secret is only known by a few people. In India and China, there are many people in both the past and present who think like that because they lack proper study of the Buddhist Way. Such people say that those who do not study many different things have secrets while those who do have no secrets. Why do they say that people with wide experience lack many secrets? Then those with the eyes and ears of heaven, or the eyes and ears of the Dharma cannot have any secret teaching or secret mind, can they?

Secret teaching, secret mind, secret practice, etc., in the Buddhist Dharma differs from the above explanation. Whenever we meet someone we both hear and give a secret teaching. When we know ourselves we know our secret practice. Of course, the Buddhas and Patriarchs know much more about their own secret mind and secret teaching. We must know that when we become Buddhas and Patriarchs secret teaching and secret practice are suddenly actualized.

"Secret" is the principle behind inner secrets, a relationship with no gaps – it covers the Buddhas and Patriarchs, it covers others, it covers oneself. It covers all our actions and all generations ; it covers all merit and all secrets. When we meet a "secret man" with a secret teaching we cannot see him with the Buddha Eye. Secret practice is not conscious of distinctions between self and others. One alone knows his own secrets, and others cannot understand others' secrets. Rather, we should know that the secret is right in front of us. Secrets are everywhere, nothing is hidden.

That is the principle we must study and clarify. Anyone who studies diligently will surely receive a secret teaching. This is the right transmission of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. At a certain time we have a secret, others have a secret, Buddhas and Patriarchs have a secret, everyone has a secret. Hence, secrets become the secret that transcends all secrets. This kind of teaching, practice, and enlightenment becomes the Buddhas and Patriarchs; therefore, secrets transcend the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Secchō said to an assembly of monks, "Shakyamuni possessed a secret teaching but Mahakasyapa did not conceal it. One night the rain blew away all the blossoms and fragrant water streams throughout the castle."

Secchō's "One night the rain blew all the blossoms and fragrant water streams throughout the castle" is the inner secret. This tells us to investigate the enlightened eyes and nostrils of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Rinzai and Tōzan did not surpass Secchō's level. We should open the nostril within the enlightened eye and sharpen our ears and nose. The essence of the ear, nose and enlightened vision is not old or new; it is simply the function of the entire body and mind. This is the principle of the rain blowing and the world emerging.

Secchō's "fragrant water flows throughout the castle" means that the body is hidden and shadows appear. Because of this, in the everyday life of the Buddhas and Patriarchs there is both earnest study and the dropping off of "Shakyamuni possessed a secret teaching, but Mahākāśyapa did not conceal it" The seven Buddhas, all the other Buddhas, Mahākāśyapa, and Shakyamuni study and practice like that.

This was delivered to the monks on September 20, 1243 at Kippōji, Eschu, Yoshida-ken. Transcribed on October 16, the same year, in the chief disciple's quarters by Ejō.

46. MUJO SEPPŌ

無情說法

"The proclamation of the Law by inanimate Beings"

The act of proclaiming the Law is the actualization of enlightenment transmitted from Buddhas and Patriarchs to Buddhas and Patriarchs. "Proclaiming the Law" is the "Law of proclamation" – it does not depend on animate or inanimate existence, acting or non-acting, karmic relationships, or cause or effect. Just as the path of a bird leaves no trace, so is the Way similarly transmitted among Buddhists. If the Great Way is fully actualized, "proclamation of the Law" is fully actualized. Whenever and wherever there is the Law, proclamation of the Law occurs. When the flower was held, there was a proclamation. When there was a transmission of the kesa, there was a transmission of proclamation of the Law. Hence, all the Buddhas and Patriarchs have eternally concentrated on proclamation of the Law. Before the Buddhas and Patriarchs appeared, there was the essence of proclaiming the Law. Do not limit your study to the proclamation of the Law by Buddhas and Patriarchs alone. All the Buddhas and patriarchs are themselves Proclaimed by this proclamation. Proclamation of the Law does not only consist of the 84,000 teachings; it has unlimited possibilities. Do not study that the proclamation of the Law of past Buddhas is explained by later Buddhas; Buddhas of the past cannot become Buddhas of the future. An earlier proclamation is not the same as a later proclamation. Therefore, Shakyamuni Buddha said: "In accordance with the manner of proclaiming the Law of the Buddhas of the three worlds, I now proclaim formally the Law, the undifferentiated universal Law."

Therefore, that is why to use the phrase "The proclaiming of the Law by all the Buddhas" means that all the Buddhas use it to proclaim the Law. Since all the Buddhas correctly transmit proclamation of the Law, it has been correctly transmitted from the ancient Buddhas to the seven Buddhas of the past and from the seven Buddhas up to the present. Simultaneously there is proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings. Within this proclamation, all the Buddhas and Patriarchs are present.

Do not ignore the correct transmission and study that "I now proclaim the Law" is a new version of the teaching. Do not believe that the ancient right transmission is now something worthless like an abandoned nest in a demon's cave.

Once a monk asked Great Sung National Teacher, Daisho of Kotakuji in Saikyo. "Do inanimate beings understand the proclamation of the Law?" The National Teacher said, "They always forcefully proclaim the Law non-stop." The monk said, "Why can't I hear it?" The National Teacher replied, "Just because you can't hear it, that does not mean others can't hear it." The monk said, "I don't understand. What kind of people can hear it?" The National Teacher said, "All the Holy Ones can hear it." Then the National Teacher added, "I can't hear it." The monk said, "If even you can't hear it, how am I to believe that inanimate beings are actually proclaiming the Law?" The National Teacher said, "Fortunately I can't hear it. If I did, I would be among all the Holy Ones and you would not be able to hear my proclamation." The monk said, "If that is so, no sentient being will be able to understand it." The National Teacher said, "I proclaim the Law for all sentient beings, not for all the Buddhas." The monk said, "What happens if sentient beings hear your proclamation?" The National Teacher said, "Then they are no longer sentient beings."

Both beginning and experienced students, who wish to investigate the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings, must directly study this dialogue of National Teacher and the monk. "Always forcefully proclaim the Law non-stop." "Always" means each moment of time, and "non-stop" means that proclamation of the Law is eternally manifest. We should not study that the principle of "inanimate beings proclaim the Law" because the principle of animate beings proclaiming the Law is based on the sounds and voices of human beings. To try to apply the principles of animate sounds to those of inanimate beings is not the Buddhist Way. Proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings is not necessarily a sound we can hear through the senses.

For example, the proclamation of the Law by animate beings has nothing to do with the quality of sound. Study these questions diligently: "What is animate?" "What is inanimate?", "Who is self and who is other?"

Therefore, study carefully the principle of proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings. Foolish people who think that the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings is like the sound of the wind in the pines or the rustling of leaves and flowers are not the type of people who truly study Buddhism. If such things were the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings, every one could hear and understand it. Consider this: Are grasses and trees in the animate or inanimate worlds? Is it so easy to tell the difference between the two worlds? Thus, if we take grasses and trees, tiles and stones to be inanimate we lack sufficient study; or if we think inanimate beings are grasses and trees, tiles and stones this is inadequate, too. Even common things like grasses or trees that are seen by human beings are not easy to categorize with ordinary distinctions. What a human being considers a tree is quite different from what a celestial considers a tree; trees in China are not like the trees here. Grasses and trees near the ocean differ from those in the mountains. Some trees grow in the sky; some in the clouds. Thousands of grasses and trees grow in the wind, fire, and other elements.

In general, we divide beings into animate and inanimate, but actually some grasses or trees are human beings and animals – there is no clear distinction between animate and inanimate. People do not doubt the miraculous trees, stones, flowers, fruit, and warm water of immortals so why should it be so difficult to believe in proclamation of the Law? It is not proper to evaluate all the grasses and trees of other lands and other worlds based just on what we have in our own little district on this small island.

The National Teacher said, "All the Holy Ones can hear it." This means that when the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings exists, all the Holy Ones stand and listen to it. All the Holy Ones and inanimate things mutually actualize hearing and proclaiming. Since animate beings have already proclaimed the Law for the Holy Ones, how can we say that inanimate beings are either holy or profane? Once we clarify the principle of inanimate beings proclaiming the Law, we will be able to hear what all the Holy ones hear. If we attain that experience, we can appreciate the world of the Holy Ones. We must study the practice of transcending the distinctions of sacred or profane.

The National Teacher said, "I can't hear it." Do not think this answer can be understood easily. Once sacred and profane are transcended, does it become "I can't hear it?" When the relativity of sacred and profane are broken, is it "I can't hear it?" Like this, study and practice hard and actualize the Way.

The National Teacher said, "Fortunately I can't hear it. If I could, I would be among the Holy Ones." This is not a simple declaration.

The "I" of "Fortunately I" is not a Holy One or worldly being but is it a Buddha or Patriarch? Because Buddhas and Patriarchs transcend sacred and profane, they arrive at the place where all the Holy Ones can hear it.

After we investigate the National Teacher's "You would not be able to hear my proclamation," we can experience the enlightenment of all the Buddhas and Holy Ones. The point lies here; proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings is "all the Holy Ones hear it"; the proclamation of the Law by the National Teacher is what the monk can hear. Provide sufficient time for the study and clarification of this principle. Let us question the National Teacher: We do want to ask about after sentient beings hear the Law. We want to know about when they are actually listening to it. What are they at that time?

The Great Teacher and High Patriarch Tōzan Gohon once asked his late master the great Patriarch Ungan Doncho. "What kind of person hears the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings?" Ungan answered, "The proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings is heard by inanimate beings." Tōzan asked, "Reverend master, can you hear it?" Ungan said, "If I could hear it then you wouldn't be able to hear my proclamation of the Law." Then Tōzan said, "If that is so, then I should not be able to hear your proclamation of the Law." Ungan said, "Since you cannot hear even my proclamation of the Law, how can you hear the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings." Tōzan composed the following verse and presented it to his master: "Marvellous! Marvellous! The proclamation of inanimate beings is incredibly wonderful! If you try to hear it through the ear, you would not get it. Listen to it through the eye and you will have it."

We must make a life-long search for the meaning of the Tōzan's "What kind of person can hear the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings?" That question itself possesses great merit. In this expression we find the skin, flesh, bones, and marrow; it is more than a mere transmission from mind to mind. Mind to mind transmission is the proper study for both beginners and advanced students. The key found in the correct transmission of the kesa and the Law. Unfortunately, people these days hope to obtain results after studying only three or four months. Even though we are able to see and hear the essence of the National Teacher's "All the Holy Ones can hear the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings" there must have already been the question, "What kind of person hears the proclamation of the Law by inanimate being?" Is this proof that Tozan grasped the heart of Daishō's expression or not? If there had not been a question now, could there be an answer? If he did not understand what Daishō had to say, how could he utter such things? If he did understand everything would not his comprehension be like this? or if he can grasp it, what is his understanding?

Ungan said, "The proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings is heard by inanimate beings." When we rightly transmit this life blood, we are studying with "body and mind cast off." "The proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings is heard by inanimate beings" is the proclamation of the Law by all the Buddhas and the form of all the Buddhas listening to the Law. All those who hear the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings – regardless if they are animate, inanimate, worldly, sages, saints – are inanimate. All things, past and present, must be evaluated by this standard. Even if the teaching comes from India, we should not use it if it has not been correctly transmitted from a true Patriarch. Even if we study for a thousand or ten thousand years, we must not transmit a teaching which is not based on the right transmission. At present, the right transmission still exists in China, and it is not so difficult to judge if a transmission is authentic or not. Even though we may grasp the fact that proclamation of the Law by sentient beings is heard by sentient beings, still we must receive the bones and marrow of all the Buddhas and Patriarchs. When we listen and understand Ungan's and Daishō's expressions we find that the Holy Ones who hear such words are "inanimate," and the inanimate beings who hear such words are Holy Ones. This is because inanimate beings who proclaim inanimately are inanimate beings that proclaim the Law inanimately.

In Tōzan's expression "If that: is so, then I should not be able to hear your proclamation of the Law." "If that is so" the fact "The proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings is heard by inanimate beings." The principle "The proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings is heard by inanimate beings" leads to "Then I should not be able to hear your proclamation." Tōzan was not just sitting in the last row when he heard about the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings – he himself was an inanimate being proclaiming the Law; such a forceful intention can shatter heaven. Not only did he experience the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings, he also heard the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings that cannot be heard. Furthermore, he experienced the proclamation of the Law not proclaimed by animate beings in addition to experiencing past, present, and future proclamations. By hearing the proclamation of the Law that cannot be heard, he clearly understood the principle of animate and inanimate beings.

Hearing the Law is not limited to the aural senses. The Law can be heard with one's entire power, mind, body; it can be heard long before our parents were born, before the first Buddha appeared, and after all eternity. The Law is heard before there is a body and after the mind is gone. Such kind of hearing the Law always produces merit. Do not say that there is no merit in hearing the Law if there is no consciousness. Even after the mind fades and the body disappears, there is still merit in hearing the Law. Even without a mind or body it is possible to gain merit by hearing the Law. All the Buddhas and Patriarchs surely spent sometime in such a state and thus become Buddhas and Patriarchs. The power of the Law influences body and mind; we can not even begin to imagine its great force. Within the limitation of body and mind, we are unable to clarify it completely. The virtue of hearing the Law plants seeds in the field of our body and mind that will never die. When the proper time comes, surely they will sprout and bear fruit.

Foolish people think that if one hears the Law continuously, but do not progress in understanding and can not remember anything about it, there is no merit involved. Gods and men study and listen to the Law with their entire body and mind and this is the most important thing they can do. One who forgets the Law and then wonders whether anything has been gained has obviously failed to meet a good master. If there has been no direct face to face transmission a master can not be called a true master. If there has been a right transmission from Buddha to Buddha then one is a true master. Foolish people state that we need conscious knowledge and retention of things in our minds, at least for awhile, for there to be some progress. At the right time, true merit embraces past and present body, past, present and future mind, causality and karma, form, nature, power, Buddhas, Patriarchs, self, others, and skin, flesh, bones, and marrow. Throughout heaven and earth, merit is actualized in the words of proclamation and the daily activities of sitting, lying, and so on.

Although we cannot easily know the tremendous virtue of hearing the Law, if we reside in the community of Buddhas and Patriarchs and study intently their skin, flesh, bones and marrow, there will be ample opportunity to attain the virtue of hearing the Law; remember that power of the Law will never decline.

Like this, there are long and short periods of practice, depending on one's ability; the correct effect will ultimately be actualized. Although it is not necessary to memorize countless details, it is not enough to master just one aspect. In your study, learn that Tozan experienced such an understanding.

Ungan said, "Since you cannot hear even my proclamation of the Law, how can you hear the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings?" When Tōzan heard this, he immediately opened his mind to great enlightenment, thus enabling him to grasp Ungan's inner teaching and transmit the bones and marrow of his Patriarchal Father.

"You cannot hear my proclamation." This is not the statement of an ordinary person. There are ten thousand ways to hear the

proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings, but the master means that we should not use ordinary consciousness to listen to it. This essential point of transmission is truly a great mystery. Those who remain caught up with the sacred and profane can never get it.

Tōzan presented a verse to Ungan: "The proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings is incredibly wonderful! Marvellous! Marvellous!" Therefore, inanimate beings and the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings is incredibly wonderful! What is this inanimate? Know that it has nothing to do with sacred or profane, or animate or inanimate. Profane, sacred, animate, inanimate, proclaiming, not proclaiming are all incredibly wonderful, "Incredibly wonderful" is "marvellous," and marvellous again. It is independent of the wisdom and consciousness of worldly people and saints, far beyond the capabilities of gods and men. Attempting to hear it with the ear is impossibly difficult; even the ears of gods and of the cosmos cannot hear it. Even by using the ears of walls or sticks, it is still not possible to hear the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings, because the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings is not heard through the ears. If you attempt to listen to it through the ears, it will never be heard, even if you try for aeons. It arises before there is sound, and it is not the cave where saints and worldly people dwell. "If you listen through the eyes, you will attain knowledge." Certain individuals have used this expression, reflecting the human view point of seeing grasses, trees, flowers, and birds in their ever-changing aspects. This kind of view is a mistake. It is completely different from the Buddhist Law. There is no such principle in Buddhism. Wherever we study Tōzan's "listening to the sound through the eye," it is the place where the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings is heard; it is the eye itself. The place where the sound of inanimate beings proclaiming the Law is actualized is the eye itself.

This "eye" must be thoroughly investigated. Hearing the sound through the eye is the same as hearing the sound through the ear, but hearing through the ear is not equal to hearing through the eye. Do not study that the ear functions within the eye, that the eye itself is the ear, or that sound appears within the eye.

An ancient worthy said, "The entire world of the ten directions is in the eye of a monk." When sound is heard through this single eye, do not think that it is the same as Tōzan's. "Hearing the sound through the eye." we should learn that this ancient worthy's "the entire world of the ten directions is in the eye" means that the entire world is this single eye. Still, there are a thousands of eyes of the hands, thousands of eyes of the True Law, thousand of eyes of the ears, thousands of eyes of the tongue, thousands of eyes of the mind, thousands of eyes that pierce the mind, thousands of eyes that pierce the body, thousands of eyes on top of a stall, thousands of eyes before there was a body, thousands of eyes before there was a mind, thousands of eyes of death within death, thousands of eyes of life within life, thousands eyes of self, thousands of eyes of others. thousands of eyes of study, thousands of vertical eyes, and thousands of horizontal eyes.

Therefore, study that the unlimited eye is the unlimited world; but realize that we can never totally penetrate the eye. It is essential in our study to hear the sound of the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings through the eye. The point of Tozan's expression is that although it is difficult to hear the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings through the ear, it can be heard through the eye.

Further, we can hear the sound throughout our body in every part of our body. Even though we can not completely experience hearing through the eye, we must master, and then drop off the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings and inanimate beings hearing the Law. This principle has been explained by my Late Master: "A gourd is a tangle of vines, wrapped up in its own tendrils." This is the right eye of Ungan and the bones and marrow of the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings. According to the principle of all Dharmas being proclaimed by inanimate beings, it becomes the proclamation of the Law of inanimate beings. This is the traditional teaching. Inanimate beings proclaim the Law for inanimate beings. What is an inanimate being? We must know that it is a being who hears the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings. What is proclamation of the Law? We must know that we are unaware that we ourselves are inanimate beings.

Great Teacher Jisai of Mt. Tosu in Jōshū [Dharma-heir of Zen Master Suibi Mugaku; also known as Daido Myokaku and the ancient Buddha, Tosu] was asked by a monk "What is the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings?" The Master said, "Don't bad mouth me."

Here Tosu's expression is obviously the standard of ancient Buddhas, and the basis of the teaching of Patriarchs. Inanimate beings proclaiming the Law, the Law proclaimed by inanimate beings and so on are all contained in it. "Do not bad mouth me." We must know that the proclamation of the Law by inanimate beings is the total teaching of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Rinzai and Tokusan do not know it; only individual Buddhas and Patriarchs can clarify it.

Delivered to an assembly of monks at Kippōji on October 2, 1243. Transcribed by Ejō on October 15 of the same year.

47. BUKKYŌ

佛經

"Buddhist sutras"

Within the Law, there is the Bodhisattva teaching and the Buddha teaching. Both are means to teach the Great Way. Such means direct and utilize themselves. Hence, the Buddhas and Patriarchs in India and China follow the instruction 'of excellent teachers and sūtra teaching, and at the proper time, respectively developed resolve, practice, and enlightenment without the slightest gap between them. Resolve, practice and enlightenment harmonize with the instruction given by teachers and the sūtras. Prior to awakening and following realization we work together with teachers and sūtras; during practice and awakening we work with teachers and sūtras. A teacher always skilfully utilizes the sūtras; utilize means to cultivate the sūtras, and keep them as body and mind. Teachers use sūtras as instruments to instruct others; sūtras are formed by their sitting, lying, walking, and moving. Sūtras are the teachers' fathers and mothers, and also their descendants. Since sūtras are based on practice and interpretation, teachers study the sūtras.

When a teacher washes his face or drinks tea, it is an ancient sūtra. A teacher who creates sūtras is someone like Ōbaku who gave sixty blows stimulate the life of his descendants. Or like Ōbai (Daiman Konin) who struck the mortar three times and transmitted the kesa and Law to the Sixth Patriarch; in addition, there are those who attained enlightenment upon seeing peach blossoms, or hearing a stone striking the bamboo, or like Shakyamuni who awoke at the light of the morning star. All these are sūtra, created by a teacher. Others becomes one with the sūtras, while some use sūtras to find the Way.

"Sūtras" form the entire universe of the ten directions. There are nothing but sūtras everywhere in time and space. Sometimes sacred letters are used, sometimes profane letters, sometimes divine letters, sometimes human letters, sometimes the letters of beasts, sometimes the letters of ashuras, sometimes the letters of a hundred grasses, sometimes the letters of ten thousand trees. Thus, whatever phenomena we perceive – long, short, square, round, blue, yellow, red, white – are all letters of the sūtras, the outer covering of the sūtras. They are tools of the Great Way, and the sūtras of Buddhists.

These sūtras are proclaimed at all times, everywhere using the teaching to open the gate for all. People everywhere can accept it and be saved by their teaching. The teaching of all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas covers the entire universe. It opens the gate of "skillful means" and "method of salvation"; one person, or even a half person, can indicate the real form of truth. At the proper time, Buddhas or Bodhisattvas, consciously and unconsciously, without forcing it by themselves, obtain the sūtras, and accomplish their great purpose.

The time when we surely obtain the sūtra is not in the past, not in present. "Past and Present" is the occasion to obtain the sūtras. The entire world appears before our eyes – this is "obtaining the sūtras." To accumulate merit by reading the sūtras, it is necessary to have Buddha wisdom, natural wisdom, and innate wisdom actualized before there is a mind or a body. Do not doubt such unusual manifestations. When we receive, maintain, read, and chant this sūtra, the sūtra becomes ours. Before letters and outside words, beneath and above the text quickly find the truth. These sūtras are called the Dharma. It is the proclamation of 84,000 teachings. Within the sūtras there are the letters of all the awakened Buddhas, the letters of all the Buddhas of the present world, and the letters of all the Buddhas in Parinirvana. Thus come, and thus gone, all the letters in the sūtras are the letters of the Dharma above the Dharma. Holding up the flower and the smile are the ancient sūtras of the right transmission of the seven Buddhas. Cutting off the arm and standing in the snow, bowing and receiving the marrow are ancient sūtras of the transmission from master to disciple. When the Dharma and the robe were transmitted, the entire contents of the sutras were transmitted. When Kōnin [the Fifth Patriarch] tapped the mortar three times, and Enō [the Sixth Patriarch] shook the rice bag three times it was the function of sūtra passing to sūtra, and the right transmission of sūtra to sūtra. There are other examples. [Enō's] "Who are you and where are you from?" [said to Nangaku] is the Buddhist teachings of a thousand sūtras and the Bodhisattva teaching of ten thousand scriptures. Years later Nangaku told him, "Words can describe things but they are not truth itself"; this explains the 84,000 volumes and the twelve divisions of the entire canon. Furthermore, the master's first looking under one's feet, the staff and fly whisk are sūtras of the past and present, full and empty. The hard practice of monks and concentration on Zazen are true Buddhist sūtras from top to bottom. Writing verses on the leaves of the Bodhi tree or writing them in space are also sūtras.

All the actions of the Buddhas and Patriarchs in time and space are the opening and closing of the sūtras.

When we learn the ultimate criteria, even inhaling and exhaling is a sūtra, and moving the feet is a function of the sūtras. All actions are functions of the sūtras – even before our parents were born, before the universe was created. Mountains, rivers, and the earth proclaim the sūtras; the sun, moon, and stars proclaim the sūtra. Sūtras are the self before the self of countless aeons, before the self of body and mind – "A speck of dust shatters and reveals all; Dharma-dhatu cracks and the universe exists."

The 27th Patriarch the Honourable Hannyatara said, "When I exhale it is not bound with causality; when I inhale it is independent of the skhandas. I am continually proclaiming the million volume sūtra of suchness, not just one or two books."

When we study such sayings of the Patriarchs, we learn that exhale and inhale are the turning of the sūtras. When we know that the sūtras are turned we discover where they are located. Turning the sūtras is to read the sūtras; turning the sūtras is the sūtras turning – everything can be known, everything can be seen.

My late Master always said, "In my practice, incense, prostrations, chanting the name of Buddhas, repentance, or sūtra reading are not done. We do single minded sitting, hard practising of the Way, and drop off body and mind. Few people understand this point. When we only read the letters of the sūtras we become attached to them; if we ignore the letters we lose the spirit. By using words it cannot be attained, by not using words it cannot be attained. Speak quickly! Speak quickly! Clarify this principle. An ancient worthy (Ummon) said, 'Read sūtras with the eye of the sūtras.'"

We must know that if there were no true sūtras in the past and present, there could never be such an expression. Sutras can be read with detachment of body and mind, and they can be read without reading. Study this.

Therefore that is why, one student, or even half a student, must always transmit the Buddhist sūtras as a true disciple, and stay away from the malicious ideas of non-believers. This actualization of the Eye and Treasury of the True Law becomes the Buddhist sūtras; Buddhist sutras are the Eye and Treasury of the True Law.

There is no same or different, no self or others. Know that the Eye and Treasury of the True Law exists in many aspects, but everyone is not able to clarify it. However, the Eye and Treasury of the True Law is open and displayed; it cannot be doubted.

Buddhist sūtras are like this. There are many different kinds of sūtras, and what we believe, accept, and act upon can be merely one verse or one line. We cannot hope to understand 84,000 sūtras. If one is not a master of the sūtras, we must not randomly explain the differences between Buddhist sutras and the Buddhist Dharma. Although many claim to possess the bones and marrow of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, if we look at them with the True Eye, we see that they are still beginners. Even if one verse or one line is received, they are not adequately grasped. Those with superficial understanding must not slander the true Buddhist Dharma. Their worldly values are not worth more than the sūtras. Captivated by fame and riches, they will lose everything – Do not confuse, disbelieve, or slander the Buddhist sūtras.

However, in great Sung China during the last several hundred years, insincere and ignorant people have taught "Forget about the words of the Patriarchs, and never look at the sūtras. All that is necessary is to make the body and mind like a withered tree and dead ashes. Be like a broken ladle, or a bottomless bucket." Such people are masquerading non-believers and demons. Their teaching is worthless and their understanding of the Buddhas and Patriarchs is empty, the ranting of mad men. It is a great pity. Even a broken ladle or a bottomless bucket are the Buddhas and Patriarch's ancient sūtras.

The teaching of Buddhas and Patriarchs cannot be neatly grouped into chapters or volumes. Anyone who says the Buddhist sūtras are different than the Buddhist Dharma, is unaware when the Buddhas and Patriarchs use the sūtras, and unaware of the special relationship between the Buddhas and Patriarchs and the sūtras. There are thousands of such inferior people. False Patriarchs sit in the lion's seat instructing men and gods. Inferior monks remain ignorant and do not know that their teaching is twisted. It is a great pity that they are trapped in illusion. Such people have yet to experience the body and mind of the Buddhist Dharma and thus do not know how to behave or think properly. Since they have never clarified existence and non-existence, when someone asks them a question, they shake their fists. However, they are unaware of the true significance of shaking their fists because they have not clarified proper and improper. Others hold up a fly whisk when questioned, but again they don't really know what this means.

Some use old standbys like Rinzai's shiryōken and shishōyo, Ummon's three verses, and Tōzan's three paths and five ranks.

My late Master Tendo Osho used to smile about this and say, "Does the study of Buddhism have anything to do with such concepts? The Great Way of right transmission of the Buddhas and Patriarchs is the practice of using the entire body and mind. When we study there is no time to think about study. If we have extra time, we make up expressions for beginners to study. We should know that elders everywhere lack a mind for seeking the Way. Hence they do not study the body and mind of the Buddhist Dharma."

Another time, my late master told an assembly of monks: "Truly, Rinzai was a disciple of Ōbaku. After receiving sixty blows of the stick from Ōbaku, Rinzai changed his master to Daigu. Daigu instructed him kindly, Rinzai reflected on his past and returned to Ōbaku. This is a well-known story. Many believe that Ōbaku's Buddhist Dharma was only transmitted to Rinzai. Furthermore, people think that Rinzai is far superior to Ōbaku. This is a total mistake. When Rinzai was temporarily admitted to Ōbaku's community the chief disciple, Chin, told him to ask Ōbaku any question. Rinzai (did not know what to ask. When the great matter has not been clarified, student monks must question the master and not stand around. Know that Rinzai did not possess such great ability. We never heard of his strong desire to surpass his master or words spoken by him that excel those of his master."

Ōbaku's expression and knowledge, on the other hand, surpass that of his master Hyakujo. He obtained the Way which his master had. not. Ōbaku is an ancient Buddha beyond time, far superior to his master Hyakujo, and much sharper than Baso. Rinzai is small-time. Why is this? Rinzai used words that were not used in the past, he knew many things but not the essence. He was capable of mastering a simple thing but was confused by many. Therefore how can we take his shiryōken, etc., as serious explanations of the Buddhist Dharma?

Ummon was a disciple of Seppō. Ummon was a teacher of men and gods, with a sharp mind. He was indeed a clever scholar but his teaching was incomplete. If Rinzai or Ummon had not appeared, what would be the standard for study of the Buddhas and Patriarchs? We should know that the inner teaching of the Buddhas was not transmitted in their lineage. Since they lacked adequate standards, they made up wild and foolish theories. They slandered the teachings in the Buddhist sūtras. Most people of that era did not follow them.

If we abandon Buddhist sūtras we must abandon Rinzai and Ummon. If we don't use the Buddhist sūtras, it is like not having either water – to drink or a ladle to scoop it up.

High Patriarch Tōzan's Sanro and live ranks were intended for beginners. His teaching was the essence of the right transmission, the direct pointing to Buddha action, and completely different from that of other schools.

Ignorant people state that Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism are ultimately one, only the entrances are different. Or they say those teachings are like a tripod. That kind of view is often heard among the monks of the Great Sung China.

If they hold such opinions the Buddha Dharma has already disappeared for them. Even a speck of dust of the Buddha Dharma can not be found among that type of stupid people. They attempt to express their understanding of the Buddhist Dharma by mistakenly stating that it is not necessary to use Buddhist sūtras, and emphasize the transmission of the Patriarchs outside the sūtras. They have very narrow views and cannot understand even the most basic points of the Buddhist Way. If they tell us to abandon Buddhist sūtras, should the sutras of the Patriarchs be used or abandoned? In the Way of the Patriarchs there are Buddhist sūtras so should we use them or not? If we hold that there is a Way of the Patriarchs separate from that of the Way of the Buddhas who will be able to have confidence in the Way of the Patriarchs? The reason Patriarchs become Patriarchs is because they rightly transmit the Buddhist Way.

If a Patriarch does not rightly transmit the Buddhist Way how can he be called a Patriarch? We venerate the First Patriarch as 28th in line from Shakyamuni. If we say the Way of the Patriarchs is separate from the Way of the Buddhas, there will be no right transmission in the 10th, 20th, or other Patriarchs. The reason we respect the Patriarchs is because we perceive the dignity of the Buddhist Way they transmit from one to another. If the Patriarchs do not have right transmission of the Buddhist Way how can they face men and gods?

Furthermore, how will they be able to venerate the Buddha and Follow the Way of the Patriarchs?

These misguided, foolish people have a superficial view of the Buddhist Way because they lack sufficient understanding of the Dharma and its origin. To compare Taoism and Confucianism with Buddhism is not only a matter of ignorance, it creates evil karma and destroys the foundation of the country by weakening the Three Treasures. The way of Lao-Tsu and Confucius can not be compared with the Way of the Arhats much less the enlightenment of Bodhisattvas and Buddhas.

The teachings of those two doctrines are simply the observations of wise men on the nature of phenomena; they can never clarify the law of causation in any of their incarnations. Even if we clarify the functioning of body and mind as "no-action", it is still not possible to cut off relativity and perceive the true form of the ten directions of the universe. The teaching of Lao-Tsu and Confucius is much inferior to that of Buddha, that is as clear as the difference between Heaven and Earth. However, many people ridiculously maintain that they are one; this is to slander Buddhism, and also to slander Taoism and Confucianism. Although Confucianism and Taoism have marvellous teachings, elders of the present day do not clarify even a small part of those teachings so how can they grasp the essence of "governing the county". Confucius too had teachings and ways of practice. Ignorant people in China cannot understand that. No one practices any kind of teaching. Upon close examination, even a speck of dust is seen to be different from others. So, how can anyone fail to comprehend the inner teaching of the Buddhist sūtras?

Despite this fact, they have failed to grasp Confucianism and Taoism, they still state boldly that the "Three Teachings are One."

Such foolish people in Great Sung China receive the title of National Teacher and act as leading religious figures without the slightest trace of guilt; they misrepresent the Buddhist Way. No one like that should maintain that they possess the Buddhist Dharma. Those "elders" all say that Buddhist sūtras do not contain the original essence of Buddhism: the transmission from Patriarch to Patriarch does, and it alone can transmit the marvellous teaching.

These are the ludicrous uttering of insane people. The right transmission of the Patriarchs never differs, not even in a word or half-word, from the teachings expressed in the Buddhist sūtras. The Buddhist Sūtras and Way of the Patriarchs have been rightly transmitted from Shakyamuni Buddha. Transmission is the direct passing of the teaching from one to another. We cannot say that Patriarchs do not know the Buddhist sūtras, or that they never read or chanted them.

An ancient worthy said, "You are confused by the sūtras; the sūtras are not confused by you."

There are many stories about ancient worthies reading the sutras. Tell all foolish people: If we abandon the Buddhist sūtras, we abandon Buddha's mind and body; if we abandon Buddha's body and mind, we abandon Buddha's descendants, and Buddha's Way. If we abandon the Buddhist Way, then how can we not avoid abandoning the Way of Buddhas and Patriarchs? If we abandon the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, we are nothing more than peasants who have shaved our heads. Who says you do not deserve many blows of the stick? You are not servants of kings and ministers but attendants of the god of Hell. Elders of the present day easily become head priests simply on the recommendation of lords and ministers. Thus they speak wildly. It is rare to find anyone who can tell right from wrong. Only my late master laughed at such people. Other elders did not understand.

Do not think that priests in foreign lands certainly know the Way of Buddha just because they live in a great and powerful nation; do not think they have surely obtained the Way.

It is not true that only people in other lands can become real monks. Everywhere some people are good, some are bad. Even in the three worlds of the Dharma-dhatu this holds true.

Again, even if you become a teacher of the emperor, it does not necessarily mean you have attained the Way. Even the emperor has difficulty finding someone who has truly attained the Way. The emperor only listens to the opinions of his ministers and then selects some one based on their counsel. There are a few instances of emperors in the past and present possessing the Way, but the majority have not. When dark ages occur, those in high positions are not people of the Way. In fact those who are ignored by such people, are likely the ones who have mastered the Way. Some know this, some do not.

Long ago in the time of Ōbai (Konin) the elder Jinshu instructed the emperor, lecturing on the sūtras and proclaiming the Dharma. Not only that, he was the highest ranking monk among the seven hundred disciples. However, the Sixth Patriarch was superior.

A woodcutter who became a lay monk, he worked in the rice polishing hut. Some may fret over such a low status, but he surpassed all others, ordained and lay, by attaining the Law and transmitting the kesa. Never before was such a tale heard in India and China. He was incomparable; none of the seven hundred high priests of that era were his equal. Many people gathered around him from all areas. He was Thirty-third in the Buddha line of transmission. If the Fifth Patriarch had not been able to perceive his character, how could this have happened?

Quietly reflect on this principle. Do not make light of it. Strive for the ability to properly evaluate people's character. If we lack such ability, great misery will be brought upon ourselves and others.

For this, wide knowledge and special talent is not a requirement. The important thing is to have deep insight and ability to evaluate people correctly. If that is lacking, we can never be free of illusion.

Therefore, know that the Buddhist sūtras are in the Buddhist Way; search in the mountains and oceans of Buddhism widely and deeply, and practice the Way correctly.

Delivered to an assembly of monks at Kippōji, Echizen, Yoshida-gun in the autumn of 1243.

48. HOSSHŌ

法性

“Dharmatā, the real nature of phenomena”

When we study sometimes we follow the teaching of the sūtras, sometimes we follow the teaching of a master; ultimately, however, it comes down to self-enlightenment without a teacher. Self-enlightenment without a teacher occurs through dharmatā, the real nature of the phenomenal world. Even if we possess such knowledge innately it is still necessary to visit masters and seek the Way. If we think we lack such innate knowledge we must study and practice harder. There is no one who does not possess innate knowledge. We must follow the teaching of the sūtras or masters until we achieve Buddhist enlightenment.

We must know that we enter the world of hoshō samādhi when we look at the sūtras or meet a master. To enter and obtain dharmatā samādhi is called innate knowledge. Thus, we obtain knowledge of our previous existences and samyo, the three types of knowledge.^{1-EN} This is the certification of supreme enlightenment. We learn innate knowledge by meeting innate knowledge. We correctly transmit wisdom not obtained from a teacher and natural wisdom by meeting wisdom not obtained from a teacher and natural wisdom. If we do not possess innate knowledge, even if we meet sūtras or masters we will not be able to hear or enlighten dharmatā.

When we drink water we know if it is hot or cold. The principle of the Great Way is not like that. All Buddhas, Mahasattvas, and sentient beings clarify the Great Way of dharmatā through the power of innate knowledge. Following the sūtras or masters and clarifying the Great Way of dharmatā is the illumination of one's own dharmatā. The sūtras are dharmatā, i.e., they are one's self. Masters are also dharmatā, i.e., one's self. Dharmatā is masters, dharmatā is our self. Since dharmatā is one's self, it is not the “self” of non-believers or demons. In dharmatā there are no non-believers or demons; there is nothing more than to eat the gruel when it is served, take the rice when given, and drink tea when it is offered.

There are some who claim to have had twenty or thirty years of study yet when they are confronted with a discussion of dharmatā they are dumbstruck and all their efforts are wasted. Others have spent years in a monastery and now occupy seats of honour but are totally confounded by the voice and form of dharmatā. Their understanding is that dharmatā only emerges after the entire universe and the three worlds are destroyed, and dharmatā is not seen in the present world. The principle of dharmatā is not like that. It completely goes beyond ideas of difference and identity, separation and unity between this phenomenal world and dharmatā. Since it is not past, present, or future, not temporary or eternal and not form, perception, mental conceptions, volition, or consciousness it becomes dharmatā.

Zen Master Baso Daijaku of Kosei in Koshū said, “Sentient beings have never left the state of dharmatā samādhi throughout myriads of kalpas. They are always in a state of dharmatā samādhi, putting on their clothes, eating rice, greeting their visitors, and using their six sense organs. All their actions are the function of dharmatā.”

Baso's “dharmatā” is dharmatā's dharmatā. If we study under Baso, we are studying dharmatā. Baso understands dharmatā and therefore cannot fail to express it. Dharmatā is riding Baso [“Ba” means horse]. Human beings eat rice, rice eats human beings. Dharmatā emerges as dharmatā, it has never left dharmatā samādhi. Both before and after its manifestation dharmatā has never left anything. Dharmatā and myriad kalpas are dharmatā samādhi; dharmatā is “myriad kalpas.”

Therefore, all things in the present are dharmatā, dharmatā is all things in the present. “Wearing clothes and eating rice” is the wearing and eating of dharmatā samādhi. It is the actualization of the dharmatā of wearing, eating, clothes, and rice. If we do not wear clothes and eat rice, do not give a greeting, do not use the six sense organs, and do not do anything, it is not dharmatā samādhi and we cannot enter dharmatā.

The present actualization of the Way was transmitted by all the Buddhas to Shakyamuni Buddha and all the Patriarchs rightly transmitted it to Baso. Each Buddha and Patriarch mutually receives and transmits dharmatā samādhi. Buddhas and Patriarchs make dharmatā lively and active through their detachment. Teachers of doctrine may talk about dharmatā, but it is not the dharmatā of Baso's sentient beings who have never left dharmatā. Even if they doubt this dharmatā, they still will be able to gain something. That is, such a thought is just a different form of dharmatā. They may think they lack dharmatā, but they still give greetings and act and this is dharmatā. Unlimited kalpas flow by and dharmatā passes. The present and future are exactly like that.

We may think that the measure of body and mind is limited to what we can weigh and it differs from dharmatā, but even such an idea is still dharmatā. The converse is also true. “Thought” and “non-thought” together form dharmatā. “Tā” (shō) means nature but we should not take it as something permanent like water that does not flow, or a tree that neither grows nor perishes. That is the opinion of non-believers.

Shakyamuni Buddha said, “Suchness is form, suchness is [all] nature.” Hence, blooming flowers and falling leaves are “suchness is [all] nature.” Foolish people, however, think that there are no blooming flowers or falling leaves in the world of dharmatā. Let us stop questioning others for a while and ask ourselves the same questions. Try to pick up others' questions and study them yourself repeatedly. Then you should be able to solve those questions. Your previous ideas were not evil or bad intentioned, just inadequate. And even when you clarify the above problems such inadequate ideas will remain somewhere. Blooming flowers and falling leaves are of themselves blooming flowers and falling leaves. Even the thought that there are no blooming flowers and falling leaves is dharmatā. “Thought” is the dropping off of all doubt, the thought of dharmatā as it is. The sum total of all our thoughts of dharmatā is our original face. Baso's “everything is dharmatā;” is 80 or 90 percent of the truth, but he still left much unsaid. For example, he did not say: “dharmatā does not leave dharmatā,” “dharmatā is all dharmatā,” “sentient beings cannot leave sentient beings,” “sentient beings are only a small part of dharmatā,” “sentient beings are only a small part of sentient beings,” “dharmatā is half of sentient beings,” “half of sentient beings are half of dharmatā,” “no sentient beings are dharmatā,” “dharmatā is not sentient beings,” “dharmatā leaves dharmatā,” “sentient beings leaves sentient beings.”

He only said that sentient beings do not leave dharmatā samādhi. He did not say that dharmatā does not leave sentient being samādhi, nor that dharmatā samādhi leaves and enters sentient being samādhi. Furthermore, we did not hear: “dharmatā becomes Buddha,” “sentient beings enlighten dharmatā,” “dharmatā enlightens dharmatā,” “inanimate things do not leave dharmatā.”

1-EN The remembrance of former births, insight into the future destiny of beings and recognition of the origin of misery and the way to its removal.

Let us ask Baso, "What do you call sentient beings?" If we call sentient beings "dharma^{tā}" where do they come from? If we call sentient beings "sentient beings" it means "not even one thing can be explained." Answer quickly, quickly!

This was delivered to the monks at Kippōji in the beginning of winter, 1243.

49. DHARANI

陀羅尼

“The mystic formula”

When the eye of study is clear, the eye of the True Law is clear. Since the eye of the True Law is clear, we obtain the clear eye of study. The most important aspect of right transmission is accomplished through the power of respecting great and excellent teachers. This is great karma and the great dharani. “Great and excellent teachers” are the Buddhas and Patriarchs. We must serve them always.

Therefore, that is why making and serving tea is the actualization of the mind’s essence and spiritual power. It is also found in bringing a water pitcher, pouring it out, bringing the water without moving the pitcher, and studying with one’s teacher. It is not only the study of the mind’s essence of the Buddhas and Patriarchs; it is also seeing the Buddhas and Patriarchs through meeting the Buddhas and Patriarchs. We must not just receive the spiritual power of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, but also penetrate the spiritual power of seven or eight specific Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Because of this, the spiritual power and mind’s essence of all the Buddhas and Patriarchs is condensed into one dharani. When we respect and venerate the Buddhas and Patriarchs we offer heavenly flowers and incense; this is not bad, but it is better to offer the dharani of samādhi. This is what it is to be a descendant of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

“Great dharani” means “the proper manner of veneration.” Because the proper manner of veneration is great dharani it can be actualized and seen. The expression “proper manner of veneration” is Chinese and has been used in society for some time. It was not handed down from Brahma or Indra; rather, it is only transmitted by Buddhas and Patriarchs. It is not the conscious world of voice and form, nor is it something that should be discussed as that which existed before or after Kūō Buddha, who was present at the beginning of the world.

The proper manner of veneration is to offer incense and make prostrations. There is a real teacher of renunciation and a real teacher of the transmission of the Law. The teacher of renunciation is a teacher of the right transmission and vice versa. Veneration for those teachers is the right dharani of study. Do not waste time; venerate them immediately.

At the beginning and end of training periods, at the winter solstice, and at the beginning and end of each month offer incense and make prostrations to those true masters. We can do this either before or after the morning meal. Straighten up and go stand in front of the master’s room. “Straighten up” means put on your kesa, take your zagu,^{1-EN} arrange your footwear, and prepare incense. Stand before the master and greet him with a bow. The attendant monks should have already cleaned the incense burner and taken care of the candles. Offer incense immediately, regardless of whether the master is sitting in his chair, behind the curtain, lying down, or eating. If he is standing ask him to sit down and rest after you make your prostrations. There are many possibilities.

After the master sits down, give a bow in the correct manner and then walk over to the incense burner stand and make your offering. You may keep the incense on your collar, inside your kimono, or in your sleeve. It depends on the person. After making a bow, if the incense is wrapped in paper, turn it to the left, hold it from underneath, take it in both hands and open it. Place it on the burner making sure it is standing straight. After placing it upright, place your hands over your chest, walk toward the right until you are standing directly before the master; bow to him in the prescribed manner, place your zagu on the floor and make either nine or twelve prostrations depending on the situation. After making those prostrations fold the zagu and bow again.

In some cases, the monk makes three prostrations and gives a seasonal greeting. However, in the above case no greeting is given, only prostrations in sets of three. This custom has been handed down from the seven Buddhas. Since it has been rightly transmitted, it can be utilized by us. These prostrations have never undergone any modification in any era. Also, whenever we receive some teaching or special guidance we should follow the above procedure. For example, the second Patriarch used three prostrations to communicate with Bodhidharma. Whenever we talk about the level of the Eye and Treasury of the True Law we must make three prostrations. We must know that prostrations are the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and that the Eye and Treasury of the True Law is the great dharani.

Lately, it has been the custom to make only one prostration when we request instruction from a master, but this is not the traditional custom. It is not absolutely necessary to offer nine or twelve prostrations to show our gratitude. Sometimes three prostrations are given, sometimes one prostration in which the head touches the ground is given, and occasionally six prostrations are given. Actually, all of these prostrations should be given with the forehead touching the ground. In India, such prostrations are considered to be the highest form of prostration. In each of the above prostrations – one, three, or six – you should touch your forehead to the ground. In the case of six prostrations, you should pound your head into the ground almost until it bleeds. You should use your zagu. Prostrations are also done in worldly society. There are basically nine kinds used there.

When we receive a master’s teachings we should make countless prostrations. Prostrations should be non-stop, done hundreds of thousands of times. They are constantly used in the community of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

In general, such prostrations should be done under the direction of a master and his instructions should be followed closely. Generally speaking, when prostrations are done in society, the Buddhist teaching exists there. If such prostrations are missing, then the Buddhist Law will disappear.

Prostrations before a true teacher who transmits the Dharma should be made without regard to the season or place. For example, even if he is lying down, eating, or going to the lavatory we should still make a prostration. Even if we are separated by walls, fences, mountains, or rivers we should make our prostrations from a distance. Even if we are separated by countless cons, by the coming and going of life and death, or by enlightenment and nirvana we should make our prostrations.

Novices and disciples must know many types of prostrations, but a true master need not give such prostrations in return. Usually, he only gives a gassho, and returns his disciple’s third prostration. When we make our prostrations we must face north, directly across from the teacher who is facing south. This is the correct and proper manner. The right transmission holds that if we have right belief all our prostrations, from the very beginning, will be made facing north.

Therefore, when Shakyamuni was still present in this world, all those people, gods, and dragons who had taken refuge in

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Buddha, faced north and showed their veneration by making prostrations. After he attained the Way his former companions, Ajñātakaṇḍinya, Aśvajit, Bhadrīka, Mahanāman, and Daśabalakāśyapa, stood up across from the Tathāgata, faced north and made prostrations. Non-believers and demons who abandoned their evil minds and took refuge in the Buddha, also faced the north and made prostrations without any prodding. In each of the communities of the twenty-eight Indian Patriarchs who followed Shakyamuni and of the Chinese Patriarchs, all the believers in the True Law naturally faced the north and made prostrations. This is the natural form of the true Dharma, and there is nothing forced or unnatural between a master and disciple. This relationship is the great dharani.

There is a great dharani named "perfect enlightenment," one named "proper manner of veneration," one named "actualization of prostration," one named "kesa," one named "Eye and Treasury of the True Law." By chanting this dharani we can protect the entire earth, all time, every Buddhaland, and the inside and outside of our hermitage. We should study and clarify that great dharani. All dharanis are based on this dharani. As relatives of this dharani all dharanis are actualized. All the Buddhas and Patriarchs derive their resolve, practice, enlightenment, and turning of the wheel of the Law from this dharani.

Therefore, since we are the descendants of the Buddhas and Patriarchs we must study and clarify this dharani in detail. "If we put on the robe of Shakyamuni we put on the robe of all the Buddhas and Patriarchs of the entire world." "Put on the robe" means wear a kesa. The kesa is a special symbol of Buddhists. It is difficult to have the opportunity to wear a kesa.

Even someone who is born in a remote country, and is also foolish, can still ultimately find the Dharma of Shakyamuni through the actualization of a dharani chanted earlier and through the power of merit. Within the various forms of phenomena, when we make a prostration to the Buddhas and Patriarchs, regardless of whether it was done under our own or another's initiative, it is the same as Shakyamuni Buddha's attainment and practice of the Way. This is the miraculous power of dharanis.

When we make a prostration to all the Buddhas of the past and present innumerable kalpas it is the occasion of putting on the robe of Shakyamuni Buddha. When we cover our body with a kesa it is the attainment of Shakyamuni Buddha's body, flesh, hands, feet, head, eye, marrow, and brain. It is also the Divine Light of turning the wheel of the Law. We should wear our kesa in that spirit. This is the actualization of the kesa's merit. We should maintain and venerate it, protecting it always, and wearing it when we venerate Shakyamuni Buddha. That is how we can complete the practice of innumerable kalpas.

Making prostrations and venerating Shakyamuni Buddha means making prostrations and venerating a true teacher who has transmitted the Dharma, given you the precepts, and shaved your head. This is to see and venerate Shakyamuni through the power of the Dharma and dharanis.

My late master, the ancient Buddha Tendō, said, "There is a prostration like Eka's in the snow, and one in the rice hut like Enō. This is an excellent precedent and example of great dharani."

This was delivered to the monks at Kippōji in 1242. Transcribed on January 13, 1244, in the chief disciple's quarters by Ejō.

50. SEMMEN

洗面

“Washing the face”

The Lotus Sūtra states: “Rub the body with fragrant oil, wash off all impurities, and put on a fresh robe; then both inside and outside will be cleansed.”

This teaching was given by the Tathagata to those of the Lotus Assembly who were practising the Four Peaceful Ways. This teaching was not given in any other assembly and appears in no other text. Purifying the body and mind with fragrant oil and washing away impurities is the first principle of the Buddhist Law. Putting on a fresh robe is another way of purification. Thoroughly washing and anointing the body with fragrant oil purifies inside and outside. When the inside and outside are purified, everything around us is purified.

However, foolish people who have neither heard of the Buddhist Dharma nor follow the Buddhist Way say that while we wash only the skin, we must also cleanse the internal organs; otherwise the body will not be completely purified. Therefore, more than the surface of the skin must be cleansed. They talk like that because they do not know and have not heard the Buddha Dharma, have never met a real master, and are not the descendants of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Abandon such false views and study instead the True Law of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Relative existence is not defined, nor are the ultimate aspects of inside and outside explained. The inside and outside of body and mind are unattainable.

When the Bodhisattva in his last incarnation attained the Way, sitting in the place of enlightenment, he first put on a clean robe and bathed to purify his body and mind. This is the proper manner followed by all the ten thousand Buddhas of the three worlds. A Bodhisattva in his final incarnation is no ordinary being and all his acts are extraordinary. His virtue and wisdom are displayed throughout his body and mind; he is altogether a supremely praiseworthy being. His methods of purification are also special.

Everyone’s body and mind functions according to time. When a Bodhisattva sits, the three thousand worlds are covered. Although this is what occurs, it cannot be evaluated by “self” or “others”—it is the absolute virtue of the Buddhist Dharma. That body and mind cannot be measured as five or six feet; five or six feet are not definite standards of measurement. This place is not “this world” or “that world”, a “limited world” or “unlimited world”—not something here or there. If we ask what kind of place this is, it cannot be understood even if explained in the greatest detail. The depth of that mind cannot be gauged through discrimination; it is not a question that can be asked based on non-thinking or discrimination. Since the “measurement” of body and mind is like this, the “measurement” of purification is the same. When we grasp “measurement” through practice and enlightenment, we attain that which the Buddhas and Patriarchs bear in mind generation after generation. Do not use narrow-minded views and do not take narrow minded views as the truth. Therefore, that is why when we bathe and cleanse the body, we must penetrate and purify the “measurement” of body and mind.

The four great elements, the five skandhas, and other indestructible qualities are all purified when we wash the body. This does not mean simply washing the body with water. Innately water is neither pure nor impure. Regardless if water is innately pure or not, we cannot say it cleanses or does not cleanse. When we maintain the practice and enlightenment of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, we use water to purify and clean—this is the Buddha Dharma. Therefore when there is practice and enlightenment, it transcends purity, is liberated from impurity, and drops off notions of not-pure and not not-pure. Therefore that is why the proper method of cleansing—neither undefiled nor immaculate—is only preserved in the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, never among non-believers.

If what foolish people say is correct, how can there be purification even if we grind away the dirt in the internal organs until they are reduced to nothing and wash them with all the water of the ocean? If the inside of this “nothing” is not washed, how can inside and outside be purified? Foolish people know nothing about how to cleanse nothingness. Use nothingness to clean nothingness, and use nothingness to wash body and mind. By accepting and believing in this method of purification, we maintain the practice and enlightenment of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

The True Law, rightly transmitted from Buddha to Buddha and Patriarch to Patriarch from generation to generation, consists of using cleaning to purify the inside and outside of the body and mind, the internal organs, relative and absolute existence, and the inner, outer, and middle of the universe. When we use incense for purification, all karma functioning in the past, present, and future quickly becomes purified.

Buddha stated, “Bathe three times, apply incense three times, and the body and mind will be purified.” Therefore, in order to purify the body and to purify the mind, each time you bathe use incense; do this three times and you will gain reverence for the Buddhas, read the sutras, do Zazen, and perform kinhin. If there is to be more Zazen following kinhin, tradition states the feet must be cleaned. Even if the feet do not touch anything dirty, still it is the custom of the Buddhas and Patriarchs to do so.

“Bathe three times, use incense three times” means: Wash the body thoroughly, put on fresh robes, kindle a small amount of incense, and let the smoke waft through your clothes – do this three times. This is the proper method. Even though the six sense organs and their functions may seem unaltered, still the virtue of purification is manifest. Do not doubt it. The three poisons and the four perversions may be present, but the virtue of purification nonetheless emerges through the Buddha Dharma. This cannot be evaluated with ordinary intellect or perceived through ordinary vision.

When you use incense, do not break it into pieces or grind it down to dust; simply use it as it is to purify all elements.

There is a standard method of purification in the Buddha Dharma: washing the body, washing the mind, washing the feet, washing the face, washing the eyes, washing the two parts used for elimination, washing the hands, washing the begging bowl, washing the kesa, washing the head. All these cleansing acts are the True Law of all the Buddhas and Patriarchs of the three worlds.

Whenever the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha are venerated, incense is prepared; first wash both hands, rinse the mouth, put on fresh clothes. Then put fresh water in a clean tray, wash off the incense, and offer it to the world of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. For special petition use sandalwood incense from Mount Mala washed in the waters of Anabadatehi [a pond of pure water located in the Himalayas] to venerate the Three Treasures.

The method of “washing the face” was transmitted from India and established in China. Although the Vinaya-pitaka treats this subject in detail, only the method transmitted and maintained by the Buddha and Patriarchs is the proper one. Not only has it

been transmitted from Buddha to Buddha and Patriarch to Patriarch for hundreds of generations, it will be carried on for aeons. It is not merely a way of removing dirt and oil – it is the lifeblood of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

It is said that if one does not wash the face, it will be a transgression to receive or give a prostration. Venerating oneself, venerating others and venerating things all reveal the nature of one's enlightenment and detachment. Therefore, the face must always be washed.

The proper time for washing the face is between 3:00 to 5:00 in the morning, or any time just before sunrise. When my late master was living on Tendō, he washed his face at 1:00 in the morning. He wore either a full or half robe and carried a towel to the wash room. The towel was three feet wide and twelve feet long. The colour should not be white – that is prohibited by custom.

In the Sanzen Igi Kyō it says, "There are five rules concerning the use of a towel: (1) use either the upper or lower edge (not the centre) (2) wipe the hands on one end and the face on the other; (3) never wipe the nose on the towel; (4) if it becomes stained with oil, immediately wash it; and (5) do not use it to wipe the body a separate towel is used for bathing."

Whenever a towel is used, those rules must be followed. Fold the towel and carry it on the forearm. Use one half for the face and the other half for the hands. Never use it to wipe or blow the nose. Do not use it to wipe the underarms, back, abdomen, navel, thigh, calf, etc. If it gets stained with dust or oil wash it right away. When it gets dampened dry it either over a flame or in the sun. Never use this face towel in the bath room.

The washing stand in the monks hall is called a goka. It should be located in a sunny section of the western corner, clearly marked as in a convenient place for the officers of the monastery. The abbot and other senior monks have a kaga in their own quarters. If the abbot lives in the monks hall he has his own special wash stand.

When you go to the wash stand, place the center of the towel on the nape of the neck, take the ends of the towel and pull them under the arms, cross them over the neck, and tie them in front of the chest. When tied like this, the towel will cover the neck of the robe, and the sleeves will be bound up exposing the forearms, hands, and palms. The towel is used much like the cord that binds up the sleeves of the robe when one is working. Then take your bowl to the kitchen, fill it with warm water from the hearth, and carry it back to the wash stand. (If necessary, it is permissible to use a small dipper to ladle warm water into the wash basin.)

After this, a toothpick must be used to clean the teeth. In the monasteries of present-day Sung dynasty China, the use of a toothpick has been abandoned for many years, but here at Eiheiji on Mt. Kippō I have recently re-established it. Hold the toothpick in the right hand, and chant this verse from the "Pure Practice" chapter of the Avatamsaka Sūtra "Taking this toothpick in hand, I vow with sentient beings to attain the True Law in the mind and purify everything." As soon as one has cleaned the teeth by chewing on the toothpick, chant, "As I use the toothpick, I vow with sentient beings that my teeth will become fangs to chew up the passions." Then finish using the toothpick. The length of the toothpick can be four shi, eight shi, twelve shi, or sixteen shi [a shi being the length of a finger knuckle].

In the thirty-fourth chapter of the Maha-Soga-Ritsu it says, "The length of a toothpick depends on the user, but it should not exceed sixteen shi or be less than four shi." We must know that the toothpick cannot be shorter than four shi nor longer than sixteen shi. Thickness is approximately that of the little finger, but it may be thinner. It is also finger-shaped – one end is thicker than the other. Chew quietly the thick end. The Sanzen Igi Kyō states: "Do not chew more than one-third of the toothpick."

Thoroughly chew the toothpick and polish the teeth up and down. Rinse the mouth with water. Clean the teeth again, polishing them over and over, and also clean the gums and places between the teeth. Rinse the mouth once more, and the teeth will be fresh and clean. Now brush the tongue.

The Sanzen Igi Kyō says: "There are five rules for brushing the tongue: (1) Never brush it more than three times each cleaning; (2) do not make it bleed; (3) never brush it so roughly the tongue gets covered with spittle; (4) never throw the toothpick where people walk; and (5) brush the tongue in private.

"Brush the tongue" means to fill the mouth with water and lightly scrape it with the toothpick, not scrub the tongue back and forth three times. Stop immediately if there is any blood. The Sanzen Igi Kyō says: "Cleaning the mouth consists of chewing a toothpick, rinsing the mouth, and brushing the tongue." Thus, a toothpick is a special instrument carefully maintained and preserved by Buddhas and Patriarchs and all their descendants.

"Once Buddha, together with 1,250 monks, was staying at the Bamboo Grove Monastery in Rajagarha. On December 1, King Prasenajit prepared a banquet for Buddha and his followers. Earlier that morning, the king himself presented Buddha with a toothpick. After Buddha finished using that toothpick, he threw it to the ground and it sprouted. It shot up until it reached heaven, and its branches and leaves covered the sky like clouds. Flowers the size of cart-wheels blossomed and fruit the size of large water-jars appeared. The roots, stem, branches, and leaves were like the seven precious gems: the sun and moon light was lost in their brilliance. The fruit tasted like amṛta, the nectar of heaven; the scent filled the world. Those who inhaled that fragrance became ecstatic. The sweet-smelling wind rustled the leaves in sublime harmony and in natural praise to the Buddha; no one tired of that divine sound. All who witnessed this miraculous transformation awoke their Buddha-seeking mind and became infinitely purer. Thereafter Buddha proclaimed the Law and opened many minds. Countless beings sought Buddha, attained the Way and were reborn in Heaven."

The way to venerate the Buddha and Sangha is to offer them toothpicks early in the morning. Then any type of food may be presented. There are numerous examples of people presenting Buddha with a toothpick. However, the above story of King Prasenajit presenting Buddha with a toothpick is the most significant.

That same day, six non-believer teachers challenged Buddha to a debate. They were so amazed and confused by Buddha's explanations that they fled and drowned themselves in a river. The millions of followers of those six teachers asked to become Buddha's disciples. When Buddha said, "Welcome Bhikkhus!", their hair suddenly fell out and kesas miraculously appeared on their bodies. They were ordained monks, and Buddha proclaimed his Law, explaining the essence of his teaching; as a result they were liberated from defilement and attained arhathood.

Therefore, that is why whenever the Tathāgata uses a toothpick both gods and men venerate him. All the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and disciples of Buddha faithfully maintain the use of a toothpick. Anyone who does not use a toothpick has lost the Law. This is a great pity.

In the Brahmajāla-Sūtra it states: "Buddhist practitioners! During the summer and winter training periods do special ascetic practices. Zazen must be done summer and winter. For the summer training session possessions are limited to the following items: toothpick, bean-paste soap, three robes, water bottle, begging bowl, sitting-cloth, staff, incense burner, drinking cup, towel, razor, flint, tweezers, straw cushion, sūtra book, precept book, Buddha-image, and Bodhisattva-image. Whenever a Bodhisattva engages in ascetic practice, he keeps these eighteen things close to his body, even if traveling thousands of miles. The two terms of practice should run from January 15 to March 15 and August 15 to October 15. The eighteen items are like the two wings of a bird."

Do not lose any of the eighteen items; even if just one is missing, it is like lacking a wing. If a bird has only one wing, it cannot fly. Real practice cannot occur if even one of those things is missing. This holds true even for a Bodhisattva – if he lacks one, he cannot proceed on the Way of Bodhisattva. Notice that the initial item is a toothpick. It is the first thing we need. Those who are concerned with the use of a toothpick are Bodhisattvas engaged in the clarification of the Buddhist Dharma. If such a thing cannot be grasped, it will not be possible to even dream of the Buddhist Law. Therefore, to see a toothpick is to see Buddhas and Patriarchs. If anyone asks what is the significance of this, tell him, "Fortunately I saw the old master of Eiheiiji use a toothpick." The precepts of the Brahmajāla-Sūtra have been maintained by all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the past, present, and future. Therefore, the practice of using a toothpick is maintained in the present.

The Zemnen Shingi says, "The ten major and forty-eight minor precepts of the Mahayana Brahmajāla-Sūtra should be chanted and carefully maintained; thus we know what is and what is not permitted. It contains the holy words of Buddha; we should not listen to those who lack proper study."

We must know that the essence of the right transmission of the Buddhas and Patriarchs is revealed in this quotation. Any deviation from it is not the Way of the Buddha, the Law of the Buddha, or the Way of the Patriarchs.

Nonetheless, toothpicks are rarely used these days in China. I went to great Sung Dynasty China in mid-April, 1223, and visited monasteries all over the land. None of the priests there knew about the use of a toothpick, nor did any of the aristocrats and commoners. Whenever I asked priests about the use of a toothpick, they were bewildered because they had never heard of the practice before. It is a great pity that the Law of Buddha has declined so much in that country. A few people rinse their mouths and use a toothpick made from six or seven inch piece of ox horn with an inch or so of horse tail attached to the end. This is not suitable for monks – it is an impure tool, not an instrument of the Buddhist Dharma. It is not used on special occasions. Sometimes a similar tool is used to clean one's shoes or comb one's hair. Some are longer than others, but they are essentially the same. And those who use even this inferior tool are only one in ten thousand. Consequently, both laymen and priests there have extremely bad breath. If you get within two or three feet to speak to them, the smell is overwhelming. The odor is unbearable. Even respected followers of the Way and those deemed teachers of gods and men are ignorant of rinsing the mouth, cleaning the tongue, and the use of a toothpick. It is easy to imagine that the Great Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs will continue to decline in that country and eventually disappear. I will never regret making the arduous journey to that land to seek the Way, but I was saddened by the sorry state of Buddhism there. What a pity, what a pity!

Here in the wonderful empire of Japan, both lay men and priests know how to use a toothpick and thus can see and hear the divine light of Buddha. Still, the proper method of using the toothpick and brushing the tongue is not widely known but is done rather haphazardly. However, when compared to the ignorant people of the Sung Dynasty, the Japanese are at least cognizant of the manners of cultured persons. Wizards and hermits too make use of toothpicks; it is an instrument to remove dirt and a means of purification.

In the Sanzen Igi Kyō it states: "There are five rules for using a toothpick: (1) the length must be standard; (2) its manufacture must follow standard procedure; (3) no more than one-third should be chewed; (4) if there are gaps in the teeth chew there three times; and (5) leftover water should be used to rinse the eyes."

The Sanzen Igi Kyō explains how to use a toothpick, rinse the mouth, and wash the eyes. This is standard nowadays in Japan. The Patriarch Eisai transmitted the correct method of brushing the tongue. When a toothpick is used, the part that was chewed should be broken off and the sharp edge used to scrape it. Water, taken in the right hand, is then used to rinse the mouth. Repeat three times. If there is any bleeding stop immediately.

When rinsing the mouth chant this verse from Avatamsaka Sūtra: "Rinsing the mouth I vow that all sentient beings may enter the pure gate and attain liberation." Rinse the mouth several times. Clean the inside of the lips, beneath the tongue, and around the jaw. Use the fingertips of the first three fingers to do that. When oily food is eaten, use powdered honey locust for rinsing. After use, the toothpick should be thrown away in an appropriate area. When it is thrown away do danshi [snapping the thumb and index finger together to purify the area] three times. In the wash stand there should be a container for used toothpicks. If one is not provided, the toothpick should be thrown away in a suitable place. The water used for gargling and rinsing should never be spat into the wash bowl; it must be discarded elsewhere.

After cleaning the mouth, the face is washed. Cup water in both hands and wash the forehead, then the eyebrows, eyes, nostrils, the inside of the ears, head, and lastly the cheeks. Carefully rub the warm water on the face; do not allow saliva or mucus to drip into the wash bowl. Be extremely careful not to waste the warm water by splashing or spilling it – it must be carefully conserved. Remove all dust and oil from the face, and wash behind the ears and around the eyes. Then wash the head and crown. This is the proper method of washing. After the face has been washed, throw out the used water and do danshi again three times.

Dry off with a towel, using the ends first. Remove it from your shoulders and fold it across the left elbow. In the wash stand there should be a pair of towels for community use plus a drying rack. (There are always two towels, so one will always be dry.) It is permissible to use the community towel instead of one's own. When washing, be sure not to make noise with the bucket and ladle, and do not spill water or splash the surrounding area. Do not waste the warm water or get things wet. Quietly reflect on this proper procedure. We have been born in degenerate times and live on a remote island, yet the proper behaviour of the ancient Buddhas has been correctly transmitted to us; we are indeed fortunate, for free of defilement, we can practice and attain enlightenment. Full of joy, return to the monastery with a light step and soft voice.

A wash stand should be placed in every abbot's quarters and in the rooms of elder monks. Not to wash the face is a violation of the Buddha Law. There are provisions for using medicinal cream after washing to protect the skin from the cold and heat.

Chewing the toothpick and washing the face is the True Law of the ancient Buddhas. If the mind is in tune with the Way and there is a desire for awakening, surely there will be practice and enlightenment. If there is no hot water use cold. This is an ancient and well-established rule. If there is no water available, at least wipe the face with face powder. If one does not clean

the mouth and face it is inappropriate to venerate Buddha, chant sūtras, offer incense, or do Zazen.

This was delivered to an assembly of monks on October 23, 1239, at Kannondōri, Kōshōrinji.

In India and China, kings, princes, ministers, officials, priests, lay people, nobles, and peasants all washed their faces. It was their custom and established habit. Some of the wash basins were made of silver, some of tin. In shrines and temples everywhere, the face was washed before performing the morning service. Before offerings are made to the stūpas of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, the face is washed. Both priests and lay people wash their faces prior to making prostrations to celestial beings, gods, Patriarchs, ancestors, masters, the Three Treasures, departed spirits, and the powers of the ten quarters. Farmers, fisherman, and woodcutters never forget to wash their faces. However, they do not use toothpicks. In Japan, emperors, ministers, old and young people, nobles, priests, and lay people all use a toothpick and rinse the mouth, but they do not wash the face. Every country has plus and minus points. Hereafter, wash the face and use a toothpick; if both are done, our life will be on a firm basis, and we can attain the insight of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

his talk was given on two more occasions: November 20, 1243, at Kippōji and January 11, 1250, at Eiheiji.

51. MENJU

面授

“Direct, face to face transmission”

Shakyamuni was once preaching to a large assembly gathered on Vulture Peak in India. He held up an udumbara flower without speaking and winked. Then Mahākāśyapa smiled. Shakyamuni said, “I possess the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and the Serene Mind of Nirvana. I now bestow it to Mahākāśyapa.”

This is the principle of directly bestowing the Eye and Treasury of the True Law from Buddha to Buddha, Patriarch to Patriarch. It was handed down by each of the seven Buddhas and given to Mahākāśyapa then it was transmitted through the twenty-eight Indian Patriarchs up to Bodhidharma. Bodhidharma came to China and passed it to Great Master Eka, Patriarch of the true teaching. It continued to Great Master Daikan Enō of Mt. Sōkei and then was transmitted by the seventeen Patriarchs that preceded my late master, the ancient Buddha Tendō of Daibyaku in Keigenfu of the Sung Dynasty.

On May 1, in the Hokke Gannen period of the Sung Dynasty [1225], I, Dōgen, made a prostration and offered incense before the ancient Buddha Tendō in his quarters. This was my first meeting with him. At that time my master faced me and said, “This is the actualization of the entrance into the Law of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. It may be compared to the holding up of the flower at Vulture Peak, [Eka’s receiving Bodhidharma’s] marrow on Mt. Sūzan, [Kōnin giving Enō] the kesa on Mt. Ōbai, and the bestowal of the Dharma to Tōzan. It is the direct, face to face transmission of the Eye and Treasury of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Only I possess the True Law. For others it is just a dream.”

The principle of this direct, face to face transmission of the Dharma is the same as Shakyamuni’s possession and bestowal of the Law to Mahākāśyapa. It is the face of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. If we do not receive the transmission of Buddha we cannot be a Buddha. Shakyamuni Buddha looked into Mahākāśyapa’s heart and consequently bestowed the Law to him. Even the transmissions of Ānanda, Rāhula, and all the great Bodhisattvas cannot be compared to that of Mahākāśyapa. Shakyamuni and Mahākāśyapa shared the same seat and kesa; this is the most significant event in the proper transmission of the Buddhist teaching. Mahākāśyapa intimately received the transmission of Shakyamuni’s face, heart, body, and eyes. Mahākāśyapa prostrated himself before Shakyamuni and devoted himself entirely to the transmission of the Law. His face is not his own but rather the face of Shakyamuni’s direct, face to face transmission. Just as Shakyamuni looked into the heart of Mahākāśyapa, Mahākāśyapa looked into the heart of Ānanda. Ānanda prostrated himself before Mahākāśyapa’s Buddha face. This is a real direct, face to face transmission. Ānanda preserved it and then passed it to Sānavāsa. Sānavāsa prostrated himself before Ānanda – this is truly direct, face to face transmission. Like this, Buddhas and Patriarchs in each generation, together with their disciples, see each other and directly transmit the True Law face to face. It even one Patriarch, master, or disciple does not receive the transmission directly, face to face, they cannot become Buddhas or Patriarchs.

For example, water flows from many different places to form a river; similarly, the many branches of Buddhism flow toward the Law. There is a continual inheritance that keeps the lamp of transmission eternally lit, but the transmitters differ only in form and not in essence. Knowing the proper time for transmission is like the mutual pecking of the shell by the mother hen and the baby chick at precisely the right time.

Therefore, we should prostrate ourselves before Shakyamuni Buddha and stay with him day and night. We will surely reflect the brilliance of Buddha’s face and preserve his virtue all our lives.

The interdependence between the Buddha and ourselves cannot be measured. We should sit quietly and reflect on this. Through our devotion to Shakyamuni’s face, we will reflect his eye in our own. When this occurs it becomes Buddha’s vision and original face. This transmission has been handed down right up to the present time and has never been broken – this is the meaning of direct, face to face transmission. In each generation, every face has been the face of Buddha, and this original face is direct, face to face transmission. Therefore, we prostrate ourselves before this right transmission, the seven Buddhas, Mahākāśyapa, and the twenty-eight Indian Patriarchs. The original face and enlightened vision is like this. Seeing these Buddhas and Patriarchs is to see the seven Buddhas of Shakyamuni. At the proper time, Buddhas and Patriarchs have direct, face to face transmission. Direct, face to face transmission of Buddha transmits Buddha face to face. This transmission is like a tangled wisteria vine (kattō) that never ends. Open the eye, directly transmit through the eye, and receive the Law through the eye. Find the direct transmission of the face through the face. Direct transmission is the giving and receiving of the face. Open the mind, transmit and receive through the mind. Reveal the body, and transmit the body through the body. Regardless of the place or country, the transmission is always like this. From China towards the east, the inner essence of the right transmission of the Buddhas and Patriarchs is direct, face to face transmission and reception. It is bestowed when we prostrate ourselves before the true eye of the Tathāgata.

When we prostrate ourselves before the face of Shakyamuni Buddha, or the fifty-one Patriarchs, or the seven Buddhas, we should not compare them to each other. And we should not be concerned with the particulars of the transmission. Here is where we find direct, face to face transmission. If you have never seen a real master, you cannot be said to be a disciple and vice-versa. By all means, masters and disciples must look into each other’s hearts and directly transmit the Law, face to face. This is the “Mind” the Patriarchs use for the actualization of the right transmission. Therefore, the brilliant face of the Tathāgata is preserved in each generation.

Therefore, that is why we can see that throughout millions of years, direct transmission is the actualization and reception of Shakyamuni Buddha’s face. The actualization of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, Shakyamuni, Mahākāśyapa, the fifty-one Patriarchs, and the seven Buddhas is the actualization of their own shadow, light, body, mind [and six sense organs]. Even if disciples cannot comprehend their master’s “one word of teaching,” the master is still able to certify their resolve to seek the Buddhist Way if the disciples are seeking the Way of Buddha with their entire body and mind. This also is right, direct, face to face transmission.

We must venerate this direct, face to face transmission. It is the imprint of Buddha’s mind in the disciples’ heart. Although it is not the highest and most precious form of life, it is accomplished directly, face to face, mind to mind; this face differs from the normal social face of the lay world. This face is the face of the Buddha’s great enlightenment – it goes beyond inside or outside. Great enlightenment directly transmits great enlightenment face to face.

If we transmit the right eye of the Law and venerate the form of Shakyamuni Buddha, we become closer to him than he is to himself. Through that vision we can actualize countless Shakyamuni Buddhas in the past, present, and future. Therefore, if we truly venerate and seek out Shakyamuni Buddha, we must also profoundly honour the direct and right transmission [of the Buddhas and Patriarchs] which is extremely difficult to find. That is, make prostrations before the Tathāgata and he will

bestow the direct, fact to face transmission. When we look at the proper study and right transmission of the Tathagata with a clear eye, we see that it is ourselves and others. We must value and protect it.

The following are the words of the right transmission: "Prostrate yourself before the eight stūpas and you will throw off all sins and find the Way." The eight stūpas are those built where Shakyamuni Buddha actualized the Way: 1) at his birthplace [Kapilavastu]; 2) where he set in motion the Wheel of the Law [Migadāya]; 3) where he attained the Way [Buddha-gayā]; 4) where he entered nirvana [Kushinagam]; 5) at Kanyakubja; 6) Vesali [7) Jetavana; and 8) Rājagṛha]^{1-EN}.

Shakyamuni's virtue is actualized throughout the earth and sky. In addition, his virtue appears in the "stūpas" of sound, smell, taste, sensation, mind, and form. We should prostrate ourselves before these stūpas and actualize the Way. In India everyone – monks, laymen, celestial and earthly beings – prostrate themselves before the eight stūpas as a general custom. The stūpas are the same as the entire canon of the Buddhist sūtras.

Furthermore, the Buddhist Way is not only actualized in each life [in the prostrations before the eight stūpas], but also in the thirty-seven kinds of practice of the Dharma. Shakyamuni Buddha practiced enlightenment throughout the unlimited past and future, and his imprint is found all over and throughout history. That is why we are able to attain the Way. We should know that the stūpas are standing continually and constantly face many frosts and blossoms, wind and rain.

Furthermore, Shakyamuni Buddha's virtue illumines the entire universe and actualizes the merit of the Buddhist Way. It is freely given to all without any loathing or begrudging. If we truly wish to practice, even if we are full of passions and defilements, the power of his virtue will give us strength have practice and enlightenment.

Shakyamuni Buddha's virtue is like this and the present direct, face to face transmission of his Way cannot be compared to prostrations before the eight stūpas, or the thirty-seven kinds of practice of the Dharma based on Buddha's face, mind, body, Way, light, or tongue. The virtue of the eight stūpas originates with Buddha's face, etc. In order to have the practice of free, unattached activity, students of the Buddhist Dharma must contemplate the virtue of direct transmission day and night in a quiet place. Then our Buddhist study will be full of bliss.

We may say that our country is superior to all others because our Buddhist Way is unsurpassed. Other countries have few people like us. The reason: our transmission is directly from the right Patriarch of Shorinji [Bodhidharma] and the sixth Patriarch Enō. This transmission is even superior to the preaching of the Law on Vulture Peak delivered in the ten directions. This present time is the only opportunity we have to find the pure Buddhist Dharma. When else will we have such an opportunity? If we fail to cut off all passions now, when can we? If we lose this chance, when will we become Buddhas? If we do not sit like Buddha, how can we practice like Buddha? We must clarify this in detail.

When Shakyamuni Buddha gave his direct transmission to Mahākāśyapa he said, "I possess the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and the Serene Mind of Nirvana. I now bestow it to Mahākāśyapa." On Mt. Sūzan Bodhidharma said to the second Patriarch, "You possess my marrow." This was direct, face to face transmission. At the proper time, you can transcend your bones and marrow and have the direct, face to face transmission of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Further, it is the direct transmission of grant enlightenment which is the transmission of the mind-seal – this belongs to a very special world. Yet direct transmission cannot be expressed at all [in words]; even the principle of illusion cannot be found.

The Great Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs is nothing but the direct, face to face transmission from master to disciple. Through direct, face to face transmission we will become full of joy and believe and venerate our own original face.

I, Dōgen, made a prostration before my late master, the ancient Buddha Tendō, for the first time on May 1, [1225]. The direct, face to face transmission was given to me, one who has mastered a small part of the vast Buddhist Teaching. I attained a certain degree of dropping off of body and mind and brought the transmission to Japan.

This was delivered to the monks on November 20, 1242, at Kippōji, Yoshida-gun, Echizen.

This principle of direct, face to face transmission of the Buddhist Way has never been seen nor heard until now. In the Keiyū period of the reign of the Sung Dynasty Emperor Jinshū [1034-1038] there was a Zen master known as Joke in Suipukuji monastery. Although he had many disciples, none had real practice. One day he ascended the lecture platform and said:

"The late Great Teacher Ummon Kinshin is still living. You monks have seen him recently, haven't you? If you have seen him you are just like me. After you have a certain measure of enlightenment you will be able to see him. If you do not see yourself you will never see him.

"Long ago, Zen Master Hyakujō, who was Ōbaku's teacher, was scolded by his teacher Baso with such a loud voice that it almost shattered his eardrums. Ōbaku heard this story from Hyakujō and attained enlightenment. This is what we mean by saying the old masters are still living. Hyakujō then asked Ōbaku, 'Are you able to become the Dharma-heir of Baso?' Ōbaku replied, 'I've heard of Baso but have never seen him. If I become his Dharma-heir without seeing him then there will be no descendants of his Law.' At that time Baso had been dead for five years. We should know that Ōbaku's enlightenment lacks something since he had never seen Baso – only one eye is open. In my case, I have known and seen the Great Master Ummon and can be his Dharma-heir. The only difference between us is that about one hundred years have passed since his parinirvana.

"Now, all of you should understand why I teach this principle. I can see Ummon, and all of you who comprehend the Buddhist Law will certify this. Those who are simple-minded will have much doubt. If you have reached a certain stage of enlightenment you will not say anything; if you haven't attained enlightenment, is it possible to get there now or not? I hope this talk will help you find real peace."

Even if we allow that Jōko saw Ummon, I doubt that Ummon saw him. Ummon would not permit such a man to be his Dharma-heir. Jōko did not say Ummon saw him, so therefore, Ummon and Joke did not have a direct transmission. Among the seven Buddhas and all the Buddhas of the past, present, and future there is not one who did not have direct transmission, is there? Do not say Ōbaku's enlightenment is incomplete. How am someone like Jōko tell what level Ōbaku has reached or what his words mean?

Ōbaku is an ancient Buddha and he sacrificed his life for the transmission of the Law. Jōko cannot even dream of beginning to study this principle of the Law. Ōbaku received the direct transmission after practising under his master and meeting him face to face. In Jōko's case, he neither knows nor has ever seen a real master; therefore, he neither knows nor sees himself. He

1-EN The ashes of Buddha were divided into eight portions and given to eight families who then constructed stūpas in the eight sacred places of Buddhism.

lacks Buddha's observation and has not fulfilled himself. Therefore, his transmission is incomplete.

Did Jōko know that Ummon is the descendant of Ōbaku? How was Jōko able to gauge Ōbaku's and Hyakujō's level of attainment? How can he gauge Ummon's? To be able to comprehend those masters' attainment one must have enough experience of the Way. If one has enlightenment one can know of others' attainment, but if one lacks sufficient study one can neither know nor measure.

Jōko said that less than five years had passed since Baso's death. Jōko was so stupid that he thought Ōbaku could not receive Baso's transmission. If you receive the transmission it must be received throughout all periods of time. If you do not do this you will be unable to keep it for half a day or even a minute. Jōko was a foolish and stupid man who did not know the meaning of sun-faced Buddha and moon-faced Buddha.

One hundred years had passed since Ummon's death and Jōko claimed to have received Ummon's teaching. He lacked the ability to transmit that master's teaching; his claim is nothing more than a dream of a three-year-old child. In order to inherit Ummon's Law it requires ten times as much ability as Jōko possessed.

Now I will try to explain the real meaning of Ummon's transmission to people like Jōko. What Hyakujō meant to ask Ōbaku was whether or not he intended to inherit Baso's teaching. Try to think about this with the same determination as that of a lion chasing small game, or changing your perspective like the cow and turtle who traded places to see what each other's habitat was like. Then there will be complete freedom and total detachment. In the Dharma transmission such an ability is necessary. Ōbaku said, "Probably, I will lose my descendants." Since you do not understand at all, how can you know the meaning of "my" and "descendants"? You must study in detail. These words actualize the truth of direct transmission – nothing is hidden.

Unfortunately, the so-called Zen Master Bukkoku Ihaku, who lacked understanding of the transmission of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, designated Jōko as one of Ummon's Dharma-heirs. That was a mistake, but people in later days do not know about that. Do not think that Jake studied under Ummon.

Recopied on June 7, 1244, in Kippōji by Ejo.

If we think like Jōko, i.e., it is possible to transmit the Way of Shakyamuni Buddha only by studying letters or reading sūtras, we are greatly mistaken. You must receive the transmission from a right master to be able to understand the sūtras. Jōko said that it was necessary to read Ummon's sayings, even though he did not read them himself. Not only did Jōko not see Ummon, he did not even see himself. He did not possess the eye of Ummon. He had much to clarify. What he really needed was to visit many temples, find the right master, and receive the transmission. He should never say that he received the transmission of Ummon. If he talks like that he is like a non-believer. Even if Hyakujō said the same things as Jōko, he still would be mistaken.

52. BUSSO

佛祖

“Buddhas and Patriarchs”

Shurei^{1-EN}

In order to actualize the Buddhas and Patriarchs it is necessary to chant their names and make prostrations before them. All the Buddhas and Patriarchs – past, present, future, from time immemorial – chant and make prostrations before the others. Just as the Buddhas and Patriarchs possess the true form of the Buddhist Dharma, we can gain true insight by making prostrations. Our way becomes the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs by practising and actualizing their virtue. The names of the Buddhas and Patriarchs are:

The seven Buddhas:

1. Vipasyin Buddha, “Universal Proclaiming of the Law.”
2. Śikhin Buddha, “Fire.”
3. Viśvabhū Buddha, “Universal Compassion.”
4. Krakucchanda Buddha, “Golden Hermit.”
5. Kanakamuni Buddha, “Golden Sage.”
6. Kāśyapa Buddha, “All Absorbing Light.”
7. Shakyamuni Buddha, “Righteousness and Contemplation.”

The Indian Patriarchs:

1. Mahākāśyapa
2. Ānanda
3. Śānavāsa
4. Upagupta
5. Dhītika
6. Bibhakan
7. Vasumitra
8. Buddhananti
9. Buddhamitra
10. Pārśva
11. Sunaśata or Punayaśa
12. Aśvaghosa
13. Kapimala
14. Nāgārjuna
15. Kānadeva
16. Rāhulabhadra
17. Samghanandī
18. Gayāśata (Samghayasas)
19. Kūmāralabda
20. Sāyanta
21. Vasubandhu
22. Manoda
23. Haklenayaśas
24. Simha
25. Basiasiasita
26. Punyamitra
27. Prajñātāra
28. Bodhidharma (the first Chinese Patriarch)

The Chinese patriarchs:

2. (Taiso) Eka
3. (Kanchi) Sōsan
4. (Dai'e) Dōshin

1-EN The proper way to reverence the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

5. (Ōbai) Kōnin (or Gunin)
6. (Daikan) Enō
7. (Seigen) Gyoshi
8. (Sekitō) Kisen
9. (Yakusan) Igen
10. (Ungan) Donjo
11. (Tōzan) Ryokai
12. (Ungo) Dōyō
13. (Dōan) Dohi
14. (Dōan) Kanshi
15. (Ryōzan) Enkan
16. (Taiyō) Keigen
17. (Toshi) Gisei
18. (Fuyo) Dōkai
19. (Tanka) Shijun
20. (Shinketsu) Seiryō
21. (Tendō) Sōkaku
22. (Secchō) Chikan
23. (Tendō) Nyojō.

I, Dogen, made my prostrations to these Buddhas and Patriarchs when I was training under my late master Tendō Nyojō, truly an ancient Buddha, at the summer training period during the Hokyo Gannen Kinototori period of the Great Sung Dynasty [1225]. This is the right transmission from Buddha to Buddha.

Date: January 3, 1241. Written down and delivered to the monks at Kannodōrin, Kōshōhōrinji, Uji-gun, Yamashiro no kuni, Japan. Recopied by Ejō at the chief disciple's quarters at Kippōji, Eichizen no kuni on May 14, 1244.

53. BAIGE

梅華

“Plum blossoms”

My late master Tendo, an ancient Buddha, was the thirtieth Patriarch of Keitokuji of Mt. Daibiyaku. One day he told the monks: “This is my first address of the winter season. Yet even now an old plum tree with many tangled branches is beginning to bloom – one, two, three, four, five, countless blossoms appear. These blossoms are not proud of their purity or fragrance. The petals fall and it feels like spring as the wind blows through the flowers, trees and grasses. You monks are no doubt surprised to hear this. Suddenly, however, a great change occurs. A violent storm arises with driving rain and pounds the earth; it then turns into a blizzard and snow covers the earth. The old plum tree endures various conditions, even freezing cold that seems to cut off its very life.”

The old plum tree mentioned here withstands all conditions – sometimes it blooms, sometimes it bears fruit, sometimes it faces spring, sometimes winter; sometimes it faces strong winds, sometimes storms; sometimes it surprises monks; sometimes it is the enlightened vision of the ancient Buddhas; sometimes it appears with grasses and trees; sometimes it is pure fragrance. It faces all these changes, all those that occur imperceptibly. Heaven and earth, the bright sun and pure moon – all aspects of the old plum tree – cannot be separated from one another.

When the old plum tree blooms the entire world blooms. When the world blooms spring comes. Then the five leaves bloom as one flower—three, four, five, one hundred, one thousand, countless flowers bloom. All these flowers grow on one, two, countless branches of an old plum tree. An udumbara flower and a blue lotus flower also bloom on the same branch. All these blooming flowers constitute the beneficence of an old plum tree. Such an old plum tree covers the worlds of human beings and celestial beings. These worlds appear within the old plum tree. Hundreds of thousands of flowers are the flowers of human beings and celestial beings. Millions of flowers are the flowers of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. When this kind of plum tree blooms, all the Buddhas emerge in this world and Bodhidharma comes into existence.

Once, my late master said to the monks: “When Shakyamuni lost his ordinary sight and attained enlightened vision, one branch of a plum tree bloomed in the snow. But now small branches have appeared and the beautiful blossoms laugh at the spring wind blowing wildly.”

“Now” is the time for the wheel of the Dharma of the ancient Buddhas to turn throughout the entire world and awaken all human beings and celestial beings – even clouds, rain, wind, water, all the grasses and trees, and insects will be influenced by the turning of the wheel of the Law. The turning of the wheel will enliven all the countries on earth and in heaven. Hearing this teaching for the first time causes such wonderful things. True attainment is to gain the understanding we lack. If there is no joy or virtue in our attainment it is not the wheel of the Dharma which we should study.

Presently in the Sung Dynasty there are one hundred and eighty provinces with a countless number of mountain and city temples. There are many unsuis and novices who know nothing of my late master, an ancient Buddha, and still more have never met him, much less learned his words directly or had a meeting of minds with him. Very few were accepted as disciples, permitted to make a prostration before him and allowed to receive his skin, flesh, bones and marrow or see his original face and clear vision.

My late master, an ancient Buddha, did not easily accept disciples in his monastery. If any of the monks were lax or lacked a Buddha-seeking mind he expelled them from the monastery. It is not necessary to help monks who are not real seekers, he said; they only disturb others and have no place here. I have seen many such people and often wondered what prevented them from staying in the monastery. It was very fortunate for me, a foreigner, to be not only accepted as his disciple but also allowed to visit him freely and observe his daily life. Since I am stupid and lack proper knowledge it was very good fortune to find such a master.

The influence of my late master was widespread throughout the Sung Dynasty and many gained the Way. Since his death the Sung Dynasty is darker than midnight; there is no ancient Buddha, past or present, who can be compared to him. Therefore, students of this latter age should know that such Dharma teaching cannot be heard or studied by others anywhere throughout the world: of men or gods.

A plum tree blooming in the snow is the manifestation of the udumbara flower [which Shakyamuni held up before Mahākāśyapa]. We have the opportunity to see the Eye and Treasury of the True Law of the Tathāgata in our everyday life. Yet most of the time we lose the chance to smile and show our understanding. However, my late master has transmitted the principle of a plum tree blooming in the snow and that clearly reveals the enlightenment of Buddha. The wisdom of enlightenment is the supreme wisdom, and if we study the plum blossoms more deeply we will undoubtedly realize this. A plum blossom is the observation that “Above the heavens and throughout the earth I am the only honoured one” – each thing is the most honoured thing in the world.

Therefore, all flowers – in heaven, on earth, white lotuses, great white lotuses, red lotuses, great red lotuses – in the ten quarters of the universe are interrelated with a plum blooming in the snow; all flowers receive the beneficence of the plum blossom. All the million kinds of flowers are like subspecies of the plum blossom and can be called “little plum blossoms.” Furthermore, flowers of sky, flowers of the earth, flowers of samādhi are large and small versions of a plum blossom. In one blossom countless countries emerge. In each of those countries different flowers bloom because of the beneficence of the plum blossoms. Only plum blossoms can give beneficence – not rain or dew drops. The continuous transmission of the Buddhist Way is based on this plum blossom. Do not only study the snow [in which Eka stood beseeching Bodhidharma] to teach him at Shōrinji on Mt. Sūzan. The snow itself is the enlightened eye of the Tathāgata – it illumines the sky over your head and the ground under your feet. Do not just learn about the Himalayas snow where Shakyamuni practiced – the snow itself is the Eye and Treasury of the True Law of Shakyamuni. The five eyes of enlightenment enable us to clarify all our studies, and the one thousand eyes of enlightenment allow us to complete them. The Divine Light of the body and mind of the venerable Shakyamuni must help us clarify all aspects of the phenomenal world (shobō jitssō). Human beings and celestial beings have different viewpoints like that of ordinary people and saints. However, when the earth is covered with snow all differences disappear.

Snow must cover the earth and the earth must be full of snow. No snow, no earth. When snow covers the earth it is the enlightened eye of venerable Shakyamuni.

We should know that flowers and the earth transcend life and death. Since they transcend life and death the enlightened eye

transcends life and death. This is called the supreme Buddhist enlightenment. The right time to comprehend this is when one branch of a plum tree blooms in the snow. Flowers and the earth are the life beyond life. "Covered with snow" means all over, back and front. The entire world is our mind, the mind of a flower. Consequently, the entire world is a plum blossom, i.e., the eye of Shakyamuni Buddha.

The eternal present is mountains, rivers, and earth – everywhere, at all times, these are the manifestation of [the flower of Bodhidharma]: "Originally I came here to save all sentient beings suffering in illusion; one flower blooms and five leaves begin to grow. This is true, natural time." The Buddhist Law came from the west to the east long ago but now is the time for the plum blossom to bloom.

When the tiny branches appear it is the time for the actualization [of enlightenment]. Among both large and small branches there are both old and new ones. We should study these branches; they cover everywhere in the eternal present. Among three, four, five or six flowers there are countless flowers. Each flower possesses its own deep and extensive virtue in its height and breadth. One plum blossom opens both the inside and the outside of the flower. While one plum blossom is on a single branch no other branches or seeds are necessary. Where the branch reveals itself it is the eternal present; this single branch is the one unbroken Buddhist Law transmitted from one to another.

Therefore, [Shakyamuni said,] "I possess the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and now bestow it to Mahākāśyapa" and [Bodhidharma said to Eka,] "You possess my marrow." If such a state is attained the entire world seems full of treasures. "One flower blooms and five leaves begin to grow." These five leaves are a plum blossom. Similarly, the seven Buddhas, the twenty-eight Patriarchs, the six Chinese Patriarchs and the following nineteen Patriarchs in China are the five leaves opening on a single branch. If you master one branch, you can master the live leaves and then you can learn the right transmission of the plum blossoms in the snow. Also we can study the world of the branch, achieve liberation, and find that the moon and clouds are the same, mountains and valleys are different.

Furthermore, a foolish person once said, "The five leaves are the five Chinese Patriarchs who came after Bodhidharma's flower bloomed." The "five leaves" refer to a point in time and are related to past and future. Such an understanding is not worth our time. That kind of understanding is not based on real effort; it is not studying the Buddhas and Patriarchs with the entire body. This is pitiful. Why should "one flower and five leaves" be limited to the live Patriarchs? Is it not necessary to count those who came after the sixth Patriarch? That is not even a good fairy tale. Do not cling to such an understanding.

My late master once said at the first address of the new year, "Congratulations on this new year. All things are made anew; prostrate yourselves and then the plum tree blooms and spring comes." If we quietly reflect upon this we can see that even though all Zen masters of the past and present may have transcended every attachment to this world, if they are not awakened to the inner meaning of "plum tree blooms and spring comes," they cannot be said to have clarified the Way. My late master alone is a true ancient Buddha among ancient Buddhas. The essence of his new year's greeting is that when the plum tree blooms the entire world is covered with spring. The virtue of just one or two plum blossoms brings spring everywhere. This is also the point of "all things are made anew." "All things" does not only refer to past, present, or future but also to time beyond time. Each and every moment, countless and limitless, is renewed. This "newness" goes beyond ordinary newness. That is why all the monks must examine the bottom of their hearts—this will reveal all things as they truly are.

My late master, the ancient Buddha Tendō, said to an assembly of monks: "If we are awakened to the one word of enlightenment, that state never changes. Buds sprout from the willow, and an old branch is full of plum blossoms."

It is said that in hundreds of kalpas of practising the final goal is to be completely awakened, from beginning to end, to one word of Buddha. The goal is the same for a short time of practice. In spring the willow has new buds; they are "new" but they still are able to open the eye of enlightenment. That eye of enlightenment is nothing but ourselves. We should know that there is an eye of enlightenment in the new buds; their "newness" is the newness of all things. "An old branch is full of plum blossoms"; the plum blossoms penetrate the branches and the branches hold the plum blossoms just as they are, nothing else. The blossoms and branch grow and reach completion together. Blossoms and branches are one entity and form the entire tree. Shakyamuni's "I possess the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and bestow it to Mahākāśyapa" is the holding up of a flower; his smile is the full smile of the blossom.

My late master, an ancient Buddha, said to an assembly, "A willow is adorned with a beautiful belt and a plum tree wears an exquisite arm bracelet." Here "bracelet" is not made from jewels or jade but is the plum blossoms. The opening of the plum blossoms is the transmission of the Way – the marrow is passed from one to another.

Once, King Hashinoku of India invited the holy man Binzuru to partake of a meal with him. At that time the king asked him, "I have heard, O Honourable One, that you have seen Buddha. Is it true?" Binzuru raised his eyebrows and opened his eyes wide. My late master praised Binzuru with this gatha:

"Raising his eyebrows he answered the question;

That he once met and saw Buddha was not a lie.

His virtue is respected everywhere,

Spring is in the tip of a plum tree branch covered with freezing snow."

This story came about because of King Hashinoku's question. To meet Buddha is to act like Buddha; to act like Buddha is to stroke the eyebrows. Even an arhat, if he is not a real saint, cannot be said to have met Buddha. If he has not met Buddha he cannot act like Buddha. If he cannot act like Buddha he cannot show his understanding by stroking his eyebrows. We should know that a venerable man is one who receives the direct face-to-face transmission of Shakyamuni, has attained the four stages of practice and expects to become a future Buddha; he has met the Buddha, has he not? Meeting the Buddha does not just mean to see Buddha but also to arrive at his level. That is why the king realized that Binzuru was a good teacher. We must study the expression "to meet the Buddha" carefully. Spring does not only exist in human beings or Buddhalands, but also in the tip of a plum tree. How can we be sure of this? Because Binzuru showed us the condition of a frozen plum tree covered with snow by stroking his eyebrows.

My late master, an ancient Buddha, said, "Our original face possesses no life or death; spring is in the plum blossoms, as beautiful as a painted landscape." When we paint a spring landscape we must not only paint willows, or red and green plums and peaches; we must paint spring itself. If you only point those objects it is not a real painting. It has to be nothing but spring itself. And there has been no one in either India or China who can paint spring like my late master. His skill was very precise. The "spring" we have been referring to is this "spring" of the painted landscape. Spring must occur effortlessly in the

painting. Plum blossoms are necessary for this kind of painting. Spring must be put in the tree. Nyojō's skillful means are truly wonderful.

My late master, an ancient Buddha, clarified the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and transmitted it to the Buddhas and Patriarchs and all people in every direction throughout the past, present, and future. That is why he mastered completely enlightened vision and was totally awakened to the essence of the plum blossoms.

This was delivered to the monks on November 6, 1243 at Kippōji with three feet of snow covering the grounds.

If we are deluded and think that the plum blossom is not the enlightened eye of Shakyamuni we should ask ourselves if there is any other vision beside this. You should know that if you seek enlightenment outside of the plum blossoms you will not get it, even if it is right in your hands. Even if it is in front of your face you will not see it. Today is not our day, but the day of the Buddhist Way. Right now we must open the enlightened eye of the plum blossoms and stop chasing after other things. My late master, an ancient Buddha, said, "Clearly illumined, the plum blossoms no longer cast a shadow. Sometimes it rains, sometimes it is cloudy; but the plum blossom stands alone in the past and present. It lacks nothing!"

Rain and clouds are the forms and functions of the plum blossoms. They represent the plum blossoms' myriad changing forms. The plum blossoms form past and present.

Long ago, Zen Master Hoen said, "The icy north wind blows, and the bamboo grove in the valley trembles. The ground is completely frozen but there is no resentment. Only the wild plums in the mountains are full of life; they speak silently of the cold, lonely days of winter." We are familiar with the plum blossoms and therefore we can feel the cold, lonely days of December. The power of the plum blossoms cause the icy north wind to blow, the snow to fall, the months to pass, and the bamboo grove to exist in the valley.

The Elder Fu of Taigen said in praise of the Way of enlightenment, "Long ago I was not enlightened, and the sound of a flute made me very lonely. But now I have no time for such useless dreams even in my sleep. I let myself flutter in the wind with the plum blossoms." The Elder Fu was originally an itinerant preacher but finally attained great enlightenment under a kitchen monk who lived on Mt. Kassan. This is the spring wind blowing through the plum blossoms.

54. SENJŌ

洗淨

“Rules for the lavatory”

The Buddhas and Patriarchs maintain their practice and enlightenment through pure, undiluted action. Once the sixth Patriarch [Enō] asked Dai'e Ejō of Kannon-in on Mt. Nangaku, “Why do we seek practice and enlightenment?” Dai'e answered, “Practice and enlightenment are not ‘not here’ but they cannot be gained if there is any impurity.” The sixth Patriarch then said, “No impurity’ is what all the Buddhas preserve. You are like that. I am like that; indeed all the Patriarchs in India said the same thing.”

In the Daibikku Sanzen Igi Sūtra^{1-EN} it says: “In order to purify the body, eliminate all internal impurities and trim the nails.” Even though our body and mind may be impure there is a method that can purify not only our own body but the entire world. Further, although the Buddhas and Patriarchs may reside in a country free of dust and dirt they work to maintain and increase their purity – even after attainment of the Way they neither relax nor abandon their practice. Their essence cannot be measured; their essence is their bearing and manner, and this manner is their attainment of the Way.

In the Jogyobon chapter of the Avatamsaka Sūtra it is written: “Entering the lavatory, vow to remove all dirt and cast off lust, anger, and stupidity. Purify yourself with water, vow to follow the supreme Way, and practice renunciation of the world. After the dirt is washed away, pray for all sentient beings, vow to maintain true equanimity and then no impurities or dirt will remain.”

Originally, neither water nor our body is pure or impure. All things are like this. Also, neither water nor our body is originally animate or inanimate. All things, even the teaching of the World-honoured One, are like this. Therefore, water cannot purify our bodies. Maintaining the Buddhist Dharma and acting in a refined, true Buddhist manner purifies body and mind. Then the body and mind of the Buddhas and Patriarchs is transmitted as our own body and mind and we are able to see and hear the sayings of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Such purification actualizes countless virtue. The proper time to enable true practice of body and mind is when the eternal aspects of all real activity are manifest- then the essence of the practice of body and mind emerges.

We must trim the nails on the fingers of both hands and also trim our toenails. It says in the sūtras that if the length of the nails is more than one bu [3 millimetre] it is a transgression. Therefore, do not let your nails grow like non-believers. Be careful about their proper length.

Among the monks in Great Sung Dynasty China there are some who lack the proper spirit for study and let their nails grow long. Some let them grow one or two sun [one sun=3 cm] or even as long as three or four sun. This is against the precepts, and is not the body and mind of the Buddhist Dharma. Those priests do not understand Buddhism. A virtuous priest with a right-minded attitude is not like that. Some priests also let their hair grow even though that too is prohibited. Do not be misled into thinking that such attitudes represent the true Dharma just because those priests come from a great and powerful country.

My late master, an ancient Buddha, admonished those monks who let their hair or nails grow: “Those who fail to comprehend the significance of shaving the head are neither laymen nor monks – they are nothing but beasts. Among all the Buddhas and Patriarchs of the past there is not one who did not shave his head. If you fail to understand this you are simply an animal.” After my master gave this reprimand many of the monks shaved their heads. In both his formal lectures and informal talks he sharply reprimanded errant monks. He told them that since they understood nothing they let their hair and nails grow. It was pitiful and although they had the body of a human being they had completely separated themselves from the Way. He said that in the past two or three hundred years the Way of the Patriarchs has been gradually fading away and the number of careless people increasing. Sometimes such people become heads of temples and receive special titles from the emperor, all the while pretending to be spiritual leaders. This is a scandal in both heaven and earth. In all of the mountain temples in the Great Sung Dynasty there is hardly anyone who possesses a Buddha-seeking mind; consequently, those who have attained the Way almost never appear. The monks only become more and more degenerate.

My master often spoke of this in informal talks yet the elders in various places ignored his reproaches. We must realize that monks with long hair are strongly reprimanded by all the Buddhas and Patriarchs, and that only non-believers have long nails. Descendants of the Buddhas and Patriarchs never do this—they remain pure in body and mind by trimming their nails and shaving their heads.

Do not be too lazy to wash your hands after using the lavatory. There is a story about Śāriputra converting a non-believer by observing this precept. At the time, neither Śāriputra nor the non-believer intended such a thing to occur. It came about through the power and dignity of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, which subjugates all malicious acts.

In the case when we are practising outdoors or in the woods it is necessary to build a privy. Wash yourself with water and sand from a river or stream. After you remove your robe arrange seven balls of sand, the size of large soy beans, into two rows. Place the balls on top of stones or in some other convenient place. Put some stones aside to be used later for brushing. Then you may use it for a lavatory. After you finish use a spatula or paper. Go to the river and wash your hands. Take three of the mud balls; put the first one in the palm of your hand, mix it with a little water and wash oil’ the genitals. Take the second ball, mix it with water and wash off the buttocks. Take the last ball and cleanse your hands.

After monks began to practice in temples it became necessary to construct a lavatory. It is called a tosu. In ancient times it was called a shin (nigoru) or shi (kawayu). It is absolutely necessary to have a lavatory in the monastery. The proper method to follow in using the ram is as follows:

Take a shukin [a kind of towel], fold it in two, and put it over the left shoulder. When you arrive at the tosu, place the shukin on the jōkan, the bamboo pole next to the lavatory. If you are wearing either a kujōe or shichijōe [types of undergarment] place it next to the shukin on the pole, making sure it will not slip off. Never throw it over the pole in a careless way. Remember where your name is written on the pole. It should be written on a piece of paper the shape of a half-moon. Do not forget where you put your robe and do not get it mixed with others’ robes, especially when there are many other monks.

If there are many monks, take your place in line, put your left list inside your right hand, and give a slight bow to the others. In the ram, also bow to one another, even if you are not wearing a robe. If you are not using your hands keep them against

1-EN A work dealing with various monastic rules and giving explanations of all aspects of a monk's life.

your chest; if you must use one hand, keep the other in a one-handed gassho, bending the fingers slightly inward as if you are going to cup water. All monks should follow this procedure.

The robe should be placed next to the shukin on the pole in the following manner: Remove the outer robe, put the arms together, fold them over the back, grasp the collar with your left hand, lift the robe up with your right, fold it down the middle and then in half so that the collar faces the pole and the back faces you. Then hang it over the pole. Wrap the shukin around the robe and tie it, being careful not to drop the robe. Then make a gassho.

After that take the bansu [string-like belt] and put it over your shoulders. Next go to the join, the place for washing hands. Put water in the bucket, hold it in your right hand, and proceed to the ram. Do not fill the bucket completely, only nine-tenths of the way. In front of the ram change your slippers; put on the special straw slippers. This is called kanzai changing slippers.

In the Zenen Shingi it says: "Do not wait to go to the tosu; make sure you have enough time to eliminate your internal impurities. Do not hurry. Put your kesa either on the self in the monks' quarters or on the bamboo pole outside the ram." (Zenen Shingi, Sanzen Iigi Kyō Bunjinyū)

Enter the tosu from the left hand side of the corridor, sprinkle water on the lavatory bowl, and put the bucket in the proper place. Purify the lavatory by snapping the thumb and index finger of the right hand together three times; make a fist with your left hand and put it on your waist.

Lift up the skirt of the kimono, pull up the sleeves close to your body, squat down and eliminate your impurities. Be careful not to get the front, back, or sides dirty. Keep silent. Do not talk with the person next door, do not sing to yourself or recite poems, do not drool or let your nose run, do not scatter anything, do not grunt and do not draw anything on the wall. Do not make any marks on the floor with the spatula. After you finish your business use either a spatula or paper. Be sure never to use old paper or paper with characters written on it. Be sure to distinguish between a used and an unused spatula. The spatula should be eight mu in length, triangularly shaped, and the thickness approximately equal to one thumb. It may be either lacquered or not lacquered. Put the used spatula in the spatula box and place a fresh one on the spatula stand in front of the lavatory bowl.

After using either paper or spatula purify yourself like this: Hold the water bucket in your right hand, cup water in your left, and wash off the genitals and buttocks three times. Follow this prescribed manner. Do not attempt to pour water into your hands and do not waste water by spilling it. After washing put the water bucket down. If you have used a spatula clean it off. Then clean the lavatory bowl. Take down your kimono and sleeves with your right hand. Again take the bucket with your right hand, change your slippers, and return to the hand washing stand. Put the bucket back in place. Wash your hands by putting ashes in your right hand and rubbing them on the top of the stones; then put some water on your fingers and wash your hands as if you are cleaning a rusty sword. Do this three times. Next mix sand and water together and clean your hands three times. Now take some cleaning powder and thoroughly wash off your hands and forearms in a small bucket, with total concentration. Three times with ashes, three times with sand, and once with cleaning powder – all together seven times, an appropriate number. Finally, put some water in a big bucket and wash one more time without using ashes, sand or any kind of powder. Change the water in both buckets and rinse both hands.

The Avatamsaka Sūtra says: "When you wash your hands in a basin of water pray for all sentient beings. With pure hands prostrate yourself before the Buddhist Law." Hold the ladle in your right hand and do not make any sounds while using the ladle or basin. Do not splash water or washing powder and do not make the surrounding area wet. Never leave any of the utensils in a random manner. Wipe your hands with the shukin. After you finish wiping your hands in front of the pole remove the strings that bind your robe and place them on the pole. Make a gassho, untie the shukin and put on your robe.

Take some bulb-shaped incense pellets, about one thumb thickness in width and four times that in length, and fan the intense smoke over your body. Then tie two incense pellets to a thin string about one foot in length and hang it over the pole. Place the incense between your palms and rub, thus putting the fragrance on your hands.

Make certain you do not mix your string with the others or leave it in a disorderly manner. To take such care is to adorn and purify the Buddha land. Do it wholeheartedly; do not be sloppy or lazy. Do not hurry. When you go to the tosu keep in mind the words of [Zen, Master Jōshū] "The Buddhist Law is not preaching to others; [everyday actions themselves constitute the Buddhist Law]."

Do not stare at the faces of the monks going to the tosu. In the corridor there is a place to rinse your hands. Since hot water sometimes causes intestinal problems it is better to use warm. There should be a kettle beside the tosu with which to warm water.

The Zenen Shingi says: "The monk in charge of the tosu directs the boiling of water and the preparation of a night lamp and he makes sure the monks have the proper attitude." Both hot and cold water is permitted. If the corridor becomes dirty seal off the entrance and place a sign giving notice. Also if the water bowl is accidentally knocked over, close the entrance. If there is a notice on the sign board do not enter the tosu. If someone announces his presence in the corridor by snapping his fingers you should leave in a short time.

The Shingi says: "If you do not purify yourself you cannot take your place in the zendō. You cannot make any prostrations to the three treasures not receive the bows of others."

In the Sanzen Iigigyō it says: "If you do not purify yourself after using the tosu you commit a transgression. Your prostrations are tainted even though the cushion on which you sit is pure. Your prostrations will never help you attain bliss and virtue." Therefore in the dojo you must strictly follow the above procedures. How can it be that we are unable to make prostrations to the three treasures and receive the bows of others?

The place where the Buddhas and Patriarchs practice the Way possesses such a manner [as outlined above]. Therefore, all monks must keep the same bearing; it must be done naturally without any prodding. Such is the everyday bearing of all the Buddhas and Patriarchs, and not only in this world; it is the activity of all the Buddhas in the ten quarters of the universe, both in the world of misery and in the Pure Land.

People who have insufficient understanding think that Buddhas have no special manner or method when they use the tosu. They also think that the method of Buddhas in this world differs from that of those in the Pure Land. Those who have learned the Buddhist Way do not think like that. Purity and impurity, hot and cold belong to the discrimination of ordinary people. We should know this. All the Buddhas use the proper method of using the tosu.

The fourteenth Vinaya precept says: "Once Rāhula was caught hiding in Shakyamuni's lavatory. [All the monks scolded him] but Buddha, even though he was aware of his errant behavior, potted Rāhula with his right hand and recited this verse:

"You did not renounce the world because of poverty,

Nor because of losing your position or riches.

You renounced it to seek the Buddhist Way –

Now you must endure all hardships and suffering."

Therefore, we can see that even in the tosu Buddhas practice the Way. Their manner in the tosu is that of purification (senjō). It has been transmitted from Patriarch to Patriarch. The Buddhas' manner is to joyfully follow all the precepts. By following the precepts we can find the true Buddhist Way which is difficult to locate. Furthermore, Shakyamuni instructed Rāhula in the ram and now all of us are grateful for that teaching. The tosu is also a place to turn the wheel of the Law and practice the proper bearing of the Way; this is the right transmission of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

In the Makasogiritsu,^{2-EN} chapter thirty-four, it says: "The tosu should not be placed in the east or north. It should be constructed in the south or west. The same holds for the urinal." We must follow this injunction. This is the way temples were constructed in India during Shakyamuni's time. This manner of construction was not only used in Shakyamuni's time but also by the seven other Buddhas of the past.

Every dojo and monastery where Buddhas practice is like this. Shakyamuni was not the first to begin this practice; it has been done by all the Buddhas. Do not construct any temples before you understand this; otherwise you will commit many mistakes and the Buddhist Way will not be attained, nor will the Buddhas' supreme enlightenment emerge. In order to construct a real dojo you must follow the established procedure which corresponds to the right transmission of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Then the virtue of the Buddhas and Patriarchs gathers and increases. If you are not the Dharma-heir of the Buddhas and Patriarchs you will not know the body and mind of the Dharma. If you do not know the body and mind of the Dharma you cannot clarify the Buddhist Law of karma.

Now the Buddhist Law of the Great Teacher Shakyamuni Buddha which has been transmitted throughout the entire universe is actualized as his body and mind. The actualization of the body and mind of Buddha is the proper time for us to purify ourselves.

This was delivered to the monks on October 23, 1242, at Kānnon-dōri-Kōshōhōrinji, Yamashiro no Kuni, Uji-gun.

2-EN A Chinese version of a Mahāsamghika vinaya text.

55. JIPPŌ

十方

“The entire universe”

One fist is the entire universe; our pure mind contains and illumines the ten quarters of the world—it completely illuminates its bones and marrow.^{1-EN} Shakyamuni Buddha once said to a large assembly, “In the Buddha-land of the entire universe there is only one vehicle.” “The entire universe” is the Buddha-land. If we do not consider it as such there will be no universe. Since the entire universe is the Buddha-land, the Buddha is lord and master. This present world of phenomena corresponds exactly with Shakyamuni’s Buddha-land. They are six of one, half dozen of another. The entire universe (the ten directions) can be taken as just one direction or one Buddha. Therefore each direction and each Buddha contains all the others. The entire universe has many dimensions—for example, one direction, that direction, this direction or the present direction; it can be taken as the direction of the Buddha eye, a fist, a round pillar or a stone lantern. The Buddhas within the Buddha-land of the entire universe are free from the concepts of large and small, pure and impure.

That is why all the Buddhas of the entire universe praise each other. Occasionally they criticize each other but even that is the turning of the wheel of the Law and is very different from the criticism of ordinary people. Those Buddhas are related as masters and disciples and question each other in order to cultivate their practice. We must study in the same way in order to inherit the teaching of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Unlike non-believers or demons Buddhas never insult or slander others. If we take a look at the sūtras transmitted to China that relate the life of Shakyamuni we find that he never said anything about other Buddhas being inferior or superior or that they are not true Buddhas. Throughout the entire teaching of Shakyamuni we cannot find any words of criticism or fault-finding. In addition, we find no other Buddhas criticizing him.

Shakyamuni Buddha said, “I know real form; this can be said of all the Buddhas of the universe.” You should know that this “form” is like a circle. It means that a long bamboo pole is long and a short one is short – just that and nothing more. If all the Buddhas of the entire universe know this “form” then Shakyamuni must also know it. “I know form” is shared with all the Buddhas of the entire universe – it is my form, the form of knowledge, “real form,” the form of all things, the form of the entire universe, the form of the phenomenal world, and the form of Shakyamuni.

This is the essence of the Buddhist sūtras. The Buddhas and the Buddha-land are not two different things. They are not animate or inanimate, illusion or enlightenment, good, evil or neutral, pure or impure, creation or maintenance, destruction or emptying, permanent or impermanent, existent or non-existent, self or others. It is beyond the four types of observation [same, different, existent, non-existent] or any negation. The Buddha-land is the entire universe; the entire universe is the entire universe, nothing else.

Zen Master Keishin Chosa said, “The entire universe is in the eye of a samana.”^{2-EN} “Eye” is the eye of Gautama – the Eye and Treasury of the True Law. Although that Law was transmitted to Ānanda it still remains the eye of Gautama. All the phenomenon of the entire universe are contained in that eye. It is progressive and possesses numerous eyes [of observation].

“The entire universe” is used as an everyday expression by monks. “Everyday” means used daily. It also has the connotation in Japanese of customary or ordinary. Yet even such everyday expressions contain the entire universe; yes, even one word contains the entire universe. We must clarify this. The entire universe is limitless – it is the entire world of the ten directions.

That is why “the entire universe” is used in our everyday life. For example, a king asks his servant to bring a horse, or some salt, or water in a container and the servant brings exactly what the king requested. Who can tell what type of man transcends the limited consciousness of ordinary people and transforms his body and mind? Ordinary speech is transformed into the words of Buddha. The ocean speaks and mountains have tongues – that is the everyday speech of Buddha. It is not necessary to use just the mouth and tongue to utter those words. Even if the mouth is covered and the ears shut the words continue to be spoken and heard endlessly. If you can speak and hear such words you will be one who truly comprehends the entire universe.

“The entire universe is the body of a samana.” When Shakyamuni was born he pointed one finger towards heaven and one towards the earth and said, “Above the heavens and throughout the earth I am the only honoured one.” This is the entire universe existing as the body of a samana. His head, eyes, nose, skin, flesh, bones and marrow form the liberated body of a samana within the entire universe. The entire universe cannot move from place to place – it is just “this,” suchness.

“The entire universe is my Divine Light.” My “Divine Light” is the self that exists before our parents were born. This self can be placed in the palm of your hand – it is the entire universe. This self is actualized in our present existence. This is where we must open the Buddha Hall and discover the Buddha within ourselves. At that moment, since our image is so brilliant and dazzling we are liberated from our limited self and the entire universe is filled with our Divine Light; the wall that encloses us is broken down and for the first time we experience our true self. Furthermore, it is not so difficult to bring out your real self, but it is difficult to transcend attachment to it. After seeing Buddha and cultivating Buddhist wisdom we must go beyond it; then the entire universe will become our own Divine Light. Our daily activities of eating rice and wearing a kesa are the activities of our Divine Light. If someone doubts our Divine Light he should receive thirty blows, even though it is a great pity.

“The entire universe is within our Divine Light.” Our eyes are the origin of our Divine Light. Clear vision is to see Divine Light. When our vision is truly clear even Divine Light falls away and we see the entire universe. However, it is necessary to practice Zazen or stay in a Zen monastery to have knowledge of this.

“In the entire universe everything has self.” The entire universe is myself as-it-is, myself as myself, yourself as myself, myself as yourself. Myself-is-your-self, yourself-is-myself and the entire universe form one unity. That is life in the Buddhist Way – and it is in the palm of your hand. Our original form cannot be gained from others. Is the life of Buddha or Bodhidharma to be found in a round pillar? You should know that the coming and going of the round pillar is the coming and going of the entire universe.

1-EN 1 Jippō, the ten directions: north, south, east, west, north-west, north-east, south-west south-east, vertical and horizontal. That is, the entire realm of the universe. In this chapter “ten directions,” “ten quarters,” and “the entire universe” are used as translations of jippō.

2-EN Chang-sha, dates unknown. Samana (shamon) is a special name used for monks. It is used for especially advanced and high-minded practitioners.

Great Master Gensha-in Soitsu^{3-EN} taught, "The entire universe is one bright pearl." We must clearly understand that this one bright pearl fills the entire universe. Both gods and demons live within the one bright pearl; Buddhas and Patriarchs consider it to be the essence of Buddhism. Men and women living in the world also value it and both beginners and advanced students study it. Indeed, such everyday acts as wearing clothes or eating rice are within the one bright pearl. My late master even used a mud ball to explain the one bright pearl to his disciples. This "one bright pearl" is the saying of Gensha-in Soitsu who was a transmitter of the Buddhist Way. It is the word of true experience of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. When we experience their life it gives us the strength to experience our own enlightenment. And it is nothing but the activity of the life of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Once a monk asked Priest Kempō^{4-EN}, "I have heard that there is only one gate, used by all the Buddhas throughout the entire universe, that leads to nirvana." Kempō drew a large circle in the air with his staff and said, "Here it is." "Here it is" is the entire universe. All the Buddhas are in the staff and the staff is right here – the one way of the entire universe. Do not lose the staff inside the nostril of Buddha, and do not miss the staff in the nostril of the staff. Do not be concerned whether or not Kempō and all the Buddhas in the entire universe have attained enlightenment – "Here it is."

Although Kempō's "Here it is" was true I hope he did not have any basic misunderstanding about the circle he drew with his staff. The breath of Buddha is the entire universe; that is all we need learn.

Delivered to the monks at Kippōji, Echizen, Japan, on November 13, 1243. Transcribed by Ejō at the chief disciple's quarters of Daibutsuji, Echigo, on December 24, 1246.

3-EN Tsung-i Ta-shih (835-908) See Ikka Myōju.
4-EN Chien-feng, dates unknown.

56. KEMBUTSU

見佛

"Seeing Buddha"

SHAKYAMUNI Buddha addressed a large assembly and said, "If all forms are seen as non-forms that is seeing the Tathāgata." Seeing "all forms" and "non-forms" is complete transcendence; that is why we can see the Tathāgata. Opening the eye of Buddha is to see Buddha; actively seeing with the eye of Buddha is to actualize the eye of Buddha.

When we see our own Buddha-form in others, or if we see our Buddha-form outside of the Buddha, it means we are confused like a tangled branch. That is why the study, analysis, transcendence, actualization, and possession of seeing Buddha is the observation of sun-faced and moon-faced Buddha. Seeing Buddha like this is to see his unlimited face, body, mind, hands and eyes. The resolve to seek the Way, study and practice, enlightenment and understanding – all these are inseparable from seeing Buddha with enlightened vision and vibrant, lively bones and marrow.

Therefore, our world and the world of others in the eternal past and present is nothing but the practice of seeing Buddha. The Way of the Tathāgata is "all forms seen as non-forms." Some confused people think that this means that all forms lack self-form but they do not know how to see the Tathāgata. They think "form" is the Tathāgata itself. Only narrow-minded people who are attached to one standpoint study like this. However, the Buddhist Way is not like this. Buddha's true function is to be able to observe all forms and non-forms. The word "Tathāgata" has both form and non-form.

Zen Master Daihōgen Bun'eki of Seiryōin said, "If all forms are seen as non-forms that is not seeing the Tathāgata." Here Daihōgen's "not seeing" is actually "seeing" the Tathāgata, i.e., Shakyamuni's "seeing" and Daihōgen's "not seeing" are the two sides of one coin. We can gain real understanding through this. Daihōgen's "not seeing" should be likened to hearing with the ear of Buddha and Shakyamuni's "seeing" is like opening the eye of Buddha. If you study this principle you can see that all forms are nothing but the form of the Tathāgata. Do not think "all forms" is a tentative substitute for "nonforms." If you think like that you will be the lost son [in the Lotus Sutra] who was separated from his rich father and wandered around as a beggar.

All the Buddhas say that since "form" is the form of the Tathāgata all forms come into existence as the form of reality. All those who have experienced the teaching of the Mahayana can say this; it certifies them as Buddhas and Patriarchs. To study this principle is to believe in the teaching of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. However, we must not be flighty, easily blown to and fro by the wind. "Forms" are the form of the Tathāgata; they are not "non-forms." To clarify, believe, and see Buddha is to enlighten, confirm, and transmit [his form]. Chant the teaching of Buddha with your voice and work to help others find the teaching of Buddha.

Like this, study the Way with your eyes and ears, drop off your body, mind, bones, and marrow, and transcend the mountains and rivers of your world. This is the Buddhas' and Patriarchs' study and practice of the Way. People who say they are unenlightened should not think they cannot open the Buddha-eye. "One word of teaching" dispels all illusion, changes our vision to that of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, and gives the experience of body and mind cast off. And these are the everyday actions of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Therefore, there is a direct path to proper study of the Way and seeing Buddha, i.e., "all forms are non-forms, non-forms are all forms." Since "non-form" is "all forms," "non-form" is truly "non-form" and nothing else. Regardless of what we call it – "form" or "non-form" – it is the form of the Tathāgata.

We should know that there are two methods of reading and studying the sutras: 1) the study of seeing Buddha; and 2) the study of not seeing Buddha. This is active, enlivened study of the Buddhist Way. If you do not study these two methods thoroughly you cannot be said to have completed the eye of study. Further, if you have not completed the eye of study you can never see Buddha. [Seeing Buddha has two parts:] "all forms are all forms" and "non-forms are all forms." If we say "non-forms" [we are like Zen Master Nansen who said,] "I do not possess the Buddhist Law." Not seeing "all forms as all forms" and not seeing "non-forms as non-forms" are also two aspects of seeing Buddha. If you thoroughly study both aspects you will be able to grasp the Buddhist Law. One who can master eighty or ninety percent of Hōgen's words will be like this.

Nevertheless, the great matter [of seeing Buddha] has another important aspect: if we experience shohō jissō, the true state of all elements, we see the Tathāgata. This is the beneficence of Shakyamuni Buddha. It is nothing but his original face and his skin, flesh, bones, and marrow.

Once Shakyamuni Buddha was staying on Vulture Peak. At that time Yakuō Bodhisattva said to the assembly, "If you practice under a Dharma master you will attain the Way of Bodhisattva. If you follow this master you will meet Buddhas without limit."

Practising and attaining the Way under a Dharma master should be done like the second Patriarch's eight years of practice [under Bodhidharma]. After that he attained his master's marrow. Nangaku spent fifteen years under his master and also received his master's marrow. This is true study under a master. The Way of a Bodhisattva is to be yourself as yourself, others as others. Then we can actually experience the formation of the life of Buddhas and Patriarchs in ourselves – this is direct experience and total comprehension. This direct experience does not duplicate the development of past Buddhas, nor does it create new formations which will develop in the future, nor does it dwell in the fullness of the present. It is the liberation that comes from true study under a master. All real attainments come from that direct experience.

We should know that study under a master is not simply to follow him but also to study the masters of the past. When such an attitude is actualized it is the time to see Buddha. Here we find unlimited Buddhas. These unlimited Buddhas actualize full, free activity everywhere. However, we must not force ourselves to see these unlimited Buddhas. First of all we must find and study under a master – to study under the right master is to see Buddha.

Shakyamuni Buddha said to a large assembly who had attained enlightenment, "Enter profound samādhi and see the Buddhas of the ten directions." The entire world is profound because the ten quarters are contained in the Buddha land. This land is not wide, not large, not small, and not narrow. No matter what form it appears in—large, small, etc.—it contains all things. It cannot be measured as seven, eight, or ten feet. It covers everything; nothing is excluded. To enter that profundity is to enter samādhi; to enter that samādhi is to see the Buddhas of the ten directions. Entering profound samādhi is to see all the Buddhas of the ten directions just as they are. Whether you possess it or not there is nothing but the Buddhas of the ten directions. Entering that profound state transcends time and seeing all the Buddhas of the ten directions is nothing more than seeing a reclining Tathāgata [i.e., a living Buddha]. Samādhi emerges and all opposing ideas are severed. If we are not afraid of a real dragon, then we will not doubt or abandon the real truth when we see Buddha. From seeing Buddha to seeing Buddha goes from samādhi to samādhi. The principles of samādhi, seeing Buddha, entering profundity, etc. are absolute. This

is difficult for ordinary people to grasp and has not been transmitted to the present day by idlers. Each and every reception of the transmission of the Way is a reception of the fruits of practice.

Shakyamuni Buddha said to Samantabhadra Bodhisattva, "Anyone who receives, keeps, reads, and chants this Lotus Sūtra, memorizes it correctly, practices it, and copies it should be considered one who is able to see me and hear the sūtra directly from my mouth."

In general, all the Buddhas see Shakyamuni Buddha; to become Shakyamuni Buddha is to attain the Way and become Buddha. Like this, the bearing of all the Buddhas has been from the beginning the practice of the seven actions of receiving, keeping, etc. Those who practice the seven actions come to know themselves as they truly are. Shakyamuni Buddha sees like this; one who follows his Way can be said to hear the sūtras from Buddha's mouth. Shakyamuni Buddha is Shakyamuni Buddha because he is seen as Shakyamuni Buddha. It therefore follows that when he spoke, his words covered the three thousand worlds. The mountains and oceans are Buddhist sūtras. One who copies [the Lotus Sūtra] will see Shakyamuni Buddha. Buddha's voice is being projected everywhere at all times; how can there be an occasion when it is not being spoken? Therefore, if we receive and preserve the [Lotus Sūtra] as mentioned above, surely we will see Shakyamuni Buddha. The virtue we derive from our sense organs—eye, ear, nose, etc.—is exactly like this. Likewise, the actions of our daily life—front, back, right, left—[also possess the same potential, to see Shakyamuni Buddha].

When we see the Lotus Sūtra we will be overjoyed to see Shakyamuni Buddha, will we not? This is the living dimension of Shakyamuni Buddha. Those who receive, keep, read, chant, memorize, practice and copy this Lotus Sūtra with all their body and mind will without fail see Shakyamuni Buddha. No one can deny Buddha's speech or hearing his living sermon, can they? Those who are in no hurry to devote themselves to this valuable sūtra are mere low-minded sentient beings with no wisdom. One who practices [the Lotus Sūtra] will see Shakyamuni Buddha.

Shakyamuni Buddha said to a large assembly: "If devoted laymen and women hear that my life is eternal and have deep faith and belief in it they will see that Buddha is always living on Vulture Peak proclaiming the Law surrounded by Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas and śrāvakas. Those devoted people will see the troubled world we live in change into a world of peace full of shining gems and precious jade."

"Deep faith" is seeing this troubled world [as the mind and body of Buddha]. "Belief" is belief that must come freely, without compulsion. The words of Buddha are absolute truth—no one can doubt it. Even accidentally hearing or seeing this sūtra provides an excellent opportunity to develop belief in it. Put deep faith in this Lotus Sūtra. By having deep faith in the Tathāgata's eternal life we can be born in this world to save sentient beings. The Tathāgata's supernatural power, the strength of his compassion, and the power of his eternal life give belief to the mind of sentient beings, to the body of the entire world, to Buddhas and Patriarchs, to all dharmas, to all phenomena, to skin, flesh, bones and marrow, to life and death, coming and going—the belief of all those is seeing Buddha.

Therefore, we should know that to open the eye of deep faith and to possess the eye of belief is to see Buddha. That is not just seeing Buddha but to see Buddha living eternally on Vulture Peak; living on Vulture Peak and the Tathāgata's eternal life are the same. Therefore, seeing Buddha is to live eternally on Vulture Peak; the Tathāgata and Vulture Peak are eternal and inseparable. Therefore, Bodhisattvas and śrāvakas are also eternal; proclaiming the Law also exists eternally on Vulture Peak. Buddha saw this world of trouble as beautiful and peaceful. He did not attach ideas of high and low to the present world of reality. Do not look upon such a view with contempt. You should look at the world as if it is full of shining gems and precious jade. If we think that this world is not full of precious jade then Vulture Peak is not Vulture Peak and Shakyamuni Buddha is not Shakyamuni Buddha. To believe that this world is full of precious jade is the real form of "belief"—this is seeing Buddha.

Shakyamuni Buddha said to a large assembly, "When we desire to see Buddha with all our heart and have no resentment present in our bodies I together with all monks can ascend Vulture Peak." "All our heart" is not the heart of ordinary people, Hinayānists, etc.; it is the heart of seeing Buddha. Seeing Buddha with all one's heart is Vulture Peak and all monks. Each and every moment of the present is the imperceptible desire to see Buddha with the mind of Vulture Peak. Therefore, this one mind is Vulture Peak. Our body is actualized in this mind, and this mind emerges through our body. Body and mind are like this; eternal and transitory life are also like this. Therefore, have no resentment and simply entrust your life to the supreme Way of Vulture Peak—this is the proper understanding of seeing Buddha with all one's heart.

Shakyamuni Buddha said to a large assembly, "Anyone who proclaims this sūtra will see me, Prabhūtaratna Buddha, and all other manifestations of Buddhas." "Proclaiming this sūtra" means that Buddha is always present in the world possessing vast spiritual power but is not seen by sentient beings because of their perverted views. That spiritual power, seen or unseen, is the virtue of the Tathāgata we must respect.

Shakyamuni Buddha said to a large assembly, "Anyone who keeps this sūtra will see me, Prabhūtaratna Buddha, and all other replicas of me." It is difficult to keep this sūtra although the Tathāgata counsels us to always preserve it. Anyone who keeps this sūtra sees Buddha. Seeing Buddha is to hold this sūtra and vice versa. Therefore, listening to just a single verse of one gāthā is to possess the vision of Shakyamuni Buddha, Prabhūtaratna Buddha, and all other replicas of Buddha – it is the transmission of the Buddha and Dharma and the attainment of Buddha's True Eye, the Buddha's life, the development of Buddha's insight and the enlightenment and essence of Buddha.

Unrai-onshuku-okechi^{1-EN} Buddha said to King Śubhavyūha, "O Great King, know this! A teacher has great influence as your leader and causes you to see Buddha and attain supreme and perfect enlightenment." In this great assembly [Unrai-onshuku-okechi Buddha] came from the distant past; although he represents all Buddhas of the past, present and future do not focus your attention on the three worlds of ordinary people. That is, the past is our mind, the present is our finger tips, the future our brain; [they are not separate but contained in one body]. Therefore, Unrai-onshuku-okechi Buddha is the actualization of seeing Buddha in our mind. "Seeing Buddha" always has this connotation. Following the Lotus Sūtra is to see Buddha, to see Buddha is to awaken the mind of supreme and perfect enlightenment. The resolve to be enlightened is the head and tail of seeing Buddha.

Shakyamuni Buddha said, "Anyone who practices all virtues and is tolerant, peaceful, upright and stable will see my body in this proclamation of the Law." "All virtues" means getting dirty helping those stuck in the mire or getting wet saving those who are drowning. "I am like this, you are like this" is the practice of one who is tolerant, peaceful, upright and stable – this is seeing Buddha in the mud and waves. If you can grasp this you can comprehend the proclaiming of the Law.

However, recently in Great Sung Dynasty China there are many with the title "Zen Master." Such people have neither seen nor

1-EN Jaladharagaritaghosasusvaranaksatrarājasamkusumitābhijna.

heard the true width and breadth of the Buddhist Dharma. They have simply memorized two or three sayings of Rinzai and Ummon and think this constitutes the entire Buddhist Dharma. If the Buddhist Law can be condensed into a few sayings of Rinzai and Ummon it would never have been transmitted to the present day. We cannot even say that Rinzai and Ummon have completely mastered the Buddhist Dharma.

Moreover, present day masters by no means surpass Rinzai and Ummon. We should not even mention them because they are so stupid and indiscriminately slander the sūtras without studying them properly. We must count them among the non-believers, not the descendants of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. How can we say they have attained the stage of seeing Buddha? They have not even understood the essence of Confucius or Lao-tzu. True disciples of the Buddhas and Patriarchs have nothing to do with these so-called "Zen Masters." You must search only for experience of the enlightened eye that sees Buddha.

My late master Tendō, an ancient Buddha, said, "Once, King Hashinoku asked the honourable Binzuru,^{1-EN} "I have heard, O Honourable One, that you have seen Buddha. Is it true?" Binzuru lifted his eyebrows and opened his eyes wide." My late master then recited this gāthā:

"Raising his eyebrows he answered the question;

That he once met and saw Buddha was not a lie.

His virtue is respected everywhere.

Spring is in the tip of a plum tree branch covered with freezing snow."

"Seeing Buddha" is not seeing our Buddha, nor others' Buddha but seeing [all] Buddhas. One plum branch sees one plum branch, i.e., the flower blooms [throughout the world]. The central point of King Hashinoku's question is whether Binzuru saw or became Buddha. When Binzuru raised his eyebrows it proved that he saw Buddha; it is a clear fact. The present respect he is given has continued unbroken from the past—his meeting with Buddha cannot be doubted. The three hundred million people [in the kingdom of Srāvasti in Buddha's time] who saw Buddha, truly saw him. They did not just see the thirty-two forms of Buddha. This principle of seeing Buddha is not generally understood by celestial beings, humans, śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. It is like many who hold a fly whisk [and pretend] to be leaders, although there are few true masters. Seeing Buddha is actualized from Buddha's side [not from our own subjective side]. Even if we attempt to conceal it seeing Buddha will emerge by itself. This is the principle of seeing Buddha. We should study in detail the essence of "raising the eyebrows" as if we are investigating the body and mind of the unlimited sands of the Ganges. Even if you stay with Shakyamuni Buddha day and night for countless aeons but lack the power of raising your eyebrows you cannot "see" Buddha. Although we are living two thousand years later and one hundred thousand li from Shakyamuni if we have the power to raise our eyebrows we can still see the aspect of Shakyamuni Buddha that has no beginning. This is seeing one plum tree with spring in its branches. Truly meeting and seeing Buddha is three prostrations [before Buddha], a gassho and bow, the smile [of Mahākāśyapa], liberation and unification, and sitting in the lotus posture on a mat.

Binzuru was once invited to dine at the court of King Aśoka. The King offered incense and prostrated himself before Binzuru and said, "I have heard, O Honourable One, that you have seen Buddha. Is it true?" Binzuru raised his eyebrow and said, "Do you understand?" The King replied, "No, I don't." Binzuru said, "Once the Dragon King Anavatapta invited Buddha for a meal and I was among the attendants." The essence of King Aśoka's question is whether or not Binzuru is truly an honourable one. At that time the honourable Binzuru raised his eyebrows—this is the actualization of seeing Buddha throughout the entire world. He had become Buddha and saw him everywhere.

"Once the Dragon King Anavatapta invited Buddha for a meal and I was one of the attendants" means that many in that assembly received and transmitted Buddha. If Hinayānists were not permitted in that assembly, and even if they were, they could not be counted among the Buddhas. Binzuru attended that meal. His presence was a result of the virtue derived from seeing Buddha. Inviting Buddha is not just Shakyamuni Buddha but all the countless Buddhas of the three worlds and ten directions. All the Buddhas come together and meet and see all other Buddhas. Seeing Buddha, seeing a master, seeing oneself and seeing others is like that. The Dragon King Anavatapta is the same as the Dragon King of the Pond of Anokuda. This pond is without heat [i.e., clear and cool, free of illusion].^{2-EN}

Zen Master Honei Jinyū^{3-EN} composed this verse:

Our Buddha saw Binzuru;

Yet his eyebrows were long, his hair short, and his eyes wild.

King Aśoka doubted it and chanted this dharani:

Om mani śrisūrya. (Hail to the adamant bliss of belief in the true Law.)

While this verse does not tally cover the entire scope of the Buddhist Way it contains the root, so we mention it here.

Great Master Jōshū Shinsai was asked by a monk, "I heard, O priest, that you met Nansen. Is it true?" Jōshū said, "A huge radish grows in Jinshū." This is truly meeting Nansen and experiencing and certifying his Way – it does not depend on the meaning, or lack of meaning, of the words. The sayings of Zen masters, common speech, raising the eyebrows opening the eyes etc., means to raise the eyebrow and truly meet and see Buddha. Even if one is an excellent person but lacks a real meeting with Buddha he cannot speak like Nansen.

"A giant radish appears in Jinshū" dates from the period when Jōshū was a monk at Shinsai-in, Tōka-en, in Jinshū. Later on he was known as Great Master Shinsai. Like this he opened his eyes and saw Buddha and could therefore correctly transmit the Eye and Treasury of the True Law of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. When the Eye and Treasury of the True Law is transmitted correctly, the great value of seeing Buddha is actualized and seeing Buddha emerges everywhere.

This was delivered to the monks at Mt. Zenjihō on November 19, 1243. Recopied the following year at the chief disciple's quarters of Daibutsuji, Yoshida-ken, Echizen, on October 16, by Ejō.

1-EN Prasenajit, the King of Srāvasti in central India during Buddha's lifetime. He and his family were devout followers of Buddhism. Binzuru is Pindola-bhāradvāja. The first of the sixteen Arhats.

2-EN Anavalapta is the name of the Dragon King who lives in the imaginary pond of the same name said to be located north of the Himalayas.

3-EN A disciple of Yogi Hōe (both dates unknown).

57. HENZAN

編參

“Direct study under a master”

The great Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs is to experience the ultimate goal of study – no strings [of attachment] can get under our feet, only clouds emerge.^{1-EN} Although we may say this, still, when a flower blooms the entire world emerges, and we are always on the [Buddhist Way].^{2-EN} Similarly, even the skin of a melon is sweet, while a bitter gourd is bitter to the roots – sweet is sweet, bitter is bitter. That is what we must study.

Great Master Gensha Soitsu was once called by his master Seppō. Seppō asked, “Why don’t you continue to visit other masters?” Gensha replied, “Bodhidharma didn’t come to China and the second Patriarch didn’t go to India.” Seppō praised this answer. The principle behind the question of visiting other masters (henzan) differs from the meaning of the words, and [in Bodhidharma’s words] it is nothing special; basically there is no difference in rank between various masters.

The first time Zen Master Nangaku Dai’e visited the ancient Buddha Sōkei [Enō], the ancient Buddha asked him, “Where are you from?” Dai’e could not answer and spent eight years seeking the answer to that question. Finally, after this practice under his master he made a prostration before the ancient Buddha and said, “When I first came here you asked where I came from. Now I know the real intent of your words.” The ancient Buddha Sōkei said, “What did you clarify?” Dai’e said, “I can’t explain in words. That’s what I learned.” This is the actualization of Dai’e’s eight years of practice under a master. The ancient Buddha Sōkei said, “Why do we seek practice and enlightenment?” Dai’e said, “Practice and enlightenment are not ‘not here’ but they cannot be gained if there is any impurity.” Sōkei then said, “I am like that, you are like that, and all the Buddhas and Patriarchs are like that.”

After this Nangaku continued his practice for eight more years, altogether more than fifteen years. Yet even his first meeting with Enō was henzan, “receiving direct instruction from a master.” And “it cannot be attained in words” opens the gate to meeting all the Buddhas and Patriarchs, i.e., practising under a Zen master. Entering a monastery [and practising the Way] does not necessarily require countless aeons. Someone who has much free time, and frequently comes and goes will not attain true practice under a master. Not coming and going is the complete enlightened vision and total attainment of study under a master. Perceiving the master’s original face is also henzan.

The essence of Seppō’s question about visiting other masters is not originally concerned with visiting other mountains in the north or south. Gensha’s “Bodhidharma didn’t come to China, and the second Patriarch didn’t go to India” elaborates on that question. Gensha’s answer “Bodhidharma didn’t come to China” is not related to “coming” or “not coming.” This is the principle of the great immeasurable earth. The lifeblood of Bodhidharma fills everywhere. Even if everyone in China studied under him it still cannot be said that Bodhidharma “came” to the east or “went” to the west. Thus, “not coming to China” is to freely come. In the east, we can see the faces of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, but that does not mean that they “came” to China. Attain the mind of the Buddhas and Patriarchs [by “not coming”] but do not lose their essence [by “coming”].

Generally speaking, the earth has no east or west; there is no place where east and west exist. Since the second Patriarch did not go to the west it is not necessary for us to go there to study. If the second Patriarch had gone to India he would have lost his other arm [and the Buddhist Way would not have been transmitted]. That is why he did not go. Because he leaped into the enlightened vision of Bodhidharma he did not have to stay in the west. If he had not possessed the enlightened eye of his teacher, surely he would have had to stay in the west. Henzan, true study under a real master, is to pluck out the enlightened eye of Bodhidharma – it is not going to the west or coming to the east. Similarly, going to Mt. Tendai, Mt. Nangaku, or Mt. Godai is not henzan. If we do not transcend the world of the four oceans and five lakes, [i.e., the world of discrimination] we cannot have henzan. We lose the Way, take the wrong step, and miss henzan.

All things throughout the ten directions of the entire universe have a real form and true body; the study of that form and body is henzan. That is why we can find henzan in “Bodhidharma didn’t come to China and the second Patriarch didn’t go to India.” Henzan means “a big stone is big, a small stone is small.” Stone is “stone,” nothing else; big is “big,” small is “small.” If you see a different stone each time you look at it, this is not henzan. To be able to accept one word, or even half a word, of a master is to clarify ourselves. This is the unlimited detachment which is henzan. For example, [Dachi, a disciple of Baso,] would hit the ground when asked any question—this is henzan. If the monk strikes the ground, then the air, and then in all directions it is not henzan. The monk Gutei visited Tenryū and was enlightened after the master held up one finger. This is true henzan and thereafter Gutei would always hold up one finger when asked a question.

Gensha once said to an assembly of monks, “Shakyamuni and I studied together.” One monk asked, “That’s a little strange, isn’t it? Who was the master at that time?” Gensha said, “Shasaburo, [Gensha’s secular name] the fisherman.” This is how we can say Shakyamuni and Gensha studied together and vice versa. This is the principle of henzan. Since Shakyamuni and Gensha studied together they both may be called ancient Buddhas. Gensha studied with Shakyamuni and is therefore known as his descendant. We must clarify this principle in detail.

In addition, we must clarify the essence of “Shasaburo the fisherman.” The main point here is that Shakyamuni and Gensha studied together at the same time. We must consider whether or not the [young] Shasaburo saw the old master Gensha or if the bald headed Gensha saw Shasaburo on the fishing boat. We must clarify whether they saw each other or not. Gensha and Shakyamuni met each other and received henzan. Shasaburo and I saw and met each other; we must seek out the principle behind this and receive henzan.

Oneself meeting and seeing oneself is the principle of henzan; if this principle does not emerge we cannot see ourselves. If we do not see ourselves we are not capable of seeing others – both of these are insufficient. If we cannot see others we cannot see ourselves. Then we cannot direct others or possess enlightened vision. We cannot fish for ourselves or gain enlightenment.

To completely attain henzan we must be totally detached from it. “The ocean dries up and we cannot see the bottom”; “People die but the mind does not depart.” “Dry up” means that the entire ocean completely dries up. However, we also cannot see the bottom of the ocean if the ocean does not dry up. “Depart” or “not depart” is independent of the human mind. When a person dies the mind does not depart. When death comes it is complete death; consequently, the entire person is

1-EN This refers to the debate between Bodhidharma and the non-believer Shūshō. After Shūshō conceded his defeat clouds arose beneath Bodhidharma’s feet and he floated away.

2-EN A saying of Tōzan.

mind, and the total mind is the person. Like this, we must clarify these relationships from every angle.

One day, my late master Tendō, the ancient Buddha, was asked to address a group of elders who had previously practiced under the same master. At that time he ascended the platform and said, "The Great Way has no gate. Yet you have come from all directions taking the road of universal emptiness to enter the heart of Seiryōji. Actually, we are welcoming a bunch of thieves and ruffians who follow Rinzai. This is like a gentle spring breeze that follows a tremendous, earth-shattering storm. Such a breeze amazes the apricot blossoms as their crimson petals float to earth."

This was given when my late master, the ancient Buddha, was staying at Seiryōji in Kenkoku at a meeting of elders who came from all directions. My late master was both host and guest for these elders. They sat together and practiced Zazen. Many people had gathered and a number were capable of making an address but since they especially asked Nyojō we can see how greatly he was respected at that time. Perhaps, the henzan of my late master was different from that of the other elders. An ancient Buddha like my late master has not appeared for the past two or three hundred years in Great Sung China.

"The Great Way has no gate." In spring countless willows and cherries bloom everywhere and wind and string instruments are continually playing. There is no other way to leap over, with our entire body, the gateless gate. We must jump over the head and enter the nostril of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. This is the proper way to study. Those who have not liberated themselves or entered the nostril of the Buddhas and Patriarchs cannot be called true students or receive henzan. The essence of henzan can only be found by studying Gensha.

The fourth Patriarch [Dōshin] practiced under the third Patriarch [Sōzan] for nine years, Zen Master Nansen Fugan studied for thirty years on Mt. Nangaku in Chiyo without once leaving the place, Ungan and Dōgo studied for more than forty years under Yakusan. These all represent true henzan. The second Patriarch practiced under Bodhidharma for eight years on Mt. Suzan and mastered the skin, flesh, bones and marrow of henzan.

Henzan is shikantaza, single-minded sitting, and the dropping off of body and mind. Hence, we can find our true self and actualize the Buddha mind. The entire body of henzan is the entire body of the great Way. This is free, unfettered samadhi and the actions of an enlightened one. Such study and practice is continually transmitted like an inseparable tangle of vines and gourds. This has been the basis of Buddhist dojo from ancient times. The life of the Tathāgatas is an endless thread and has never been severed. One gourd gives henzan to another. Even one blade of grass can give henzan.

This was delivered to an assembly of monks on November 27, 1243, at Hotori hermitage on Zenjihō. Transcribed the same year on December 27, in the chief disciple's quarters by Ejō.

58. GANZEI

眼睛

“Enlightened vision”

The study of the Way during the past countless aeons bears fruit in the present eighty-four thousand forms of enlightened vision.

One day, when my late master Tendō, an ancient Buddha, was staying at Zuiganji he entered the Dharma Hall and said to the monks, “The autumn breeze is pure and fresh, the autumn moon is clear and bright. With enlightened vision we can see the real form of the great earth, mountains and rivers. Staying at Zuiganji has renewed my vision. The sound of the stick and the shout of a katsu are again lively as we test each other.”

Here, “testing each other” is testing each other’s ancient Buddha vision. The important point is for everyone to mutually use the stick and the shout. This is tenkatsu, i.e., making one’s vision anew. Such a manifestation of insight and activity is enlightened vision. The real form of mountains, rivers, and the great earth is rooted in enlightened vision and exists throughout innumerable kalpas. “The autumn breeze is pure and fresh” and “the autumn moon is clear and bright” are viewed beyond time. The freshness of the autumn moon cannot be compared to the four great oceans, and the brightness of the autumn moon is beyond comparison with a hundred thousand suns and moons. “Pure and fresh” and “bright and clear” are the enlightened vision of mountains, rivers and the earth. “Each other” means the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Do not expect great enlightenment, non-enlightenment, or some previous enlightenment in the distant past – this is the enlightened vision of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. “Testing” is also rooted in enlightened vision; it is the actualization of renewed vision and the active eye of enlightenment. “Renewing our vision” is the same as “meeting,” i.e., [Nyōjō’s] eye meets [Buddha’s] eye. They meet like thunder and lightning. Do not think that the body is large and the eye is small. Even though there are some old people who think like that, they do so because their enlightened eye is not open completely.

Once when Great Master Tōzan Gohon was practising under Ugan, he found Ugan making a pair of straw sandals. Tōzan said, “I came here to receive enlightened vision [yet all you do are things like making sandals].” Ugan replied, “You want to give it to someone and then leave?” Tōzan said, “I don’t have any.” Then Ugan said, “If you had it to whom would you give it?” Tōzan did not speak. Ugan said, “Is what you want really enlightened vision or not?” Tōzan said, “It is not enlightened vision.” Ugan gave a loud shout.

We can see that the focal point of all study and practice is to seek enlightened vision. Practising the Way in the zendō, studying in the Dharma Hall, sleeping in the monastery – all these are seeking enlightened vision. Working together and sharing the life of the monastery is also enlightened vision. This story clarifies the principle that enlightened vision is not ourselves and not others.

Tōzan was seeking enlightened vision from his master and ultimately gained it. The problem of oneself is independent of the problem of others, and one should not depend on others. That is why Ugan said, “You want to give it to someone and then leave?” i.e., to whom are you going to give your, version of enlightened vision? When Tōzan said, “I don’t have any,” it indicated his personal understanding of enlightened vision. We should quietly reflect on this actualization of the Way. Ugan said, “If you had it to whom would you give it?” This concerns the real nature of enlightened vision and is both “don’t have” and “have” of “I don’t have any” and “if you had...” This is the proper way of understanding which we should study. “Tōzan did not speak.” This does not mean he could not answer. Ugan asked, “Is what you want really enlightened vision or not?” This is renewed enlightened vision, that is, illusion is crushed and enlightened vision comes to life. The essence of Ugan’s expression is that enlightened vision seeks enlightened vision, water follows water, mountains follow mountains. Different things work reciprocally, similar things live together.

Tōzan said, “It is not enlightened vision.” This indicates our own vision is enlightened. “Not enlightened vision” means the body and mind of insight; it should be taken as the form of our active enlightened vision. All the Buddhas of the three worlds turn and proclaim the Great Wheel of the Dharma of enlightened vision. In order to penetrate the deepest aspect of our study we must leap into enlightened vision through resolve, practice, and great enlightenment. This enlightened vision is not ours and not others’. Therefore, it contains no obstacles or attachments.

An ancient Buddha [Roya Ekaku] said, “How wonderful! All the Buddhas of the ten quarters were originally flowers in the eye.” That is, all the Buddhas are enlightened vision; flowers in the eye are all the Buddhas of the ten quarters. Moving forward or backward, practising Zazen or sleeping are all functions of enlightened vision without any attachment or clinging.

My late master the ancient Buddha said, “Pluck out the enlightened eye of Bodhidharma, make it into a mud ball and strike people with it.” Then he shouted, “Jaku! The ocean dries up and waves billow to the sky!” He said this at the abbot’s quarters of Seiryōji to a large group of monks. Those people who are “struck” are like those who are “made” [i.e., being taught]. “Strike” means that each person can find his original face. For example, through the enlightened vision of Bodhidharma each person can make and he made. The principle of throwing at people is like this. Everyone can be reborn by being struck with this enlightened vision. We have had examples of monks being struck with a list in the monastery, hit with a staff in the Dharma Hall, or belted with a fly whisk or stick in the master’s quarters – this is the enlightened vision of Bodhidharma. Making a mud ball from Bodhidharma’s eye is like petitioning a master to be accepted as his disciple, greeting him, and practising Zazen under him. About this being “struck” the master said, “The ocean dries up, waves billow to the sky.”

My late master the ancient Buddha entered the Dharma Hall and praised the Tathāgata’s attainment of the Way, saying, “After six years of ascetic practice he became like a wild fox. He fled from the mountains, full of perplexity; he had completely lost the enlightened vision he was seeking. There was no place else to look. He was like a madman, yet when he saw the morning star he attained enlightenment.” “Attaining enlightenment when seeing the morning star” seemed to occur too suddenly since just prior to that he had completely lost his enlightened vision. It was like other people telling him he was enlightened. He was full of perplexity, and therefore had to overcome it. Enlightenment does not appear only where we want it to appear; it is independent of any one attainment of the Way.

Once my late master the ancient Buddha said, “When Shakyamuni lost his ordinary sight and attained enlightened vision, one branch of a plum tree bloomed in the snow. But now small branches have appeared and the beautiful blossoms laugh at the spring wind blowing wildly.” Buddha’s enlightened vision cannot be tentatively expressed by one, two, or three [or any number]. What kind of vision is lost? Is there any kind of enlightened vision that can be lost? The plum branch that bloomed in the snow was the enlightened vision of Shakyamuni. It bloomed in spring and actualized the heart of spring.

My late master the ancient Buddha said, "[Shakyamuni's ascetic practice] was like continuous rain, day after day, but his enlightenment was like a beautiful clear day. Even the bullfrogs and worms were singing. Ancient Buddha mind transcends time, and diamond enlightened vision emerges. Tottsu! Entwinement causes more entwinement." "Diamond enlightened vision" is in both the continuous rain and the beautiful sky, and in the singing of bullfrogs and worms. People of the present age lack such an understanding. Since there is no past we can call it "ancient Buddha." The ancient Buddhas of the past live in the present time; it cannot be compared to the passing of non-ancient Buddhas.

My late master the ancient Buddha said, "Today is the winter solstice and the days will gradually get longer. Enlightened vision will shine and the breath becomes lively." For countless generations, day after day, the days have gotten longer. This is the detachment of enlightened vision. Enlightened vision will shine and the mountains will be seen in the sunshine. Like this there is enlightened vision in all aspects of life.

One day my late master spoke at Jōjiji in Rinan. He said, "This is the morning of February 1. The enlightened vision of a fly whisk is shining. Its brightness is like a mirror, and its darkness like black lacquer. Its brightness illuminates the entire universe. Why are all of you monks encircled by an impenetrable wall?" Smiling, he was silent for a while and then said, "The spring wind has the answer to this question," and left the platform. The meaning of "encircled by a wall" is enlightened vision. This "morning," "February," and "first day" are each aspects of enlightened vision, that is, the enlightened vision of a fly whisk. Since it transcends black lacquer [i.e., the discriminations of ordinary people], it becomes this morning's enlightened vision. It is the enlightened vision of February which illuminates the entire universe and it is the first day praised by my master. The activity and actualization of enlightened vision is like this.

This was delivered to an assembly of monks on December 17, 1242, at Zenjihō, Echizen. Transcribed the same month at the chief disciple's quarters of Kippōji by Ejō.

59. KAJŌ

家常

“The everyday life of the Buddhas and Patriarchs”

The Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs is to drink tea and eat rice; this is their family tradition. The proper manner of drinking tea and eating rice has been handed down continuously up to the present time. This is how the drinking of tea and the eating of rice is put to practical use for Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Once Priest Fuyo Dōkai of Mt. Taiyō asked his master Tōsu Gisei,^{1-EN} “Can we say that the Buddhas’ and Patriarchs’ daily activities of drinking tea and eating rice is their essence? Is there something else beside this?” Tōsu replied, “Let me ask you this: Do you think it is necessary for the provincial lords of Wo, To, Gyo and Shun to seek power if the imperial command exists throughout the country?” Taiyō was about to answer but Tōsu put his hossu over Dōkai’s mouth and told him, “You should have received thirty blows when you first came here to question me!” Taiyō was enlightened upon hearing that, bowed, and started to leave. Tōsu called out, “Hey, come back here!” but Taiyō did not look back. Later on, Tōsu asked Taiyō, “Have you attained the state where there is no longer any doubt?” Taiyō covered his ears and ran away.

Keep in mind that the Buddhas and Patriarchs express their real selves in the everyday activities of drinking tea and eating rice. Those activities constitute the very life of the Buddhas and Patriarchs as they have always taught – there is no Buddhist Way beside this. And we must not seek to borrow the power of the Buddhas and the Patriarchs. That is why we must clarify both Taiyō’s question and Tōsu’s statement about the provincial lords. When it is clarified it must be transcended, but be sure to also clarify the meaning of transcendence.

Great Master Sekitō Kisen of Sekitōan on Mt. Nangaku^{2-EN} once said, “I live in a hermitage that contains nothing of value; after taking my meal if I feel sleepy I nap.” The coming and going of the Way and “after taking a meal” indicates what the Buddhas and Patriarchs consider to be their essence – drinking tea and eating rice. If you do not eat the rice of the Buddhas and Patriarchs neither you nor they can be satisfied. Therefore, the principle mentioned above, “after taking....” is actualized before, during and after the meal. Do not think that there is no drinking of tea or eating of rice after taking a meal. This is meaningful study.

My late master Nyojō once told an assembly of monks, “There is an old koan: Once a monk asked Zen Master Hyakujō, ‘What is the most important thing in the world?’ Hyakujō answered, ‘Sitting alone on this mountain.’ Do not be astonished by Hyakujō’s answer. We must strive to surpass Hyakujō when we sit. If someone asked me the same question I would say, ‘Nothing’ or ‘Bringing my mendicant bowl from Jōjiji to Mt. Tendō and using it to eat rice.’”

In the daily activities of the Buddhas and Patriarchs we can find the most important thing – “sitting alone on this mountain.” Leaping up to Hyakujō’s level is also the most important thing. The most superlative, however, is “Bringing my mendicant bowl from Jōjiji to Mt. Tendō and eating rice with it.” When we realize that all our actions have the same value as eating rice we will find the most important thing. Drinking tea and eating rice is exactly the same as sitting alone on a mountain. A mendicant bowl is used for eating rice and to eat rice you need a mendicant bowl. The bowl used at Jōjiji is the same as eating rice on Mt. Tendō. “When you are sick of rice, you know its true taste; when you have had too much rice, you become sick of it; after knowing its taste, you become sick of rice; and after you are tired of it you can taste it.” What is a mendicant bowl? It is not just a piece of wood, nor simply a lacquer bowl or something made from stone or iron. It has a meaning beyond its form. It is bottomless and can drink the entire universe which receives it with a gassho.

My late master once addressed an assembly of monks at Jōdo Zenin of Zuiganji in Daishū and said: “When hungry, eat; when tired, sleep. Make your hearth shoot flames to the sky.” “Hungry” means the daily activities of the Buddhas and Patriarchs – drinking tea and eating rice. We should be the ones to eat that rice. “Tired” means total exhaustion. Nothing is left and therefore the body and mind are unified; then all tiredness disappears and all your actions are perfected and fulfilled [you sleep]. When you sleep like this, sleep as the eye of Buddha, the eye of the Dharma, the eye of wisdom, the eye of the Patriarchs, and as the eye of a round pillar and stone lantern.

My late master was invited to Jōjiji in Rinanfu. Before he left Zuiganji he entered the Dharma Hall and said:

Half a year I stayed on this mountain taking meals and meditating; stillness everywhere, the cliffs covered with mist and haze.

Once while sitting, thunder resounded through the valley and the sky darkened.

Yet even then the mood of spring drifts from the capital – crimson apricot blossoms all around.

The teaching of the Patriarchs is an extension of the teaching of the Buddhas; i.e., “taking meals and meditating.” In that statement the transmission of Buddha’s life and wisdom is actualized. “Half a year” is the same as “taking meals.” We cannot even begin to estimate how thick the mist and haze, which is dispersed by Zazen, is; suddenly the clear sound of thunder resounds and darkness scatters, and the light of spring dyes the apricots of the capital crimson. This “capital” is well ordered and sparkles. “Taking meals” is “suchness” and the mountain is Zuiganji.

At another time my late master told the monks gathered in the Buddha Hall of Zuiganji of Keigenfū in Minshu:

“The golden, sublime image of Buddha is nothing more than to put on a kesa and eat rice. That is why I prostrate myself before all of you. Awake with Buddha and retire with Buddha. Isn’t that right! Even the Buddha’s proclaiming of the Law for forty-nine years cannot be compared to your everyday life in the monastery. Shakyamuni’s holding up of the flower means nothing if you do not live like this.”

All monks must realize that the golden image of Buddha is nothing more than to put on a kesa and eat rice and vice-versa. There is no difference between someone who has put on a kesa and eats rice and the sublime image of Buddha. Wearing a kesa and eating rice is the only Buddhist Way. Therefore Nyojō prostrated himself before the monks. They both were eating the same rice. At this level, even the holding up of the flower is unnecessary.

Zen Master Enchi of Chōkein in Fukushū,^{3-EN} once ascended the lecture platform and addressed the monks as follows:

1-EN Fu-jing Tao-k’ai (d. 1118) and T’ou tzu, (d. 1083).

2-EN Shih t’ou, 700-790

3-EN Chang-ching (d. 932).

I have lived on Mt. Issan for over thirty years. I have done nothing but eaten rice and excreted. I have learned nothing from my master Issan. The only thing I have accomplished was to tame a water buffalo. When he wandered through the fields I brought him back, and if he overgrazed I struck him with my whip. After a while he became quite tame. The only problem was that he would follow anyone who called him. But now he has changed into a pure white cow who stays next to me and always looks serene and bright. Even if I try to chase him away he remains.

We should carefully consider this story. Enchi spent more than thirty years studying under his master Issan and the only thing he did was to eat rice. If you can perceive the real meaning of eating rice you will discover the significance of the water buffalo.

Great Master Jōshū^{4-EN} Shinsai asked one of his new disciples, "Have you been here before?" "Yes," replied the monk. "Have a cup of tea before you leave," Jōshū told him. Jōshū then asked another monk the same question, "Have you been here before?" "No," this monk answered. "Have a cup of tea before you leave," Jōshū said. Later on an assistant priest asked Jōshū why he told the same thing to both of the monks. Jōshū shouted, "Hey you!" "Yes!" said the priest. "Have a cup of tea before you leave." In this story "here" is not related to the head or nostrils of the Buddhas and Patriarchs nor does it have anything to do with Jōshū. "Here" is transcended so we cannot say "I have been here" or "I haven't been here." Both are "here."

Concerning this Nyojō said, "How can Jōshū be welcomed with a cup of tea in a luxurious building where sake is being drunk?" So we can see that the everyday life of the Buddhas and Patriarchs is found in the drinking of tea and the eating of rice.

Delivered to the monks on December 17, 1243, beneath the mountains, Echizen. Transcribed the following year at the chief disciple's quarters by Ejō.

4-EN Chao-chou (778-897).

60. SANJUSHICHIHON-BODAI-BUMPŌ

三十七品菩提分法

“The thirty-seven conditions favourable to enlightenment”

There is a koan of the ancient Buddhas concerning the teaching, practice, and enlightenment of the ‘thirty-seven conditions favourable to enlightenment. Both the advancement toward enlightenment and the return to the world to save sentient beings are inextricably bound together; this bond is the basis of the koan and actualizes all the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

First of all, there are the four types of meditation which eliminate false views (shinenjo): 1) observation that the body is impure; 2) observation that perception leads to suffering; 3) observation that the mind is impermanent; and 4) observation that all things are devoid of self.

“Observation that the body is impure” is observing that the body is a bag of skin that covers the entire universe of the ten directions. This becomes the true body and therefore transcends pure and impure. If there is no detachment there can be no attainment of this observation. If there is no body there can be no attainment of practice, teaching, or observation of the body’s impurity. Yet the attainment of this observation has already been actualized, so we should know that it is gained through detachment. The attainment of this observation appears in such daily activities as sweeping the grounds and wiping the Zazen platform. If we practice like this for months and years it will become an absolute act, covering the great earth in its total suchness.

Observing the body is the “body observing,” i.e., not the observation of other things. Right observation occurs like that. When “body observing” is actualized, “mind observing” is involved and cannot be actualized. Therefore, “observation of the body’s impurity” becomes both diamond samādhi and sūrangama samādhi.^{1-EN} The principle behind Shakyamuni’s sighting of the morning star is called “observing the body’s impurity.” It cannot be compared to pure or impure. Yet physical bodies and one’s actual body are “impure.” Studying in such a manner, we see that demons become Buddhas when Buddhas take the form of demons and bring them to Buddhahood. Buddhas become Buddhas when Buddhas take the form of Buddhas and Buddha emerges. Human beings become Buddhas when they have the form of ordinary people, set themselves aright, and become Buddhas. Truly, we must study the principle behind such transformations.

For example, consider the method of washing a robe. Water removes the dirt from the robe, and the robe becomes wet. Although this water is used several times and changed several times, water is still being used and the robe is being washed. More than one or two washings are necessary and we should not rest until it is clean. When the water is used up we put more water in. We wash the clean robe again to make it cleaner. After all kinds of water have been used, the kesa will be clam. That there is a fish in dirty water is the principle we must clarify. There are many different kinds of robes and different ways of washing them. Practising like that, we actualize enlightenment in the washing of a robe. However, we must possess this purity in ourselves. That is why it is not always necessary to put the robe in water or for water to wet the robe. When dirty water is used to wash :1 robe, it is still possible to find a way to clean it. There is a method of cleaning a robe and other things with fire, wind, earth, water, and air; there is a way to clean earth, water, fire, wind, and air with earth, water, fire, wind, and air.

The essence of observation of the body’s impurity is exactly like that. Body is nothing but body, observation is only observation, impurity is just impurity; this is being born wearing a kesa like the third Indian Patriarch Sānavāsa. If there had been no kesa when he was born then none of the Buddhas or Patriarchs could transmit a kesa. But why was only Sānavāsa born wearing a kesa? We must earnestly clarify this principle.

The “observation that perception leads to suffering” means suffering is perception. It is not self-perception nor the perception of others; neither is it existent nor non-existent perception. Perception and suffering co-exist in our living body. It is like a sweet melon clinging to a bitter gourd. Skin, flesh, bones, and marrow become bitter (i.e., suffer, ku), mind and no-mind, etc. also become bitter. This is the practice and enlightenment of individual miraculous powers. These powers are detached from the sweetness of melon stem and the bitterness of lotus root. Like this, the suffering of sentient beings emerges and exists. Sentient beings include not only ourselves and not only others; they exist as suffering and we cannot deny it. A sweet melon is sweet to the stem, and the lotus root is bitter to the core. Since we are unable to comprehend suffering, we must question ourselves further to find what suffering is.

Concerning the “observation that the mind is impermanent,” Sōkei [Enō] the ancient Buddha said, “Impermanence is the Buddha-nature.” Impermanence has many interpretations but they ultimately are reduced to the fact that it is the Buddha-nature. Great Master Yōka Shingaku said, “All things are impermanent, everything is empty – this is the Tathāgata’s Great and Perfect Enlightenment.” Observation of the mind’s impermanence is the Tathāgata’s Great and Perfect Enlightenment, i.e., the Great and Perfectly Enlightened Tathāgata. If the mind does not have this observation it falls into subjectivity. If there is mind there must also be this observation.

The actualization of supreme and total enlightenment is the impermanence and the observation of the mind. Mind is not necessarily permanent, nor is it separated from various pluralistic forms; even wall, tiles, stones, and large and small rocks are mind. This is impermanence, i.e., observation. “Observation that all things are devoid of self” is that long things are long, short things are short, in themselves. Actualization and function exist and therefore, there is “no self.” The dog has no Buddha-nature, the dog has Buddha-nature, all sentient beings have no Buddha-nature, Buddha-nature has no sentient beings, Buddhas have no sentient beings, Buddhas have no Buddhas, Buddha nature has no Buddha-nature, sentient beings have no sentient beings. Like this, all dharmas are no dharmas—all things are without self. If we grasp this we can attain freedom from perplexity and doubt.

Shakyamuni Buddha said, “All the Buddhas and Patriarchs practice this law [the four types of meditation] and it forms their sacred essence.” That is, all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas keep the four types of meditation as their sacred essence. We must know that they are the sacred essence of perfect and marvellous enlightenment. Consequently, Shakyamuni Buddha used the expression “all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas,” and even those Buddhas who have not yet realized marvellous enlightenment have it as their sacred essence as well as Bodhisattvas who have gone beyond perfect and marvellous enlightenment. Truly, the skin, flesh, bones, and marrow of all the Buddhas and Patriarchs take the four types of meditation as their sacred essence.

1-EN Samādhis based on the teachings found in the Diamond Sūtra and Sūrangama Sūtra. Diamond samādhi (vajra-samādhi) is extremely sharp and clear; sūrangama samādhi is all powerful, destroying all illusions.

There are four right efforts: 1) to prevent future evil from arising; 2) to destroy present evil; 3) to produce merit; and 4) to increase the present good.

"Prevent future evil from arising." "Evil" does not have an exact definition, but due to certain influences and circumstances evil actions occur. Nonetheless, we must try to prevent evil before it arises. This is the Buddhist Dharma which has been transmitted to the present day. In the teaching of non-believers there is the concept of a pre-existent self, but such a notion is not found in the Buddhist Dharma. Where does evil exist if it has not occurred yet? If we say there is evil in the future this is called *danmetsuken*, an idea of the non-believers [which omits the law of cause and effect]. Even if future evil is manifested in the present, that is still not part of the Buddhist teaching. That kind of thinking is nothing but confusion about the three aspects of time. If we are confused about the three aspects of time, we will be confused about the Dharma; if we are confused about the Dharma, we will be confused about the actual form of reality; if we are confused about the actual form of reality, we will be confused about "only Buddha transmits Buddha." Do not say that the future comes after the present. Furthermore, we should ask, "What is future evil?" Is there anyone who can comprehend it? Even if it can be comprehended, there are occasions when future evil does not occur or when it is not in the future. If that is so, then it cannot be called future evil—it is extinguished evil. Instead of studying the doctrines of non-believers, Hinayānists, śrāvakas, etc., study the doctrine of preventing future evil from arising. Accumulating evil throughout the world is future evil which has not yet arisen. "Not arisen" means that yesterday's definition is final, but today's is not.

"Destroy present evil." "Present" means all life in the present. In other words, all life is half-life; half-life is this life. This life obstructs nothing; it transcends evil. In order to destroy evil we must consider the story of Devadatta who fell into hell still living, but it was predicted that he would attain Buddhahood some day. A living person can become a donkey or a Buddha. After we study this principle we will find its essence – destruction must be destroyed, and there is nothing left but destruction.

"To produce merit" is to realize our original face that existed before our parents were born; then the real nature of human beings appears from the unlimited past; it is the understanding that preceded Kūō Buddha.

"To increase the present good" should not be confused with "to produce merit." Remember it says "increase." Shakyamuni was enlightened upon seeing the morning star, began to teach others to see what he saw, and helped others attain enlightened vision. [Baso Dōitsu] practiced for thirty years, and never lacked rice or salt [i.e., his merit increased]. This is the meaning of increase. The valley is deep and the ladle handle is long and can they continually increase their capacity.

There are four steps to supernatural power: 1) resolve; 2) mindfulness; 3) diligence; and 4) deep analysis.

"Resolve" is the determination to become the body and mind of Buddha and awaken from the sleep of illusion. The limited self makes a prostration to [the great self]. Resolve is not related to the body and mind formed by karma – it works freely like the birds flying in the vast sky and fish swimming in shallow water.

"Mindfulness" is wall, tiles, stones, mountains, rivers, and earth; it is each of the three worlds; a chair, bamboo, wood. Each reveals its own function and therefore possesses the mind of Buddhas and Patriarchs, the mind of fools and saints, the mind of grass and trees, the mind of demons and ghosts. All the minds are "mindfulness."

"Diligence" is the one step off the top of a hundred-foot pole. Where is the top of this hundred-foot pole? If there is no progress nothing can be gained; we must step ahead with no wobbling. In that step we move towards enlightenment, sometimes advancing, sometimes retreating. When we increase our diligence it covers the entire universe and then true diligence emerges.

"Deep analysis" is the liberated cognition of all the Buddhas and Patriarchs, and settles nowhere. There is an analysis of the body, of the mind, of consciousness, of straw sandals, and of the self that existed before time. These are called the bases of spiritual power, and there is no hesitation or reticence here.

Shakyamuni Buddha said, "Without taking a step we arrive at our destination." This is called the four steps to supernatural power. It is like a hole made by an auger and a sharpened chisel [i.e., any act can be accomplished through these supernatural powers].

There are five faculties leading to proper conduct: 1) faith; 2) diligence; 3) thought; 4) concentration (*samādhi*); and 5) wisdom.

We should know that "faith"^{2-EN} does not depend on oneself not others. It cannot be created by oneself, nor be forced upon others. Since it cannot be developed, based on one's own tenets, it is the hidden transmission of the east and west. Faith is the faith of the entire body and mind. Surely Buddhahood bears fruit in oneself and others. If no such fruit is born, faith can never be actualized. Consequently, it is said, "The Buddhist Dharma is like the Great Ocean and can be entered only through faith." Where faith exists, Buddhas and Patriarchs are actualized.

"Diligence" is *shikantaza*, single-minded sitting in Zazen. This means if we want to stop or rest we do not. Do not stop what should continue on and on. This faculty transcends diligence and neglect and is not limited to any special time.

Shakyamuni Buddha said, "I practice diligence continually and thereby attain Supreme and Perfect Enlightenment." "Continually practice" covers the past, present, and future from beginning to end. "I practice diligence continually" is the attainment of his enlightenment. Because he attained Supreme and Perfect Enlightenment he is continually diligent. If that was not so, how could he have been continually practicing? Or how could he have attained his enlightenment? Scholars of the *abhidharma* and *sūtras* cannot find this essential point. That is why they are unable to have true study.

"Thought" is the body of a withered tree. The "body" of a withered tree means a withered tree is "thought" i.e., the physical body of a withered tree possesses the life of Buddha. Thought is one's reflections. There is thought in the physical body and thought in no-mind. There is thought in the existent mind and thought in the non-existent body. The life of the entire body of the universe is thought. The life of all the Buddhas in the ten directions is also thought. One thought, countless people; one person, many thoughts. Nevertheless, there are people with thought and without. People do not necessarily possess thought, and thought does not always depend on human beings. Nonetheless, this faculty of thought possesses great merit.

"*Samādhi*" has the two aspects of *sekishubimo* [i.e., *jijiyū samādhi*, the *samādhi* of self-realization] and *sakkibimo* [*taiyū*

2-EN Shinkon, "faith" or "belief." Actually, the meaning of this word is closer to the English word "confidence"; that is, confidence in the enlightenment of Buddha and the truth of the Buddhist Dharma, rather than belief in some supernatural or abstract principle. It is a totally rational concept with no emotionalism or mysticism involved.

samādhi, to encourage the samādhi of others]. In other words, “karma never stops” and “karma ceases.” Sometimes we become a donkey, sometimes a horse. A piece of jade may be surrounded by stones, but all the stones are not jade. The earth contains many mountains, but the earth is not only mountains. We must ultimately transcend all oppositions and harmonize them.

“Wisdom” is not completely understood by all the Buddhas of the three worlds, yet even raccoons and white oxen possess knowledge of it. Wisdom cannot be explained with words – it is breathing through the nostrils, or the fingers of a list. When a donkey looks into a well, donkey sees donkey, well sees well—they are unified and inseparable.

There are five powers of the five faculties: 1) the power of faith; 2) the power of diligence; 3) the power of thought; 4) the power of concentration; and 5) the power of wisdom.

“The power of faith” is the power developed from the practice of faith that enables us to shatter all evil beliefs. From the time we are born until the time we die the power of faith is the essential force. That force is behind “seven times down, eight times up.” There the power of faith is like pure water or a spotless pearl. The transmission of the Law and kesa is accomplished through faith – transmitted by Buddhas to Patriarchs.

The “power of diligence” is to teach with explanations when we cannot reach with actions, and to teach with actions when we cannot explain. That is why when we have sufficient explanation we do not need action, or when we have enough action we do not need any additional explanation. Strength comes from strength – this is the power of diligence.

The “power of thought” is [Seidō’s] nose being yanked by his master. Actual- ly, the master’s nose was pulling [Seidō’s]. jade attracts jade, tile attracts tile. Even if you can grasp this, you still deserve thirty blows of the staff. This power can never be exhausted even if used by everyone.

The “power of samādhi” is like a child holding his mother, the mother holding the child, the child holding the child, the mother holding the mother. Nevertheless, the head cannot be called a face, money cannot buy money; this power is like a song continually increasing in volume becoming livelier and livelier.

The “power of wisdom” comes from deep in the distant past; it is like having a boat enabling us to cross over to the other shore. “We get a boat just when we need it” is an ancient proverb; it is absolutely necessary to have a boat when we need it. “Boat” means overcoming all obstacles in crossing over to the other side. This power gradually melts the spring ice.

There are seven ways to enlightenment: 1) discrimination of the true from the false; 2) diligence; 3) joy; 4) spiritual peace; 5) equanimity; 6) concentration; and 7) mindfulness.

If we make even the smallest mistake in “discriminating the true from the false,” it creates a gulf like that between heaven and earth; discrimination is neither difficult-nor easy, but we must investigate carefully with an attentive mind.

“Diligence” means not being like merchants who want to get something for nothing. Whatever we buy or sell we must know its price and value. This power enables us to put others first without having our own body broken. Even if we have not “sold” the one word of enlightenment, there is some merchant who has “bought” it [i.e., knows the mind of that one word]. Before the donkey’s tail is finished, the horse’s begins to grow.

“Joy” is heartfelt concern for others. Yet the thousand hands and eyes of Daihi (Kannon) are not enough to save all sentient beings. It is like plum blossoms blooming in the last snow of the season; spring has come but it is still bitterly cold. Nevertheless, we become vigorous and joyful.

“Spiritual peace” means stepping outside ourselves when we think about our inner nature, and stepping outside of others. When we are with them we can gain what others cannot. We spend our life in the midst of diversity and should remain in a state of spiritual peace.

“Equanimity” is Tōzan’s saying “No matter what I say, don’t accept it.” A Chinese cannot learn about other countries by walking around China, nor can a Persian search for articles made from ivory other than those produced in his own country.

“Samādhi” is similar to anticipating things before they occur; that’s intuition. Use your own nostrils, not others’; completely control your own veins. Then we will be like the water buffalo on Mt. Issan.^{3-EN}

“Mindfulness” is walking through the air around a pillar in the Buddha Hall. The mouth resembles the wooden clapper used to announce various events in the monastery and the eyes become eyebrows [i.e., functionless functions]. It resembles sandalwood incense burning in the temple, or a lion roaring in his den.

The Eightfold Path (Eightfold Holy Path) consists of: 1) right vision; 2) right thought; 3) right speech; 4) right action; 5) right livelihood; 6) right effort; 7) right mindfulness; and 8) right samādhi.

“Right vision” is within the enlightened vision of our entire body. That is why we must possess the eye which existed before our body was born. This vision sees all things as they are in their true form – the actualization of enlightenment. We share that vision with the Buddhas and Patriarchs. If we do not have enlightened vision within our body we cannot be called Buddhas or Patriarchs.

When we have “right thought” all the Buddhas of the ten directions are actualized; when the ten directions emerge and the Buddhas appear it is the time of right thought. When we have right thought it is not ourselves, and not others. Although our thought occurs in the present, it should be like that of Shakyamuni at Benares. We should possess the same thought as Shakyamuni at that time. An ancient Buddha said, “Think ‘not-thinking.’ How? By using ‘non-thinking.’” This is right thought. Sitting until the cushion is worn away is also right thought.

“Right speech” is like a mute person thinking he is not mute. In the world of ordinary people a mute person does not speak; however, in their own world there are no mute people. We must study the proverb, “the mouth is hanging on all the walls – every mouth is on all the walls.” That is, the silence of Zazen is the actualization of right speech.

“Right action” is practising the Way after renouncing the world, attaining enlightenment after entering the monastery. Shakyamuni Buddha said, “The thirty-seven conditions are the real actions of monks.” The monks’ actions should be neither Mahayana nor Hinayāna. There are various kinds of monks – Buddha monks, Bodhisattva monks, śrāvaka monks, etc. If you have not yet renounced the world you will never be able to inherit or transmit the right action and great Way of the Buddhist

3-EN See Shōbōgenzō vol. I, p. 110.

Dharma. Recently, there are some lay people who are studying the Way, but none of them have mastered it. In order to master the Way, it is absolutely necessary to renounce the world and become a monk. If one lacks the determination to renounce the world, how can he ever hope to inherit the Buddhist Way?

However, there have been some Zen monks in Sung Dynasty China during the past two or three hundred years who claim that there is no difference between their study and that of lay people. These kind of people are worse than excrement-eating beasts. At times, some monks have said to kings and ministers that there is no distinction between a statesman's mind and that of the Buddha's and Patriarchs. Since kings and ministers do not know what the right teaching and right Law are, they are happy to bestow titles and honours to undeserving monks. Any monk who follows that path will become a Devadatta, a perverter of the Dharma. In order to get the praise of kings and ministers such monks tell childish and ridiculous stories. This is very pitiful. These monks are not the descendants of the seven Buddhas, but rather demons and beasts. They have not studied the Way through their body and mind, never learned anything, or attained liberation of body and mind. They lack knowledge of the evil side of court life and politics; consequently, they are unable even to dream of the Great Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Although the lay disciple Vimalakirti lived in the time of Shakyamuni, he was unable to master many things and had much to clarify. Hōon, another lay disciple, visited many Patriarchs but was unable to receive the transmission from Yakusan, or attain the stage of Kosei [Baso]. All that remains is his name. His study bore little fruit. Other laymen such as Rifuba, Yūbunko, etc. studied a great deal but never ate a real rice cake [i.e., tasted the true teaching].^{4-EN} How then could they eat a painting of a rice cake or partake of the meal of the Buddhas and Patriarchs? The problem of receiving the mendicant bowl never even arises. It is very pitiful that they spent their lives as worthless skin bags. All beings, earthly and heavenly, and in the dragon kingdoms, should seek the Law of the Tathāgata, renounce the world, practice the Way, and then transmit the teaching of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

We should not pay any attention to the words of inauthentic Zen masters. They do not know the body or mind [of Buddha]. That is why they talk like that. Such people lack compassion for sentient beings, and have no desire to protect the Buddhist Dharma; they only like the filthy offerings of laymen – they are like malicious dogs with human faces. Do not sit, talk with, or depend on them. They are beasts. If such monks possess filthy lucre, they think they are superior. Actually, these monks do not have anything equal to the filth of beasts. There is no evidence or principle anywhere in the five thousand volumes of the sūtras or in the two thousand year history of the Buddhist transmission that the mind of a layman and the mind of a monk are equal. None of the Buddhas and Patriarchs in fifty-four generations has ever said such a thing. Even a monk that has broken or does not keep any of the precepts, and lacks any Law or wisdom is still superior to a layman who keeps the precepts and possesses insight. This is because only a monk has the wisdom, enlightenment, and practice of the Way as the basis of his life. A layman may accumulate goodness and virtue, but he nevertheless lacks the root of virtue in body and mind.

Even during the lifetime of Shakyamuni, no layman attained the Way. A layman's house is not a dojo where the Buddhist Way can be studied; there are too many obstacles. Those who say that a layman's mind is the same as a Patriarch's mind do not possess the body and mind of the Dharma and have not transmitted the skin, flesh, bones, and marrow of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. This is very pitiful. Even though they live during the period of the propagation of the True Law they still fall into the realm of beasts.

Sōkei [Enō] the ancient Buddha left his parents and sought out a master; this is an example of right action. Prior to having his Buddha-seeking mind aroused by hearing a verse from the Diamond Sūtra, he was a woodcutter living in a hut. After he heard the Diamond Sūtra the fragrance of the Buddhist Law overcame him, and he abandoned his worldly concerns and became a monk. We should learn from this story that when we possess the Buddhist Dharma in our bodies and minds we cannot remain laymen. All the Buddhas and Patriarchs have experienced the same thing.

To think that it is not necessary to renounce the world is a graver sin than the five deadly sins, and such people are worse than Devadatta. We should have no traffic with such people because they are worse than the worst bhikkhus and bhikkhunis. Life is short and we have no time to waste talking to evil beasts. Nevertheless, these people have received a seed in their previous lives that enables them to hear the Buddhist Dharma and they have a place in the scheme of the Buddhist world. We should try to prevent them from falling into the realm of beasts. Do not forget the profound mercy of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, always preserve the virtue of the cream of the Law, and do not pay any attention to, or have anything to do with, the barking of malicious dogs.

The ancient Buddha Bodhidharma left the Buddhist country of India and came to the east; he transmitted the True Law of the Buddhas and Patriarchs for the first time. If he had not attained the Way by renouncing the world, such an event could never have occurred. Prior to the first Patriarch's coming to the east, the people of China neither saw nor heard the True Dharma. Therefore, we should know that the right transmission of the True Law is nothing other than the virtue contained in renouncing the world. The Great Teacher Shakyamuni did not take his father's crown, not because it was not noble, but because he wanted to inherit a more precious rank. His rank is the rank of one who has renounced the world. All sentient beings in the heavenly and earthly worlds venerate such a rank. How is it that human kings or dragon kings cannot share the same throne with Shakyamuni? Because his seat is the seat of a supreme enlightened one. One who has such a rank proclaims the Dharma and helps those in illusion; he appears radiant and bright. The actions of one who has renounced the world and attained such a rank are "right action." All the Buddhas, including the seven Buddhas of the past, have maintained this kind of action. This could not have occurred if Buddha had not searched for Buddha. People who have not yet renounced the world should venerate, respect, worship, and revere those who have renounced the world and show their sincerity with all their body and mind.

Shakyamuni Buddha said, "Renouncing the world and receiving the precepts is the seed of Buddhahood; such people are ordained monks." Therefore, we should know that ordination equals renunciation. People who have not yet renounced the world are just floating through life—this is a very sad and pitiful situation. In Shakyamuni's teaching there are many examples describing the virtue of renouncing the world. Shakyamuni taught the Dharma sincerely and all the Buddhas have certified it. Even if a monk breaks the precepts and does not practice, he can still attain the Way, but a layman can never do that. Emperors prostrate themselves before monks and nuns but they do not bow in return. The same thing occurs when celestial beings pay their respects to monks and nuns. Such things come about because of the superior virtue of renouncing the world. If monks and nuns who have renounced the world prostrate themselves before the celestial beings then palaces will crumble,

4-EN Hōkoji (Páng 740-803) was a lay disciple of Baso and also studied under Sekitō Rifuba and Yūbunko were Chinese court officials who studied Buddhism.

Divine Light will lose its brilliance, and good fortune will end – all virtue will be lost.

Generally speaking, following the transmission of the Buddhist Dharma to the east, vast numbers of those who have renounced the world have attained the Way, but no laymen. This happens because if someone sees or hears the Buddhist Dharma he will quickly renounce the world. The lay world is not the place for the Buddhist Dharma. If someone maintains that a layman's body and mind is the same as the body and mind of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, he has not yet seen or heard the Buddhist Dharma. This is the mentality of criminals who have fallen into the darkest hell. Only fools who do not know what they are saying talk like that. Anyone who equates the layman's mind with the mind of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, and calls this the supreme Dharma, will make emperors overjoyed; however, the Buddhist Dharma is supreme only if the layman's mind is actually the same mind as that of the Buddhas and Patriarchs; then the body and mind of the Buddhas and Patriarchs becomes the body and mind of a layman – if that happens then the layman no longer exists. Zen masters who hold that both minds are the same have never learned the true meaning of the Buddhist Dharma; moreover, they cannot even dream of the mind of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

In general, Brahma, Indra, human kings, dragon kings, etc. should not be attached to the law of retribution in the three worlds. Instead they should quickly renounce the world, receive the precepts, and practice the Way of all the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Throughout innumerable kalpas renunciation has the seed of Buddhahood. Upon reflection, we can see that if Vimalakirti had renounced the world and become a monk, as the bhikkhu Vimalakirti he would have been superior to the layman Vimalakirti.

Today we only see Sūbhuti, Śāriputra, Mañjūśrī, and Maitreya [as Buddha's true disciples]. Vimalakirti does not have even half the stature of those monks. Therefore, how can we see three, four, or five Vimalakirtis [i.e., his disciples and descendants]. If we cannot see three, four, or five Vimalakirtis we will not be able to see even one Vimalakirti who knows and possesses [the Buddhist Dharma]. If there is a Vimalakirti who does not possess [the Buddhist Dharma] we will not see the Buddha Vimalakirti. If there is no Buddha Vimalakirti there can be no Vimalakirti Mañjūśrī, Vimalakirti Maitreya, Vimalakirti Śāriputra, etc. Moreover, how can there be a Vimalakirti of mountains, rivers, earth, or a Vimalakirti in grasses, trees, tiles, wind, rain, water, fire, etc. in the past, present, and future? Vimalakirti has not seen the virtuous Divine Light of those things because he has not renounced the world. If he had renounced the world he would be full of virtue.

Zen masters in the Tang and Sung Dynasties failed to comprehend this principle; consequently, they think Vimalakirti has attained the Way. It is a great pity these people do not know what true teaching is in the Buddhist Dharma. Not only that, some even think that the Way of Shakyamuni and Vimalakirti is the same. These people have yet to learn the Buddhist Dharma, the Way of the Patriarchs, or about Vimalakirti – they have no idea of the differences between them.

Such people think that Vimalakirti's thundering silence as an answer to the Bodhisattvas is the same as the silent teaching of Buddha. That indicates they do not really know the Buddhist Dharma, and they lack the ability to learn the Way. Since the words of the Tathāgata are different from all others his silence, of course, is different from all other kinds. The silence of the Tathāgata and the silence of Vimalakirti cannot be compared in any way. If we evaluate those who maintain that the words are different but the silences are the same, we find that they have never advanced beyond the stage of a novice. It is a great pity that such people have never seen nor heard the voice or form of Buddha. How can they possess the Divine Light of the unsurpassed voice and form of Buddha? How can they find the real meaning of studying silence with silence? They know nothing about it. In general, things differ from one another, so how is it possible to compare the action and silence of Shakyamuni with others? They have not penetrated the depths of the Buddhas' and Patriarchs, teaching and therefore cannot make such comparisons.

Sometimes malicious people think that teaching and deeds are mere expedients and that silence and keeping quiet are the truth. To talk like that is not the Buddhist Dharma, it is closer to the teaching of Brahma and Shiva. How can that teaching be related to either the action or silence of the Buddhist Dharma? We must study in detail whether or not action and contemplation exist in the Buddhist Way and what their relationship is. Present day students should study this eagerly.

In present Sung Dynasty China almost no one studies the Great Way, probably not more than two or three. People there think Vimalakirti maintained his noble silence and that if we do not follow him we will be inferior. That is the goal of their Buddhist Dharma. Again, there are those who equate Vimalakirti's silence with that of Shakyamuni; consequently, they lack the Divine Light that enables one to distinguish between them. People who think like this have never studied, nor seen or heard the Buddhist Dharma. Just because they happen to be men of the Great Sung Dynasty does not mean that they possess the Buddhist Dharma. This principle is easy to understand.

Right action should be a monk's work. Scholars of the abhidharma or the sūtras do not know this. The work of monks is to practice in the monastery, to make prostrations in the Buddha Hall, and wash the face in the lavatory. Making a gassho, bowing, offering incense, and boiling water – this is right action. Not only does the head change into a tail, but the head changes to a head, the mind changes to mind, Buddha changes to Buddha, the Way changes to the Way- this is right action. If we have a mistaken understanding of the Buddhist Dharma, our eyebrows will fall off and our original lace will be lost.

"Right life" is taking rice gruel in the morning, and eating lunch at noon. It is spiritual forging in the monastery, sitting in a chair and receiving instruction. Old Master Jōshū had less than twenty disciples because he actualized right life. Yakusan had less than ten, Fumyō^{5-EN} only seven or eight. This is the lifeblood and basis of right life, separated from all evil deeds.

Shakyamuni Buddha said, "None of the śrāvakas have attained right life yet." That is to say, the teaching, deeds, and enlightenment of śrāvakas is not right life. However, recently foolish people say that there should not be any distinctions between śrāvakas and Bodhisattvas; the hearing and observation of the precepts must be the same. From the standpoint of the Hinayāna they criticize the actions of the Mahāyāna Bodhisattva.

Shakyamuni Buddha said, "Keeping the precepts of the śrāvakas is the same as breaking the precepts of the Bodhisattvas." Therefore, although the śrāvakas may think that they keep the precepts, when compared with those of the Bodhisattvas it is like breaking their own precepts. The same can be said for their respective practices of samādhi and wisdom. For example, the form of the precepts "Not to kill any living being," etc. seems to be the same for both śrāvakas and Bodhisattvas, yet there is certainly a distinction – a difference greater than that between heaven and earth. How can we say that śrāvakas transmit the essence of the Buddhas and Patriarchs? There is not only right life, but pure life. Therefore, that is why study under the Buddhas and Patriarchs is the only right life. It is not necessary to use the interpretations of abhidharma scholars since they have not yet attained right life – their life is not a real one.

“Right effort” is practice with our entire body, the practice that strikes people in the face. It is like riding a horse upside down or whirling around the Buddha Hall one, two, three, four, or five times. Nine times nine even equals eighty-two; [that is, it transcends rational systems of counting]. Turn the head and many intersections can be seen; turn the face and more intersections appear. Entering your master’s room and the master’s lecturing in the Dharma Hall are right effort. Meeting at the Boshutei or Usekirei,^{1-EN} in front of the monastery. or behind the altar in the Buddha Hall is like two mirrors facing each other and giving three reflections.

“Right mindfulness” is eighty or ninety percent deception. It is a mistake to think that wisdom develops from mindfulness; this is like the foolish boy who abandoned his father. Wisdom that develops within mindfulness is detached insight. People who say that no-mindfulness is right mindfulness are heretics. Again, do not think that the spirit of earth, water, fire, and wind is mindfulness, nor that it is some form of inverted consciousness. “You possess my skin, flesh, bones, and marrow” is right mindfulness.

“Right samādhi” is the dropping oli of the Buddhas and Patriarchs; dropping off is right samādhi. Then we will have the ability to cut off the head and make nostrils [i.e., complete freedom of activity]. It is the holding up of an udumbara flower within the Eye and Treasury of the True Law. Within the udumbara flower there are a hundred smiling Mahākāśyapas. This dynamic, lively activity has been practiced for a long time, like a broken wooden ladle. Therefore, after six years of leaves falling and grasses finding, one night the flower bloomed. The universe was set afire, and all impurities were burned away.

These thirty-seven conditions favourable to enlightenment are the enlightened eyes, the nostrils, the skin, flesh, bones, marrow, hands, feet, and face of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Moreover, enlightenment is the actualization of 1,369 [37 x 37] conditions. Practice Zazen continually, and drop off body and mind.

This was delivered to the monks on February 24, 1243, at Kippōji, Echizen. Transcribed the same year on March 9, in the chief disciple’s quarters by Ejō.

1-EN Boshutei or Usekirei: Places were Seppō used to live.

61. RYŪGIN

龍吟

“The roar of a dragon”

One day Great Master Jisai of Mt. Tōsu in Jōshū^{1-EN} was asked by a monk, “Does an old withered tree roar like a dragon or not?” The Master replied, “In my Buddhist Way even a skull proclaims the Great Law.” Non-believers say that an old withered tree is just an old withered tree and ashes are only ashes. There is a great difference between the opinions of non-believers and those of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Non-believers discuss the concept of a “withered tree” but they do not know what it really is. Much less do they understand the roar of a dragon. Non-believers think that a withered tree is a dead tree and it will not have foliage next spring.

Buddhas and Patriarchs understand a withered tree in this manner: Even if the ocean dries up we cannot see the bottom. “The ocean dries up” is the same as “the tree becomes withered.” A “withered tree” is one that will have foliage next spring. “Withered” is the continuity of the tree. All trees in the mountains, oceans, and sky are “withered.” To have new buds on the trees is to be “withered” and hear the roar of a dragon. Even a huge tree is the growth of a “withered” tree. The form, nature, character and strength of a “withered tree” is the “withered post” of the Buddhist Way.^{2-EN} The term “withered” can be applied to trees in a mountain valley or trees in a village; we can use the terms “conifer” for those in a mountain valley and jinten for those in a village.^{3-EN}

[Zen Master Sekitō once said,] “Because there is a root leaves appear.” This is the Buddhas and Patriarchs. The innermost root and the outermost leaves are one in the root of truth. We must study this.

In this “withered tree” long is long, short is short. There can be no roar of a dragon if the tree is not “withered,” although a “withered tree” transcends the dragon’s roar. “Many springs come and go but the nature of the withered tree never changes.” Further, the roar of a dragon should not be thought of in terms of the five tones [of Chinese music]: Kyu, sho, kakui cho, and u, although the dragon’s roar contains those sounds.

When the monk asked his question it was the first time his desire to get the truth was revealed. Tōsu’s answer, “Even a skull proclaims the Great Law” summarized every thing about the Buddhist Way and affirmed the monk’s question. Tōsu’s attitude was the real Buddhist attitude: that which put others’ welfare before our own enlightenment—this is the skull and the roar of a dragon.

Once a monk asked Great Master Ryuto of Kyōgenji:^{4-EN} “What is the Buddhist Way?” The master answered “The roar of a dragon in a withered tree.” The monk then said, “I don’t understand.” The master told him, “It’s the glowing eyes of a skull.”

Another time, a monk asked Great Master Sekisō,^{5-EN} “What is the roar of a dragon in a withered tree?” “You are retaining a mind that seeks pleasure,” the Master told him. “What are the glowing eyes of a skull?” The monk asked again. The master said, “You still retain that consciousness.”

At still another time, Great Master Sōzan Honjaku^{6-EN} was questioned by a monk, “What is the roar of a dragon in a withered tree?” Sōzan said, “The life blood [of the Buddhas and Patriarchs] has never ceased flowing.” “What are the glowing eyes of a skull?” The monk asked. “A withered tree never dries up,” was Sōzan’s answer. But the monk said, “I cannot understand. Is there anyone who can?” “Everyone, throughout the world, can understand it,” Sōzan told him. The monk said, “I still don’t understand. Are there any words that can adequately describe the roar of a dragon?” The master replied, “I cannot understand the meaning of the words myself.” The monk failed to comprehend Sōzan’s answer and his life was lost.

All of these dialogues are using a form of conversation that is as different from ordinary speech as a dragon’s roar is from the voice of a man. “Within the withered tree” or “in the skull” are not concerned with discrimination of in or out, self or others; they permeate past and present. When Sekisō told the monk he retained a mind that seeks pleasure he was trying to show the monk a more complete form of the roaring dragon, and the second answer, “You still retain that consciousness” tried to give him the taste of liberation.

Sōzan’s “The lifeblood never ceases” attempts to express what cannot be expressed in words; “it never dries up” is the same as “the bottom of the ocean cannot be seen.” It is endlessly drying. When the monk asked if there is anyone who could understand it Sōzan told him everyone throughout the world can understand it. That is, everyone is able to hear the roar of a dragon; it exists everywhere. Let us investigate this a little further. Leaving aside for the time being the possibility that no one has heard the roar of a dragon, let us consider where the roar of a dragon is when everyone hears it.

We know that the roar of a dragon is a sound made in the mind like breathing through the nose. Sōzan meant by his final answer that he could not express the roar of the dragon in words, but actually his own voice was the roar of the dragon. The monk could not comprehend this; consequently, his life was wasted. This is a great pity.

These dialogues of Kyogen, Sekisō, and Sōzan concerning the roar of a dragon gather clouds and draw water. Saying or not saying, glowing eyes or the skull—these are different voices of a dragon. The question to Sōzan about the dragon’s roar was like the croak of a bullfrog and the question about the skull was like the voice of an earthworm. It was the dragon’s roar—the ceaseless life-blood the Buddhas and Patriarchs. This great stream is transferring water from one ground to another and never dries up. A round pillar becomes pregnant and a stone lantern meets a stone lantern.

Delivered on December 25, 1243, at Eiheiji, Echizen.

1-EN T’ou-tzu, dates unknown.

2-EN “Withered” is a symbol for total detachment. In this chapter it stands for an absolute state of non-duality and complete detachment.

3-EN “Village” in the text is “rice paddy.” We have taken it to mean village because “jinten” is the world of men and gods.

4-EN Hsiang-yen, dates unknown.

5-EN Shishuang (d. 888).

6-EN Tao-shang (d. 901)

62. SOSHISEIRAI

祖師西來意

“Why the first Patriarch came from the west”

One day Great Master Kyōgenji Ryuto (Shikan), who was in the transmission of Zen Master Dai-e, delivered the following discourse to an assembly of monks:

“Once a man was hanging from a branch of a tree by his mouth. The tree is perched over a 1000 foot gorge and he cannot grasp any branches with his hands nor reach the tree with his feet. A monk standing beneath the tree asks him, “Why did the first Patriarch come from the west?” If the man answers he will plunge to his death. If he does not answer he avoids his duty. O monks! What would you answer in such a case?” A monk named [Kotōshō] arose from the assembly and said, “I do not want to ask you about when he was up in the tree; please show us the situation before he got up there!” Kyogen then gave a great laugh.^{1-EN}

There are many interpretations and explanations of this koan, but few have understood it correctly. Most people are just groping in the dark. If we look at this koan with a “non-thinking” mind [i.e., a mind that goes beyond ordinary cognition, a mind of detachment] we can attain the same kind of real, free samādhi as Kyogen. And if we sit in Zazen like Kyogen we can grasp the meaning of this koan even before he speaks. Then we can use both Kyōgen’s insight and Shakyamuni’s Eye and Treasury of the True Law to help us understand why Bodhidharma came from the west.

Let us clarify the meaning of Kyōgen’s koan. What does “man” signify? Not a round pillar of the Buddha Hall, not a wooden post or anything like that. The man’s countenance is that of the smiling Buddhas and Patriarchs. He distinctly knows his own form and the form of others. He is climbing to the top of a tree, not to the top of the universe or even to the top of a 100 foot bamboo pole. The gorge is 1000 feet deep. Whether he falls or not it is always 1000 feet deep. But “1000 feet” has a very special meaning. We can say the man climbs up 1000 feet or climbs down 1000 feet. There is 1000 feet on both his right and left. We can say that everything is “1000 feet” – the man, the tree, the gorge. It is the measure of an old mirror, a hearth, or a stūpa.^{2-EN}

“Hanging from the branch of a tree with his mouth.” What is this “mouth”? If we are unable to recognize the function of this “mouth” we must search hard for its true definition. An old saying is “Search for the branch and remove the leaves.” Going directly to its essence is the way to seek out the real meaning of “mouth.” It must be the focus of our study since the man’s life depends on his mouth and vice-versa.

While he is hanging from the branch the tree is only a tree, nothing else and his feet are just his feet. We should not say that the feet step on the tree. The tree, the branch, the feet and the hands climb themselves.^{3-EN} Although the man’s feet possess the ability to move back and forth and his hands can grasp and release he is dangling over the edge of a gorge and neither feet nor hands can get a hold on the tree. You might think that he is hanging in space. Actually he is hanging in “emptiness,” and that is far better than simply hanging from the tree [in a state of relativity].

“Why did the first Patriarch come from the west?” asked the monk beneath the tree. It was as if the tree itself was asking the question. Here the tree, the man, and the question are the same; they are all equal. Both the questioner and the questioned are of equal significance. Tree questions tree, man questions man, Bodhidharma questions Bodhidharma. The monk beneath the tree must ask his question as if his life also depended on the answer. This is the spirit we must have.

“If he answers he will plunge to his death.” What does this mean? We know it is possible to give an answer without opening the mouth. However, whether he opens his mouth or not do not forget he is hanging from the branch. Since the function of the mouth is not dependent on opening, closing, speaking or silence then hanging from the branch is also independent of those actions. Opening and closing are the normal, everyday actions of the mouth so therefore we can say that “hanging from the branch” is the ultimate state of opening or closing the mouth. Opening and closing the mouth to give answers to others is just like hanging from the branches it not? Does it mean the first Patriarch came from the west to answer others’ questions? If you fail to answer like one who is hanging from a branch your answer will be incorrect; it will only be your own incomplete observation. It must be given as a matter of life and death.

Only if you lose your life before you answer can you help others. The real purpose of Kyogen was to help others, even if he lost his own life. Before you give such an answer your life is static, dormant but after you answer like Kyogen your life becomes vigorous and active. You are truly alive for the first time and know how to speak true words. We can answer others’ questions and also find our own answers. Moreover, the mouth we use to speak these words is very different from the old, everyday one.

“If he does not answer he avoids his duty.” You must realize that in this case the answer is not different from the question. All the Buddhas and Patriarchs who have either answered or questioned why Bodhidharma came from the west based their interpretation on the proper understanding of “hanging from a branch by the mouth.”

Zen Master Secchō Myogaku [Priest Juken]^{4-EN} said, “If you are on top of the branch the Way is easy to find; but if you are underneath it the Way is very difficult to locate. Consequently, I will answer all questions as if my very life depends on it. Please ask me anything.” There seems to be a separation between Secchō’s asking for a question and his answer but actually the question follows the answer in this statement. Now I have a question to ask of all the sages of the past and present ages: “Is Kyōgen’s laughter from on top or beneath the branch? Did he answer Kōtoshō’s question or not?” All you monks gathered here must also answer this question.

Delivered on February 4, 1244, deep in the mountains of Echizen. Recopied on June 12, 1279, at Eiheiji.

1-EN Hsiang-yen Chih-hsien (c. 820). This is the fifth case of the Mumonkan.

2-EN “1000” indicates limitlessness or endlessness; it is the measure of truth of all things.

3-EN This means that we can look at the tree, the feet, the branch and hands from both subjective and objective perspectives; e.g., from the tree’s standpoint (tree is only tree) or the feet’s standpoint (feet are just feet). Actually they all are one, interdependent and interrelated

4-EN Hsüeh-tou, (d. 1052).

63. HOTSUMUJŌSHIN

發菩提心

“Developing the supreme mind”

The High Patriarch of India [Shakyamuni] said, “Great Nirvana is like the Himalayas.” We can see that this is a very appropriate simile. Shakyamuni was able to say this because he was familiar with the mountains and knew them well. “Himalayas” were chosen because of their magnitude, severity and similarity to Great Nirvana.

The first Chinese Patriarch said, “Each mind is like a petrified tree.” “Each mind” is “Mind,” i.e., the mind that covers the great earth. Therefore, there is the mind of self and of others. The minds of all the people of the great earth, of all the Buddhas and Patriarchs of the entire universe, of all heavenly dragons etc. are all this petrified tree. There is no other mind besides this. This “petrified tree” is not existent nor non-existent, not emptiness nor form, etc. Through the mind of a petrified tree we develop the mind of resolve for practice and enlightenment. Because the mind is originally a petrified tree we can actualize the eternal condition of “thinking” through “non-thinking.” If we study the voice of the wind of the petrified tree we can, for the first time, transcend the ideas of non-believers. Outside this there is no Buddhist Way.

The National Teacher Daisho said, “Walls, tiles, and stones are the ancient Buddha mind.” We must study carefully where walls, tiles, and stones exist. You must question where and how such things are actualized. “Ancient Buddha mind” is not Kūō Buddha, who existed aeons ago. Rather, it is just the ordinary everyday life of human beings. In such kind of life we sit and find Buddha. This is called the mind of resolve for enlightenment.

In general, the working of hotsubodaishin (the Buddha-seeking mind) is developed from hosshin (the initial awakening of the mind, the resolve for enlightenment); other than this, there is nothing. Awakening the mind of enlightenment is to make Buddha by holding up one blade of grass, or to make the sūtras with a piece of wood. Offer sand and the water from rice gruel to the Buddha, and then offer one handful of rice for sentient beings and five flower stems for the Tathāgata. The Buddha-seeking mind is to assist others when asked; it also can release you from the grasp of demons. Not only that, you must find the house that is not a house, i.e., enter the mountains and practice the Way with faith and trust in the Dharma. Make the form of Buddha, build stupas, chant the sūtras, recite Buddha’s name, proclaim the Dharma for all beings, find the right master, practice Zazen, take refuge in the Three Treasures – this is to praise Buddha.

Like this, the workings of the eighty thousand kinds of practice are surely contained in the initial awakening for enlightenment. We can attain the Way through hosshin even in the midst of this dream world while still drunk – in the blooming flowers, in the falling leaves, in the peach blossoms, in the sound of a tile striking the bamboo, in the heavens, and in the ocean. All these are the Buddha-seeking mind in the Buddha-seeking mind. Hotsubodaishin is within the body and mind, within the body and mind of all the Buddhas, and in the skin, flesh, bones, and marrow of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Therefore, building a stupa or making a Buddha is the Buddha-seeking mind. It is the resolve for enlightenment that leads directly to becoming Buddha. Do not stop midway or get caught in forms. This is the virtue of mu-i (not created) and musa (not being produced by conditions). They represent the observation of the Tathāgata and the true nature of the Dharma. All the Buddhas concentrate on this as their samādhi. It is their dharani and their supreme and perfect enlightenment; it is the fruit of arhats and the actualization of Buddha. There is nothing else besides the dharmas of mu-i and musa.

Although foolish Hinayānists say that the purpose of making a statue or building a stupa is to gain merit, put such an idea aside. Give up discriminatory thinking and concentrate your mind – this is mu-i. It is unborn and unconditioned reality, and the observation of the true form of all dharmas. This interpretation of mu-i is standard in east and west, both past and present. Some people try to expiate their sins or pernicious deeds by making a statue or building a stupa, while others try to escape the world of defilement reciting the name of Buddha or chanting the sūtras. If we act like that, we will not only destroy the seed of our own humanity but also the Buddha-nature of the Tathāgata. It is truly a pity that although we live in the age of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, we become their bitter enemy. Even if we climb the mountain or enter the ocean of the Three Treasures, we will come back empty handed. Even if we see thousands of Buddhas or Patriarchs we cannot attain their Way and we lose the right direction of the Buddha-seeking mind. This occurs because we neglect the sutras and do not follow them with a high degree of knowledge. We only follow non-believers and malicious teachers. Yet it is better to abandon the idea that building a stupa, etc. is not hotsubodaishin as soon as possible. Just purify your heart, body, ears, eyes and do not look at or listen to such observations. Follow the teachings in the Buddhist sūtras and choose masters of high attainment. Take refuge in the True Law and practice the Buddhist Dharma.

In the Great Way of the Buddhist Dharma countless sūtras and innumerable Buddhas can be seen in a speck of dust. One blade of grass or one tree together form one body and mind. If all dharmas were not created, then one mind could not have been created. If all dharmas have real form then one speck of dust has real form; therefore, one mind is all dharmas, all dharmas are one mind, and the entire body.

When a stūpa, etc. is built for some purpose, the fruit of Buddha’s enlightenment and the Buddha-nature of suchness must also have some purpose. However, since the Buddha-nature of suchness cannot be made intentionally, making a statue or building a stupa should not be done with some purpose or intention. The Buddha-seeking mind must arise without any ulterior motive; it is the virtue of purity and purposelessness. Yet we must firmly believe that making a statue or building a stupa, etc. is the Buddha-seeking mind. All the actions and wishes of countless ages started from this point. The Buddha-seeking mind cannot be destroyed in innumerable kalpas. This is “seeing Buddha and hearing the Law.”

We should know that gathering petrified wood, piling up mud, and collecting gold, silver, and the seven precious jewels to make a Buddha-image or stupa is to do so with the concentration of one mind. Gather air to make a Buddha, hold up the mind to form Buddha; pile one stupa after another to make a stupa, actualize one Buddha after another to make a Buddha. As it says in the sūtras, “Think like this and all the Buddhas of the ten directions emerge.” We must know that when we have a thought to become a Buddha all the Buddhas of the ten directions share the same thought. When one thing becomes Buddha all things become Buddha.

Shakyamuni Buddha said, “The morning star appeared and I attained the Way simultaneously with all living things.” That is why resolve, practice, enlightenment, and nirvana simultaneously occur together. The body and mind of the Buddhist Way is grass, trees, tiles, stones, wind, rain, water, and fire. The resolve for enlightenment in those things of nature lead to the Buddhist Way. Making a Buddha-image or constructing a stupa is held by universal emptiness and formed by scooping water from a valley stream. This is supreme and perfect enlightenment. If there is one mind of enlightenment there must be millions. This also holds for practice and enlightenment.

Therefore, do not think that awakening occurs only once, practice is open-ended, or that the fruits of enlightenment bear just once—this is not hearing, knowing, or meeting the Buddhist Dharma. Countless awakenings arise from the initial resolve to seek enlightenment. The resolve of innumerable persons started with one person's initial awakening. The initial awakening becomes countless awakenings. Practice, enlightenment, and turning the wheel of the Law work exactly like this.

If grasses, trees, etc. are not themselves, how can they possess a body and mind, and vice versa. That is why grasses, trees, etc. are complete within themselves. Practising the Way through Zazen is the Buddha-seeking mind. The initial awakening and Zazen are not the same, not different, not this or that; they cannot be separated. Study like this. There must be no ulterior motive from the initial gathering of grasses, wood, and jewels to the final construction of a stupa or Buddha-image; otherwise it will prevent us from attaining the Way, and the thirty-seven ways to enlightenment will be forced. Also the practice of body and mind of men and gods in the three worlds will become forced. Then our ultimate goal will be lost. Grasses, trees, tiles, stones, the four elements, and the five skandhas are all only one mind, and the true form [of suchness]. Throughout the entire world of the ten quarters, the Buddha-nature of suchness has absolute, immutable existence. Yet how do grasses and trees exist within the Buddha-nature of suchness? How do they become the Buddha-nature of suchness? All forms that are free of intention and non-created are true forms. True form is the true form of suchness; suchness is the body and mind of the eternal present. This body and mind emerges with hosshin, resolve; do not stop pumping the water wheel [of Tōzan] or pushing the grindstone [of Enō]. Hold up a blade of grass to make a six foot golden image of Buddha; hold up a speck of dust to construct a stupa of an ancient Buddha. This is hotsubodaishin, the Buddha-seeking mind: seeing Buddha, hearing Buddha, seeing the Dharma, hearing the Dharma, becoming Buddha, and practising Buddha.

Shakyamuni Buddha said, "Both lay men and women who have taken refuge in the Dharma and ordinary good men and women give their own flesh and that of their spouses and children as an offering to the Three Treasures. How can all bhikkhus who have received such an offering and the trust of lay people fail to practice diligently?"

We can see that offerings of food and drink, clothing, bedding, medicine, monastery buildings, fields and forests, etc. is like offering one's own flesh and the skin, flesh, bones, and marrow of one's wife and children. Then they can receive a great ocean of merit from the Three Treasures and become one with them. Becoming one with them means making an offering to the Three Treasures. The virtue of the Three Treasures is actualized in one's own flesh and the skin, flesh, bones, and marrow of one's wife and children—this is to practice the Way with diligent effort. Then the form and nature of Shakyamuni is made into our own and we find the skin, flesh, bones, and marrow of the Buddhist Way. Here, "trust" is the resolve for enlightenment. Therefore, how can those bhikkhus who have received that "trust" be, lazy? [The resolve for enlightenment and attainment of the Way] must work reciprocally, from beginning to end.

That is why, even an awakening as small as a, speck of dust will ultimately give us a right-mind. With such a mind we can fathom emptiness. In general, if people have resolve for enlightenment they can attain the seed of Buddha-nature, regardless of whether they have studied it or not. If we practice with a stainless mind and the four elements and five skandhas [i.e., with a body] we can attain the Way. Even grasses, trees, fences, and walls attain the Way if they practice with a stainless mind. The four elements, the five skandhas, grasses, trees, fences, and walls attain the Way simultaneously and share the same nature. Therefore, they share the same mind, life, body, and function.

Many of those who studied under the Buddhas and Patriarchs practiced the Way by holding up the mind of grasses and trees. This is form of the Buddha-seeking mind. The fifth Patriarch was once the gardener Saishodōsha, Rinzai planted cedar and pine trees on Mt. Ōbaku, and Tōzan learned how to care for pines from the old man Ryu. Each of them had the dignity and constancy of a conifer and plucked out the enlightened vision of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. The actualized energy of the Buddhas and Patriarchs becomes our own and opens our eyes. Building a stupa or making a Buddha-image, etc. are the articles of enlightened vision that awaken and are awakened by our mind. If we do not attain the enlightened vision of building a stupa, etc. we cannot attain the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. To attain the enlightened vision of making a Buddha-image is to make the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Some think a stupa, etc. will ultimately turn to dust and consequently does not possess real virtue, while practice, which is beyond life and death, is the only stable, undefiled element. However, this is not the Buddha teaching. If the stupa turns to dust practice will also turn to dust. Conversely, if practice does not turn to dust neither will the stupa. "After all, what is this world we live in? Talking about the creation of life and death (yu-i) or explaining nirvana (mu-i).

It says in the Avatamsaka Sūtra: "When a Bodhisattva dwelling in the world of samsara first awakens the mind, he directly searches for enlightenment. His mind is stable and unmovable. The virtue of one thought is profound and vast, with no limit. The Tathāgata's analysis [of the world] is similarly inexhaustible." We should be able to see clearly that the awakening and resolve for enlightenment is inextricably bound up with the problem of life and death [samsara]. This is the meaning of "directly searching for enlightenment." One of his thoughts is the same as a blade of grass or one tree because there is only one life and one death. Nevertheless, its virtue is unlimitedly profound and vast. The Tathāgata may explain his analysis of the world for aeons but can never exhaust it. The ocean may dry up but there is still the ocean floor. Even though a man dies his mind still lingers – we never arrive at some final state. Just as one of the Bodhisattva's thoughts is unlimitedly profound and vast so is one blade of grass, one tree, one stone, or one tile. If one blade of grass or one stone is seven or eight feet then one of the Bodhisattva's thoughts is seven or eight feet, and the resolve for enlightenment is seven or eight feet.

Therefore, that is why entering the deep mountains to meditate on the Buddhist Way is easy; building a stupa or making a Buddha-image is difficult. Both can be accomplished through diligent effort, but there is a difference between self-awakening and the awakening of others. To accomplish this kind of Buddha-seeking mind is to actualize the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

This was delivered to the monks at Kippōji, Yoshida-gun, Echizen, on February 14, 1244. Recopied at Eiheiji on March 10, 1279 by Ejō.

64. UDONGE

優曇華

“The flower of an udumbara tree”

Shakyamuni was once preaching to a large assembly gathered on Vulture Peak. He held up an udumbara flower without speaking and winked. Then Mahākāśyapa smiled. Shakyamuni said, “I possess the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and the Serene Mind of Nirvana. I now bestow it to Mahākāśyapa.”

All of the seven Buddhas of the past including Shakyamuni and all the Patriarchs who came after him held up a flower and transmitted the True Law in this manner. Holding up the flower is holding up the Buddha-mind; it is the actualization of their enlightenment. All aspects of the flower – ideal and real, subjective and objective, external and internal – are contained in the act of holding up the flower. The entire flower is the original Buddha-mind and Buddha-body.

Since Shakyamuni first held up the flower it has never been lost right up to the present. It has been continually transmitted from Buddha to Buddha, Patriarch to Patriarch without ceasing. The moment Shakyamuni held up the flower he expressed eternity; this is what he transmitted to his successors. The holding up of the flower transcended past, present, future – it takes place in eternal timelessness. Therefore, we must hold up the same flower together with Shakyamuni. However, the flower is holding up itself, that is, any flower – plum blossoms, spring flowers, snow flowers, lotus flowers, etc. – [can actualize their real nature]. [Bodhidharma’s] expression “one flower blooms and five leaves begin to grow” is the “udumbara flower” that contains all 360 sermons of Shakyamuni and the 5,048 volumes of the Tripitaka. It contains the classifications of the three vehicles, the twelve schools, the three sages and ten saints. The flower is not overwhelmed by any of those things and even contains many other miraculous things.

We have the example of many masters to illustrate the holding up of a flower: [Bodhidharma’s] “one flower blooms and five leaves begin to grow. This is true, natural time”; [Nyojō’s] “holding up the flower is holding up the flower of the Buddha-mind”; [Reiun’s] peach blossoms and the sound of the tile striking the bamboo; [the second Patriarch Eka’s] cutting off of his arm and standing waist deep in the snow to show his determination, and the [sixth Patriarch’s] work in the rice polishing hut and his reception of the kesa [from the fifth Patriarch]. All these reveal the real nature of the udumbara flower which was held in Shakyamuni’s palm; indeed it is the very life of Shakyamuni himself.

However, the holding up of the flower has always existed before, during, and after Shakyamuni’s attainment of the Way. So Shakyamuni’s attainment of the Way is the udumbara flower’s attainment of the Way. It transcends time. The first awakening, the starting out on the Way, and the ultimate practice and enlightenment of all the Buddhas and Patriarchs can be compared to a butterfly dancing in the wind. Shakyamuni conceals himself in the udumbara flower and yet reveals himself as the udumbara flower. Like this he conceals himself in space yet he is actually space himself. Here Shakyamuni is the actualization of the udumbara flower. Shakyamuni is synonymous with universal emptiness and the holding up the flower. Holding up the flower does not mean only holding it up with the fingers, it is held up by the clear vision and mind of Buddha himself.

Mountains, rivers, heaven and earth; the sun, moon and earth; rain and wind; human beings and animals; trees and grasses – all these are nothing but the holding up of an udumbara flower. Life and death, coming and going are its various forms, they are its Divine Light. Even our present study is nothing more than an aspect of the udumbara flower.

Shakyamuni said: “The flower of an udumbara is extremely beautiful and all beings admire it.”^{1-EN} By “all beings” he meant the continual manifestation of the Divine Light of all beings – grasses, trees, insects, the Buddhas and Patriarchs. “Admire” is the spontaneous and lively action of the body and mind – in the skin, flesh, bones and marrow. It also is continuously being revealed and concealed. However, to be able to truly understand this is as rare as the udumbara flower.

When Shakyamuni was sitting in meditation beneath the Bodhi tree, he suddenly blinked and saw the morning star; his Buddha-eye was opened. The movement of his eyes then was the same when he winked while he was holding up the udumbara flower and Mahākāśyapa smiled. Mahākāśyapa’s face became like the flower Shakyamuni was holding.

At the moment Shakyamuni blinked, we also lost our ordinary vision and our Buddha-eye was opened. His blink was an action of the udumbara flower. It is the moment when the udumbara blooms.

When this flower is held up everything – Mahākāśyapa, sentient beings, all of us – is also holding up the flower. And this act of holding up the flower has never ceased; it has continued right up to the present. Further, our entire body becomes the hand holding up the flower. We can say that an udumbara flower forms the body and mind, becoming the four elements and the five skandhas.

When Shakyamuni said “I possess” it was the same as “I bestow” since what is bestowed is surely possessed. “I possess” is the most important phrase in Shakyamuni’s statement. This should be the focus of our study. When “I possess” changes to “I bestow,” the Eye and Treasury of the True Law becomes our own.

“Bodhidharma came from the west” is the same as “holding up the flower.” “Holding up the flower” can be called “complete and undivided concentration” i.e., shikantaza [single minded, theme-less, sitting] or body and mind dropping off. To become a Buddha or Patriarch is another example of “complete and undivided attention”; this attitude of mind must be actualized in all our daily activities such as wearing clothes and eating rice. After all, the most important thing for Buddhas and Patriarchs is this complete and undivided attention. If you can manifest this spirit when you make a prostration in the Buddha Hall or practice Zazen in the monastery the flower of your mind will become more brilliant and the things around you will become more beautiful. In that profound state the feeling is that of a monastery enveloped by clouds just before the han is struck or that of a sho which sounds like it is drifting from the bottom of a river.^{2-EN} The activity of an udumbara flower causes the spring wind to blow and the plum blossoms to bloom.

My late master Nyojō said, “When Shakyamuni lost his ordinary vision it was like a single branch of a plum tree blooming in the snow. Soon after the plum blossoms were in full bloom, tiny branches appeared all over. Instead of wondering about this people should laugh at the spring wind blowing wildly”

Nyojō meant that the clear vision of the Tathāgata became the plum blossoms and the plum blossoms become the tiny branches. Buddha is concealed in the Buddha-eye, the Buddha-eye is concealed in the plum blossoms, and the plum

1-EN The teaching of the Buddha is extremely wonderful but very difficult to hear or comprehend; it is as rare as the flower of an udumbara which only blooms once in three thousand years.

2-EN A han is a wooden sounding board struck at various times and services; a sho is an ancient reed instrument.

blossoms are concealed in the tiny branches. Then the spring wind blows and plum blossoms fall willingly creating a gentle music.

My late master Nyojō also said, "Reiun attained enlightenment when he saw the peach blossoms in bloom, but I attained it when I saw them falling." We must clarify this. Reiun said he attained enlightenment when he saw the blooming peach blossoms; he actualized truth and confirmed his faith. Nyojō received his enlightenment when he saw the peach blossoms fall; they bloom because the spring wind loves them yet fall because the wind hates them. But no matter how much the spring wind loves or hates the peach blossoms they still fall and achieve the dropping off of body and mind.

This was delivered to the monks on February 12, 1244, at Kippōji, Echizen. Recopied on February 6, 1312.

65. NYORAIZENSHIN

如來全身

“The entire body of the Tathāgata”

Once Shakyamuni was staying on Vulture Peak in north-east Rajagrha. He said to Yakuō Bodhisattva:^{1-EN} “O Yakuō! Wherever you go always expound, read, chant, and copy this sūtra. Wherever you find it construct a stupa and adorn, it with the seven precious jewels [gold, silver, emeralds, nacre, agate; coral, and amber]. Make it high, wide, and majestic. Do not put any relics inside the stupa since it already contains the entire body of the Tathāgata. To show your respect and devotion decorate the stupa with flowers, incense, strings of precious stones, golden ornaments; also use musical instruments and compose songs and poems in its honour. Anyone who pays homage to this stupa like this will surely pass over to supreme and perfect enlightenment.”

“Sūtra” is the sum total of all its different aspects – expounding, reading, chanting, and copying. These sūtras and the adornment of the stupa with the seven precious jewels are jissō.^{2-EN} That is why the stupa must be extremely high and wide – its measurement is jissō.

Since the stupa contains the entire body of the Tathāgata the Lotus Sūtra therefore also contains the entire body of the Tathāgata. Proceeding further we can see that expounding, reading, chanting, and copying also contain the entire body of the Tathāgata. Showing our respect with flowers and incense and the other things is still one more form of jissō; they contain all sūtras and the Tathāgata. We honour the Tathāgata in such a fashion because he is truth itself. That is why we do not need any relics for the stupa.

Buddha’s proclaiming of the Law is golden speech. Listening to it is the most excellent virtue. Accumulate such virtue. If anyone can truly prostrate himself before this stupa and honour it he will be very near supreme enlightenment. Near is not physical proximity; it means near the state of enlightenment. Expounding, reading, chanting, and copying the Lotus Sūtra is the same as looking at the stupa: We should be very grateful for this opportunity to attain supreme enlightenment.

Therefore the sūtras contain the entire body of the Tathāgata. Making a prostration before that sūtra is exactly like making a prostration to the Tathāgata. To gratefully honour it is to gratefully honour the Tathāgata. Indeed the sūtra itself is Buddha’s relic. To see it is to see Buddha’s relic. We can never master the Buddhist Way unless we realize that the Lotus Sūtra is shōhō jissō. Furthermore, the world of human beings, the world of gods and devas, the world of the ocean, the world of space, this country and all others are shōhō jissō.

Expounding, reading, chanting, and copying the Lotus Sūtra is the same as receiving Buddha’s relics ; it is the way to supreme enlightenment. By “sūtras” we mean the relics of all the past, present and future Buddhas, shamons, Shakyamuni, lions, wooden Buddhas, painted Buddhas, men, and the relics of the Buddhas and Patriarchs living in the great Sung Dynasty.

Shakyamuni once told an assembly of monks: “I have practiced the Way of a Bodhisattva for many years. The virtue of such a life will never cease.” The countless relics of Shakyamuni [the three treasures, the sūtras etc.] constitute his eternal life. The life of a Bodhisattva cannot be measured; it is not limited by such numbers as a billion. It transcends the entire universe. This is the ceaseless life of the Tathāgata that is contained in the sūtras.

Bodhisattva Chijyaku said,^{3-EN} “Shakyamuni Buddha has mastered all types of difficulties and increased his many kinds of virtues after innumerable kalpas of practice yet he still continues to seek the Way of a Bodhisattva. There is no place anywhere – from the tiniest atom to the greatest universe – where sentient beings cannot be saved by the devoted efforts of a Bodhisattva. Shakyamuni practiced the Way of a Bodhisattva for all sentient beings and ultimately attained supreme and perfect enlightenment.”

We can now see that even billions of worlds are only an infinitesimal part of the pure Buddha-mind and that the entire universe can be held in the palm of Buddha’s hand. However, we must realize that the entire body of the Tathāgata is not conditional on the laying down of his life for others and his relics are not dependent on any physical state prior to or after his manifestation in this world. His practice was the expression and experience of the Buddhist life – it became his skin, flesh, bones, and marrow. Despite the fact that he became a Buddha he continued to practice harder than ever. Even if all sentient beings in all billions of worlds were –to be saved he would still not abandon his practice. His practice is the paramount activity of the entire body of the Tathāgata.

This was delivered to the monks on February 15, 1244, at Kippōji, Echizen. Recopied June 23, 1279, at Eiheiji.

1-EN Lotus Sūtra, chapter “Hosshibon”.

2-EN Shōhō jissō. The true state of all elements. It means that the variety of all phenomenal things express the universal and eternal truth.

3-EN Lotus Sūtra, chapter on Devadatta, Chijyaku is the Bodhisattva of accumulated wisdom.

66. ZAMMAI ŌZAMMAI

三昧王三昧

“King of all samādhis”

Sitting in the full lotus posture is a direct transcending of the entire world; it is the most precious and sublime state of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. When we sit in that posture we overcome non-believers and demons and enter into the innermost heart of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Only through this Way can we attain absolute transcendence and achieve our ultimate goal. That is why the Buddhas and Patriarchs concentrate on this practice, and no others.

Know that the world of Zazen is far different from any other realm. After this principle is clarified you must develop the resolve to attain enlightenment and seek true practice, enlightenment, and nirvana.

At the precise moment of sitting in Zazen, examine whether or not time permeates the vertical and horizontal [all of space] and consider the nature of Zazen – is it different from normal activity? Is it a highly vigorous state: Is it thinking or non-thinking? Action or non-action? Is Zazen only the full lotus posture or does it exist in the body and mind? Or does it transcend body and mind? We must examine such various standpoints. The goal is to have a full lotus posture of your body and a full lotus posture in your mind; and you must have a full lotus posture in the state where body and mind have fallen off.

My late master Nyojō said, “When you practice Zazen body and mind drop off. This can be attained only through shikantaza [single minded, theme-less sitting]. Burning incense, prostrations, the nembutsu^{1-EN}, penances and sūtra reading are not necessary.” In the past four or five hundred years only Nyojō taught that we can directly confront the mind of the Buddhas and Patriarchs through shikantaza and become one with their experience. Very few in China can compare with him. Not many have correctly identified Zazen with the Buddhist Dharma, the Buddhist Dharma with Zazen, and no one has clarified the true form of Zazen as the Buddhist Dharma.

The Zazen of the mind is not the same as the Zazen of the body, and vice-versa. There is a Zazen of shikantaza that differs from the Zazen in which body and mind have fallen off. Once body and mind drop off we attain the comprehension and experience of the Buddhas and Patriarchs; and we must preserve this mind by thoroughly examining all its aspects.

Shakyamuni Buddha once instructed a large assembly of monks: “If one sits in the lotus posture, he realizes samadhi in body and mind. He achieves great virtue, is respected by all and his splendour is like the sun illuminating the entire world. Indolence and sloth are thrown off and he becomes light and untiring.; the mind of enlightenment is radiant and bright. His form is like that of a coiled dragon). When Mara sees a depiction of the lotus posture he is filled with fear and dread How much greater will his terror be when he sees the lotus posture of an enlightened one?”

If Mara is overwhelmed by just a picture of the lotus posture, how great must be the limitless virtue of the actual posture itself. Whenever we sit in Zazen then, we have bliss and virtue beyond measure.

Shakyamuni also said to a large assembly of monks, “That is why I sit in the lotus posture.” He then told his disciples to sit in the full lotus posture. Non-believers seek the Way by using a variety of postures – tiptoe, constant standing, legs placed behind the neck etc. – but they are sunk in a sea of falsehood and their mind is never at rest. For this reason, Shakyamuni instructed his followers to sit upright in the full lotus posture. If we sit upright, our mind is rectified, and its wandering and dispersion can be brought to unity. If our mind strays or our body wavers, this posture can restore them to proper order. If you wish to enter samadhi you must put all your wanderings and scattered thoughts to rest. Practice like this and you will attain the King of all samādhis.

Now we clearly realize that the full lotus posture is the King of all samādhis. It is realization. All other samādhis are its subordinates. The lotus posture is an upright body, a bright mind, and the body and mind of suchness that leads directly to the Buddhas and Patriarchs, right practice and enlightenment, and the ultimate life of all things in Buddha-nature.

We can actualize the King of all samādhis through the full lotus posture in this very body – in our skin, flesh, bones and marrow. Shakyamuni Buddha always used this posture and transmitted it to his disciples, and taught it to both men and gods. Since the seven Buddhas of the past, the essence of the Buddhist Way is this full lotus posture.

While Shakyamuni Buddha sat beneath the Bodhi tree in the full lotus posture innumerable kalpas passed. But regardless of time elapsed – fifty or sixty kalpas, twenty-one days or just a short time – he turned the wheel of the Law. The teaching of Shakyamuni is complete and lacks nothing. The full lotus posture itself contains all the sūtras. One Buddha encounters another in this posture and all sentient beings become Buddhas at that time.

After the first Patriarch Bodhidharma came from the west, he spent nine years sitting facing a wall in the Shositsu Hōshorinji monastery on Mt. Su. Ever since then, the essence and kernel of the Dharma has spread throughout China. The full lotus posture was the life blood of the first Patriarch. Before he came to China no one knew of such a posture. Throughout our entire life we must therefore be totally engaged, day and night, in the full lotus posture and not leave the monastery – this is the King of all samādhis.

Delivered to the monks on February 15, 1244, at Kippōji, Echizen. Transcribed that same night at the chief disciple’s quarters by Ejō.

1-EN Reciting the name of Buddha, especially Amida Buddha, commonly used in the Pure Land sects.

67. TEMBORIN

轉法輪

“The turning of the wheel of the Law”

My late master Nyojō once entered the Dharma hall and addressed the monks : “Shakyamuni said, ‘When one person resolves to attain enlightenment and finally achieves the Buddhist Way the entire world is universal emptiness. Nothing lingers or remains behind.’” Then Nyojō held up a flower and said, “This is Shakyamuni’s teaching. It far surpasses the knowledge of ordinary people. Nevertheless, my interpretation is when one person resolves to attain enlightenment and finally achieves the Buddhist Way it is like a mendicant monk smashing his rice bowl.” Concerning this the fifth Patriarch Hōen of Mt. Goso said, “When one person resolves to attain enlightenment and finally achieves the Buddhist Way all things in universal emptiness return to their source in Buddha.” Busshō Hōtai taught that, “When one person resolves to attain enlightenment and finally achieves the Buddhist Way universal emptiness truly becomes universal emptiness.” Zen Master Engo Kokugon of Mt. Kassin said, “When one person resolves to attain enlightenment and finally achieves the Buddhist Way universal emptiness will add even more luster to the world.” Again, if I was asked about this I [Dōgen] would say, “When one person resolves to attain enlightenment and finally achieves the Buddhist Way that resolve brings us back to the truth.”

Let us consider this statement of Shakyamuni’s, “When one person resolves to attain enlightenment and finally achieves the Buddhist Way the entire world is universal emptiness. Nothing lingers or remains behind.” It comes from the Shūryōgonkyō. This statement was taken up by many of the Buddhas and Patriarchs of past generations. It leads directly to their bones and marrow and their enlightened eyes. Why do I insist on this? Some people hold that the ten chapters which constitute the Shūryōgonkyō are not authentic, while others maintain that the sūtra is part of the canon. These two conflicting opinions have been held for many years right up to the present day. Also, some say that the newer translations of this sūtra [those made during the Jinryū period of the T’ang Dynasty, c. 705] are spurious and do not compare with the older ones.

But as we have seen the fifth Patriarch, Busshō Hōtai and my late master took up this statement and utilized it in their respective teachings. That is, those masters actualized Shakyamuni’s words in their teaching, and made that quotation into a living sermon that turns the wheel of the Law. The turning of the wheel of the Law is the preaching of Buddha, given by the Buddhas and Patriarchs and vice-versa. Even if the newer translations are spurious, if the Buddhas and Patriarchs take quotations from it, it becomes the real turning of the wheel of the Law. No matter what – a tile, a stone, tinted leaves, an udumbara flower, a golden robe – if the Buddhas and Patriarchs use it to explain their teaching it turns the wheel of the Buddhist Law and becomes its Eye and Treasury.

We must realize that when sentient beings transcend delusions and attain enlightenment they become the disciples of the Buddhas and Patriarchs and resemble them in almost every way – the Buddhas and Patriarchs become the skin, flesh, bones and marrow of sentient beings. They are no longer just friendly with their relatives and old acquaintances but now become the brother of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. The same can be said for the “spurious” translations of the ten chapters of Shūryōgonkyō; when the expressions in it have become the words of the Buddhas and Patriarchs it transcends any questions about its authenticity.

The words of the Buddhas and Patriarchs differ from common speech. Although common speech has parallels with the words and expressions in the Shūryōgonkyō the content is different and must not be taken as the focus of our study. There are numerous examples of the difference in meaning between the Buddhas’ and Patriarchs’ words and common speech. This is because the turning of the wheel of the Law is the body of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Not even one of them lack it. When the wheel of the Law turns it uses sound and form but it transcends any particular sound and form. Similarly, the sound and form beyond sound and form cause the wheel of the Law to turn. It turns in order to bring out the inner core of the Buddhist Teaching and uses many vehicles of instruction – [Ōbaku Kiun] used his first, [Shakyo Ezō] yanked noses and [Seidō Chizō] caught the universal emptiness.^{1-EN} In each of these methods, the teaching of the Buddhas and Patriarchs emerges. The morning star of Shakyamuni, [Ezō’s] yank of the nose, [Reiun Shigon’s] peach flower—all these manifestations are the turning of the wheel of the Law. That is its essence. To turn the wheel of the Law we must study and practice without leaving the monastery. That is, just sit in the full-lotus posture on the chorenjo^{2-EN}, seek the true teaching from the right master and ultimately attain The Buddhist Way.

This was delivered to the monks on February 27, 1244, at Kippōji, Echizen. Transcribed in the chief disciple’s quarters on March 1, of the same year.

1-EN See the following chapter Koku.

2-EN The raised platform in the meditation hall.

68. DAISHUGYŌ

大修行

“Great practice of the Way”

Among the many disciples of Zen Master Daichi of Mt. Hyakujō in Kōshū^{1-EN} A (his master was Baso Dōitsu) there was an old man who earnestly listened to Hyakujo's talks. Usually the old man left with the others but one day he stayed behind. Hyakujō asked, “Who is that standing in front of me?” The old man answered, “I am not a human being. Long ago, in the time of Kāśyapa Buddha, I lived on this mountain. One day a student asked me if one who attains Great Practice of the Way is still subject to the laws of karma. I told him, 'No, it ceases' and have been transmigrating as a wild fox for the past five hundred years. Please give me a word of teaching that will release me from transmigrating.” Then the old man said, “Is one who attains Great Practice of the Way still subject to the law of karma?” Hyakujō shouted, “Yes, it never stops !” The old man was enlightened, prostrated himself before Hyakujō and said, “Thanks to you I am finally liberated from the body of a wild fox. I am presently living behind this mountain and have one more request. Please hold a funeral service for me in the manner customary for deceased monks.”

Hyakujō then asked the monk in charge of services and rites to strike the byakutsui^{2-EN} and call the monks to inform them that after the meal a funeral service would be held for a departed monk. The monks said to themselves, “Everyone here is healthy and no one is in the infirmary. Why is there going to be a funeral?” After the meal Hyakujō took the assembled monks to some rocks behind the mountain and pointed at a dead fox. Then the service was held and the fox was cremated.

That evening Hyakujō ascended the platform in the Dharma Hall and explained the day's events. Then Ōbaku^{3-EN} asked, “The old man gave a wrong answer to his disciple when he was a master and was reborn as a fox for the next five hundred years. What would have happened if he gave a correct answer?” Hyakujō said, “Come closer. I'll tell you.” Ōbaku came over and slapped Hyakujō's cheek. Hyakujō smiled and clapped his hands and said, “I thought foreigners had red beards, but now I know men who have red beards are foreigners.”

This koan is called “Great Practice of the Way.” As it says, there was a Mt. Hyakujō in the time of Kāśyapa.^{4-EN} This is the one word of teaching that actualizes Great Practice of the Way. Nevertheless, Mt. Hyakujō in the time of Kāśyapa and Mt. Hyakujō in the time of Shakyamuni in the present are not the same, yet not different. We cannot say that one comes before and one comes after. The present Mt. Hyakujō differs from the Mt. Hyakujō in the time of Kāśyapa; however, in the above koan there is this statement, “Once I lived on this mountain.” The relationship between the old man and Hyakujō is applicable to every monk seeking the Way. The old man's question is the question of every monk. It can be understood as one or two, two or one, same or different, different or same. If you are lazy or slack concerning this point you easily fall into duality.

All the past students and those who accomplish Great Practice of the Way on Mt. Hyakujō have sought to clarify how we are influenced by karma. Do not look for an easy answer. During the period of Eihei in Gokan when the Buddhist Law entered China for the first time and even after Bodhidharma's time the fox's question about karma was rarely heard. If you experience Great Practice of the Way you find it is Great Karma. So we cannot say either “No, it ceases” or “Yes, it never stops.” If we mistakenly answer “No,” we will also misunderstand “Yes.” Even if we understand them as expedients it is still possible to fall into or be liberated from transmigration. For example, it may be an expedient in the time of Kāśyapa but not in the time of Shakyamuni.

The old man said, “For live hundred years I've been transmigrating as a wild fox.” Before the old man was a master on Mt. Hyakujō there was a fox but it did not transmigrate again as a fox. No master of Mt. Hyakujō should transmigrate as a wild fox. Only non-believers think that the spirit of a former master could leave his body and enter a wild fox's. And neither did the fox come out and absorb the master. To say that the former master of Mt. Hyakujō as a wild fox means that he must have abandoned his position. A master of Mt. Hyakujō cannot transmigrate as a fox. How does that apply to karma? Basically the law of karma has no concrete existence, yet is always present. It affects everyone regardless of their intentions. Yet if we mistakenly answer “No” it does not mean that we will transmigrate as a fox. If that were so, surely such masters like Rinzi, Tokusan and others are now endlessly transmigrating as foxes. Indeed all of the masters of the past two or three hundred years must be transmigrating as foxes. If that were true we would have no doubt heard about it. Among all the numerous answers given in reply to disciples' questions there are many that are worse or more vague than the old man's.

There are many who cannot be said to be diligently seeking the Buddhist Law. Therefore, it is necessary to have a clear mind in order to understand the significance of this koan. If our study is superficial we will never comprehend it. Most important, we must realize that we do not transmigrate as the result of a wrong answer or keep from transmigrating by a correct one.

What happened to the old man after his liberation from the body of a wild fox is not mentioned. Yet there is still a pearl to be found. But do not be like those who have never seen or heard the Buddhist Dharma and say, “Because of delusion one is reborn as a wild fox and the body of the fox can be liberated. After liberation from the body of a fox one returns to the ocean of original enlightenment.” This is the interpretation of non-believers, not the Buddhist Dharma. Furthermore, if you hold that the fox does not possess innate enlightenment, that also is not the Buddhist Dharma. If you have great enlightenment the wild fox will never depart; but if you throw it away you will never see its enlightenment. The fox will have nothing to do with the Buddhist Law – it is just a single fox. In real Buddhism this cannot happen.

The present Hyakujō gave a word of teaching and liberated the former Hyakujō from five hundred years of transmigrating as a wild fox. We must clarify this. The present Hyakujō's word of teaching liberated the old man. But the mountains, rivers, and earth have been continually giving countless words of teaching up to the present and the old man was not liberated. I cannot help doubting this story. If the countless words of teaching given by the mountains, rivers, and land were unable to liberate the old man, neither could the present Hyakujō. Sages of the past understood that “no” and “yes” are expressions of the same truth. However, the former Hyakujō did not experience either of those expressions and regardless if he is transmigrating or liberated, still he does not know the skin, flesh, bones and marrow of the fox. “As the twig is bent so grows the tree.”

But what about the old man's life of transmigrating for five hundred years? Why did he transmigrate? What was the world of

1-EN Dai-chang (724 - 814)

2-EN A small, octagonal shaped pillar, about three or four feet high, used to call the monks for announcements, services, etc.

3-EN Huang-po (d. 850).

4-EN Kāśyapa Buddha was one of the Buddhas who preceded Shakyamuni Buddha.

transmigration like? If the old man had said "karma ceases," why was he reborn as a wild fox? And where did the body of the fox beneath the rocks come from?

The former Hyakujō's expression "No, it ceases" made him fall into transmigration as a fox; "Yes, it cannot be stopped" liberated him. Nevertheless, transmigration and liberation exist together and are the principles of cause and effect.

However, it has been said from ancient times that "karma ceases" is a negation of the law of cause and effect that will result in transmigration – in this case as a wild fox; This is not the true principle of karma. Even if the former Hyakujō understood for some reason that karma ceases it was based on Great Practice of the Way; do not take it as an intentional deception of the monk. It is not a negation of the law of karma. Another old sage said, "karma never stops;" karma is always working. That is an affirmation of the law of karma. Great Practice of the Way is the state in which liberation from karma is attained. This is the old man's liberation. Yet it is not complete – only about 80 or 90 percent. Moreover, in the time of Kāśyapa Buddha the former Hyakujō lived on Mt. Hyakujō and in the time of Shakyamuni Buddha the present Hyakujō lives there. It is the body of the past and present, sun-faced and moon-faced, the original nature of the wild fox in the present.

How is it possible for the wild fox to recall the past five hundred years? To say that he can is to deceive ourselves since the fox was unable to recall even his present existence. He never carried any extra knowledge in his skin. Besides that, if this fox could recall the past five hundred years it would be no ordinary fox but one who actualized Great Practice of the Way—that is the completion of this koan. If our knowledge is incomplete and we do not liberate our body and wisdom from birth and destruction we cannot calculate the life of five hundred years. If that is the case, when we speak of it it will be nothing more than an empty lie.

We cannot say we know the wild fox without using the knowledge of the wild fox. Who else knows besides him? Knowing or not knowing, however, is not applicable to the transmigration of the fox. If there is no transmigration there is no need of liberation. Neither transmigration nor liberation occur. Neither is there a past or present Hyakujō. It is not easy to acknowledge this, but still we must study it. If you clarify this principle you will shatter all erroneous views which arose during the Ryō, Chin, Zui, Tō and Sō Dynasties.

It was unreasonable for the old man, who was only the ghost of a wild fox, to ask the present Hyakujō to hold a formal priest's funeral service for him. No one should doubt this. A dead fox is not a dead monk because a fox never received the precepts, or attended summer training periods, has no bearing of the Buddhist Way, and lacks a monk's authority. If we substitute a dead fox for a dead monk we will hold a priest's funeral service for anyone, ordained or not. If lay people request a priest's funeral service like the wild fox, then we must give it to them. However, this practice is unheard of and has never been transmitted in the Buddhist Dharma. There is no precedent for it. It was said that the fox was cremated in the customary fashion, but it is not certain. There could have been a mistake.

We must realize that there is a standard procedure that must be followed when we enter the infirmary or go to the Bodhi-garden [cremation ground]. The corpse of the wild fox might say to himself, "I was the former master of Mt. Hyakujō but how can we find any vestiges of his former practice and the bones and marrow of the Buddhas and Patriarchs? Who can prove that he was really a former master of Mt. Hyakujō? Never disregard the law and discipline of the Buddhas and Patriarchs by overestimating the importance of this story.

All the descendants of the Buddhas and Patriarchs should stress the importance of law and discipline. Do not give in to every request as Hyakujō did. It is very difficult to find even a small part of the Buddhist Dharma. Do not be tempted by this fleeting world or led by emotion. In Japan it is especially hard to find the law and discipline of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. It is rare even to have an opportunity to see or hear it, so you should treasure it as a precious gem. However, there are many unfortunate people who lack a strong or devout faith. It is pitiful that they do not know what is, and what is not, important. They completely lack the accumulated wisdom of the past five hundred or one thousand years.

Nevertheless, we must still encourage ourselves and others to attain Great Practice of the Way. Even one prostration or a single moment of Zazen, received as the right transmission of the Buddhist Dharma of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, should be honoured as a great joy, since they reveal the unfathomable Buddhist Law. If you do not possess such joy, even if you meet a thousand Buddhas, you will never receive any merit or virtue. Such people are non-believers who are uselessly pretending to be followers of the Buddhist Dharma. When they speak it seems they possess great knowledge, though there is nothing but talk, no proof can be seen.

Those who have not renounced the world – kings, ministers, Brahma or Indra and so on – may request to have a priest's funeral service but it should not be permitted. You should tell them, "Renounce the world and receive the precepts and become a great master. Then you can request a priest's funeral." They love the three transitory worlds and do not care for the Three Treasures. Even if they bring a thousand pelts of a wild fox they just debase the Buddhist Way. They must renounce the world and receive the precepts as soon as possible.

Hyakujō ascended the platform and explained the story of the old man to the monks. The meaning of the story is rather obscure and it is difficult to see why he attempted to explain it. He said the old man had already completed five hundred years of transmigration and was now liberated. But how is five hundred years calculated? In human years, in fox years, or by the Buddhist Way? How can the wild fox comprehend Hyakujō's life? If the fox sees Hyakujō, Hyakujō is the spirit of the fox. To see Hyakujō is to see the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

That is why Zen Master Kobuku^{5-EN} (Priest Hōjō) composed this gatha:

Hyakujō saw a wild fox and they had a meeting of minds.

Because of his request, the fox was cremated as a deceased monk,

But it was not as splendid as it should have been.

Students should fathom the bottom of the fox's heart;

If you do not sever the cause of the fox's transmigration

The principle of causality will never be found

and Great Practice of the Way will never be attained.

5-EN Ku-mi, no dates.

Hyakujō and the fox had a meeting of minds; although what the old man said was only one half of understanding, it still contained the Great Tongue and become a word of teaching. At that very moment the wild fox, Hyakujō, the old man, and the entire world were liberated from their bodies.

Ōbaku said, "The old man gave a wrong answer to his disciple and transmigrated as a wild fox for five hundred years. What would have happened if he gave a correct one?" This question is the actualization of the Way of the Buddha and Patriarchs. Among all the disciples of Nangaku there is none that equalled Ōbaku. But neither the old man or Hyakujō expressly stated that the old man's answer was wrong; only Ōbaku insisted that it was mistaken. Why? To Ōbaku that answer was a mistake, so he must not have understood the real intent of Hyakujō's talk. It seems as if Ōbaku has not yet mastered the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. We must clarify the fact that neither the former or the present Hyakujō answered incorrectly.

Furthermore, five hundred pelts of a fox, three sun^{6-EN} thick, symbolize his life on the mountain directing students. If just one hair is liberated then we will have the present Hyakujō's stinking bag of bones. On thorough examination we will find that this is only half of the meaning of liberation. There is a continual transmigration from degradation to liberation and a cause and effect relationship that comes from a word of teaching. This is actualization of Great Practice of the Way.

If Ōbaku wanted to know, "What will happen?" The answer should be, "Transmigration as a wild fox." Ōbaku would then ask, "Why would that happen?" Reply, "Hey! You wild fox!" It does not matter if your answer is mistaken or not. It is better not to let Ōbaku even ask his question. If he does, tell him, "Did you find what you were looking for?" Or "Are you liberated from the body of a wild fox?" Or "Have you told other students 'karma ceases'?"

Hyakujō's "Come here, I'll tell you" already contains the answer to Ōbaku's question. When Ōbaku approached, there is no before or after. When Ōbaku slapped Hyakujō's cheek, it was the liberation of the wild fox.

Hyakujō smiled and clapped his hands and said, "I thought foreigners had red beards, but now I know men who have red beards are foreigners." This expression means that Hyakujō was not willing to explain 100 percent – only about 80 or 90 percent. Even that is not actually that much since 100 percent is in reality only 80 or 90 percent. Nonetheless, you can still say that Hyakujō's actions expressed the power of his understanding. This power does not come from the den of a wild fox. Ōbaku's feet are kept on the ground, but he is stuck in the road like a mantis. Slapping the cheek or clapping the hands – each action is different in one way, but the same in another: "Sometimes red-bearded people are foreigners and other times foreigners have red beards."

This was delivered to the monks on March 9, 1244, at Kippōji, Echizen. Transcribed on March 13, at the chief disciple's quarters of the same temple by Ejō.

6-EN About ten centimetres, or three inches.

69. JISHŌZAMMAI

自證三昧

“Self-enlightened samādhi”

The right transmission of all the Buddhas and Patriarchs from the time of the seven Buddhas to the present is the samadhi of practice and enlightenment; namely, following the right master and studying the sūtras. “This is the enlightened vision of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. That is why the ancient Buddha Sōkei asked a monk, “Why do you seek practice and enlightenment?” The monk said, “Practice and enlightenment are not ‘not here’ but they cannot be gained if there is any impurity.” Therefore, we should know that undefiled practice and enlightenment is the Buddhas and Patriarchs. The samadhi of the Buddhas and Patriarchs is frost and hail, wind and lightning.

When we follow the right master, sometimes we see half our face and body, but then other times we can see all our face and body. Sometimes we see half of ourselves, and half of others. Sometimes a master reveals himself with the face of a god covered with hair [enlightenment]. Sometimes as a devil with horns [practice]. Different types of behavior confront us and personalities change unexpectedly. We find ourselves experiencing this on countless occasions. Searching for the Dharma is carried out throughout kalpas. This is the real function of study under a master. We meet our real selves and true form – [Shakyamuni] blinked and [Mahākāśyapa] smiled; [Eka] received the marrow [of Bodhidharma’s teaching] and made a prostration after severing his arm.

Generally speaking, from the time of the seven Buddhas until the sixth Patriarch, seeing ourselves while studying under a master was not limited to one or two instances; and seeing others is not only in the past, or only in the present.

When we study the sūtras we study our own skin, flesh, bones, and marrow. When we cast off our own skin, flesh, bones, and marrow, the enlightened vision of the peach blossoms will emerge and the sound of a tile striking the bamboo will enable us to clearly see and hear frost and hail.

When we study the sūtras their true meaning should emerge. This “sūtra” is the sūtra of the entire universe—mountains, rivers, earth, grass, trees, self, and others. It is the taking of meals and the wearing of clothes, the work of everyday life. When we study the Way based on those respective sūtras, countless sūtras are revealed. The letters of those sūtras are the real ones. We also find unwritten gathas everywhere. Possessing such understanding enables us to study with our body and mind and spend countless lives in innumerable kalpas – then surely we can arrive at the proper stage of understanding. Studying with our entire body and mind takes us beyond time and we will surely receive the fruits of our efforts. About five thousand of the Indian texts written in Sanskrit have been translated into Chinese. They are comprised of the three vehicles, the five vehicles, the nine divisions, and the twelve divisions.^{1-EN} We must study these texts; since it is impossible for us to avoid following these sūtras, they will become our en- lightened vision and marrow. Head to tail, everything is true and right. Some- times you get it from others, sometimes you give it to others—it is the activity of enlightened vision that drops off self and others. Since enlightened vision and the marrow [of Buddhism] is not dependent on self and others, the right transmission of the Buddhas and Patriarchs has been passed down from ancient times to the present. There is a sūtra of the long stall” which freely proclaims [detachment] and breaks down all discriminations between emptiness and existence. There is a fly whisk sūtra which purifies snow and frost. There is a Zazen sūtra proclaimed in each Zazen session; also a one- chapter kesa sūtra which contains ten volumes. All these are protected by the Buddhas and Patriarchs. By following the teachings of these sūtras we attain practice and enlightenment. Various faces appear – human, divine, sun-faced, moon- faced – as well as the meaning of following the teaching of the sūtras. Nevertheless, following the right master and the teaching of the sūtras ultimately means following our own self. The sūtra themselves are our own self as a sūtra; tight masters themselves are our own self as a right master. Therefore, study and practice under a right master is the study and practice of oneself. Holding up a hundred grasses or ten thousand trees is the holding up of ourselves. Clarify the fact that surely, we ourselves are the final object of our practice and study. In this study, self is cast oi? and original being emerges. That is why in the Great Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs there is a method of self-practice and self-enlightenment; if there had not been a right transmission of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, the right Dharma could not have been handed down. There is a right transmission from master to disciple; if it is not the bones and marrow of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, it cannot be rightly transmitted. Studying like this, we can say “You possess my marrow” or “I possess the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and now bestow it to Mahākāśyapa.” Proclaiming the Law is not dependent on self or others. Proclaiming it to others is proclaiming it to ourselves. Then the self [of others] and our own self listen together. One ear hears, one proclaims. One tongue proclaims, one hears. All of the six sense organs should be like that. Furthermore, through one body and mind we can practice and have enlightenment. The ear itself and the tongue itself hear their own proclaiming. Yesterday the law of permanence was proclaimed for others; today it is proclaimed for ourselves.

Like this, the days and months pass. Proclaiming the Dharma for others and practising it diligently is to hear, clarify, and enlighten the Dharma, life after life. When we proclaim the Dharma for others in this life with a sincere mind, it is easy for us to attain the Dharma ourselves. In addition, when we help others to hear the Dharma it increases our own merit when we study, both mentally and physically. If we disturb others when they are trying to listen to the Dharma we will just be preventing ourselves from hearing it. Hearing and proclaiming the Dharma, life after life, existence after existence, is to hear the Dharma, world after world.

We can hear in our present existence the Dharma which has been transmitted from the past up to the present. Within the Dharma there is creation and destruction; therefore, if we rightly transmit the Dharma throughout the entire universe of the ten quarters, we can hear it life after life and practice it existence after existence. Since the Dharma is actualized life after life, and manifested in existence after existence, a speck of dust and the entire field of existence together enlighten the Dharma. Nevertheless, even if we hear only one word [of the Dharma] in the east, we should proclaim it in the west, if only to a single person. Just one person can make use of such a device and proclaim the Dharma. In either the east or west one can have the same practice and enlightenment. Try to bring the Buddhist Dharma and Way of the Patriarchs as close to your body and mind as possible. Then your life will be full of joy, hope, and determination. Start from this moment, from this day, from this year, from this life- this is your task. Take the life of the Buddha Dharma and concentrate on it. This is the meaning of not wasting your life.

1-EN The three vehicles are those of the śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and Bodhisattvas; the five vehicles are the above three plus the vehicles of men and gods. The nine divisions are sūtras, gāthās, records of the lives of the Buddha’s disciples, jataka tales, tales of miracles performed by Buddha, historical narratives, allegories, verses taken from the sūtras, and discussions of doctrine. The twelve divisions include the above and prophecies of future Buddhas, sūtras which deal with broad topics, and statements by the Buddha not prompted by questions from his disciples.

However, you should not think that we cannot proclaim the Dharma because we have not completely clarified it. If we wait until there is total clarification, it will require innumerable kalpas. Further, even if we master the human Buddha, we must still clarify the universal Buddha. Even if we succeed in clarifying the mind of mountains, we must also clarify the mind of water. Even if we can grasp the living aspects of karma, we must also get the non-living aspects of karma. We may completely understand the circumstances of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, but we must also comprehend their progression. Therefore, if we think that we should completely clarify all these problems in one life before proclaiming the Dharma to others, it means we lack sufficient reflection, courage, and study. Those who study the Buddhas and Patriarchs by studying just one Dharma or one object should develop a strong determination and make an effort to help others. Then they are able to transcend self and proclaim to others. Further, it is possible to help others complete their study, even if we have not completed our own study. Obviously, if we can help others we can help ourselves complete our study. Although we may innately understand this point, it cannot be experienced until we meet the right master. That is why if we have not yet met the right master nor realized our innate knowledge we cannot understand the nature of unchanging knowledge nor the eternal knowledge beyond knowledge. Although it is possible to say we all possess innate knowledge, the Great Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs cannot be known unless we study.

Experiencing and comprehending ourselves and others is the Great Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. The initial resolve to study occurs simultaneously between self and others. From this initial resolve, both self and others practice and attain the final stage together. Your practice and the practice of others must advance like this.

Nevertheless, when scatterbrained people hear about the way of "self-awakening," "self-enlightenment," etc. they think it is sufficient to study by themselves and not receive any transmission from a right master. This is a great mistake. If we perceive the nature of mind and discriminatory faculties and believe that it is not necessary to receive the transmission from a master, we are like the non-believers and naturalist philosophers of India. If we understand this properly, how can we consider such people to be men of the Buddhist Way? Furthermore, if we hear the expression "self-enlightenment" and evaluate it as something depending on the formation of the five skandhas it is almost the same as Hinayānist self-cultivation. Among those who make no distinction between the Mahayana and Hinayana, there are many who call themselves descendants of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. However, how can they deceive clear-minded people?

In the Shōkō period [1131-1162] of the Sung Dynasty there was a Zen master known as Dai'e shake of Kinzan. Originally he was a student of the sūtras and abhidharma. He travelled all over the country and first studied the commentaries and verses of Ummon and Secchō under Zen Master Myōkyō Shōri of Senshū. Before he completed his study of Ummon's school he took up study under priest Dōchō of Tōzan. However, Shūkō was unable to receive Dōchō's inner teaching. Dōchō was the Dharma-heir of Fuyo [Dōkai], who was beyond compare to any other master of his time. Shūkō studied under Dōchō for a time but was not able to find Dōchō's skin, flesh, bones, and marrow. Furthermore, he was completely unable to have enlightened vision within a speck of dust.

One day Shūkō, who had merely heard about the two ways [bikyō, a formal ceremony and shiso, a seal of transmission] of Dharma transmission of the Buddhas and Patriarchs asked Dōchō to designate him as his Dharma-heir. However, Dōchō would not allow it and said, "In order to receive my seal of transmission you must not be in a hurry. Instead, study harder and practice more diligently. Receiving the transmission of the Buddhas and Patriarchs cannot be done so simply. I do not begrudgingly withhold my seal, but you have not yet opened your mind." Shūkō protested, "I innately possess the True Eye of self-awakening and self-enlightenment, so why don't you give it to me?" Dōchō just smiled and said nothing.

Later on, Shūkō studied under priest Tandō. One day Tandō asked Shūkō, "Why do you have only one nostril [i.e., only half your true self] today?" Shūkō said, "I am the disciple of Hōbō!" [Hōbō was Tandō's master.] Tandō said, "O you miserable Zen monk!"

Another time, Shūkō was chanting and Tandō asked him, "What sūtra are you reciting?" Shūkō replied, "The Diamond Sūtra." Tandō said, "In the principle of equanimity there is no high or low. Then why is Mt. Unko high and Mt. Hōbō low?" Shūkō answered, "In the principle of equanimity there is no high or low." Tandō said, "You are just mimicking me," and chased him away.

Again another day, Tandō saw somebody dressed up as Emma, the King of Hell. He asked Shūkō, "Who is that man?" Shūkō said, "Ryō." Tandō rubbed his head and said, "His name is the same as mine [Tandō's secular name was Ryō], but I'm not wearing the same kind of hood." Shūkō said, "That's true. You have the form of a monk." Tandō said, "O what a blockhead you are!"

One time Tandō said to Shūkō, "Perhaps you have a tentative understanding of my Zen and might even be able to explain it. Maybe you could even compose commentaries and verses, and explain, give discourses or personal instruction about it. However, you lack complete knowledge of one thing. Do you know what it is?" Shūkō said, "I lack something?" Tandō said, "Yes, you do. I will explain it to you. When you are in my room Zen exists. When you leave it Zen disappears. It is the same as when you are awake Zen is there, but when you sleep it goes away. If your Zen is like that, how can you face the problem of life and death?" Shūkō said, "Yes, that is truly my main doubt."

Later, Tandō became ill and Shūkō said, "O priest, one hundred years from now, who can I depend on to solve my central problem?" Tandō replied harshly, "There is lingo Kokugon, but I don't know him. If you meet another master surely you will resolve your doubts. If you meet another master do not go anywhere else. After that you will no longer need to study Zen."

When we reflect upon this we can see why Tandō did not allow Shūkō to become his Dharma-heir. Often he tried to help Shūkō open his mind, but Shūkō could not shed his doubts; he could not find out what his problem was or attain liberation from it. Priest Dōchō did not give the seal of transmission to Shūkō, but rather, encouraged him by saying he was not complete. Dōchō's vision was clear and believable. Obviously, Shūkō lacked proper study, did not attain liberation, could not solve his problem, or satisfy his doubt. He often requested to be given a seal of transmission because his study was superficial, he had no mind for the Way, and lacked proper study and practice. This is lacking deep thought. Those who fail to accomplish the Buddhist Way because of inadequate study, or because of their love of fame or wealth, destroy the inner essence of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. It is a great pity not to know the words of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Such people do not know practice is self-awakening and that visiting masters leads to self-enlightenment. Therefore, they have much misunderstanding and misinterpretation. Because of that none of Shūkō's disciples or descendants understood the truth even though they pretended to be real students. If we fail to meet and comprehend the Buddhist Dharma such things occur. Monks of the present age must study this in detail and never be lazy.

After Tandō's death, Shūkō obeyed his master's instructions and went to study under Engo at Tennenji monastery in the

capital. One day Engo was in the Dharma Hall and Shake' said to him, "I have to confess that I possess Zen enlightenment." Engo said, "Not yet, you don't. You haven't clarified the Great Dharma, no matter what you say."

Another time, Engo was in the Dharma Hall speaking on the fifth Patriarch Hōen's "Sometimes we use words, sometimes not." After hearing this, Shūkō said, "I have attained the Dharma of peace and bliss." Engo laughed and said, "I'm not deceiving you [you haven't attained enlightenment yet]."

This is how Shūkō came to study under Engo. Shūkō was permitted to enter Engo's community, but he was unable to make any progress. In neither his informal discourses nor in his lectures did Shūkō show any new insight.

We should know that although there are chronicles that claim Shūkō possessed Zen enlightenment and attained the Dharma of great peace and bliss, that did not actually happen. He was only a student, nothing more.

Zen Master Engo was an ancient Buddha, honoured throughout the ten quarters of the universe. Since Obaku, such a great figure as Engo has not appeared. He is a very rare type of ancient Buddha, even in other worlds. However, he is not well known in this sorry world of ours. In light of Engo's admonishments to Shūkō, we can see that Shūkō did not surpass his master or even equal him. How could such a man possibly surpass his master? It cannot even be dreamed.

Therefore, we should know that Shūkō was unable to possess even half the virtue of his master. He simply memorized and then repeated mechanically the sayings of the Avatamsaka and Surangama-samādhi-nirdesa Sūtra. He was unable to gain the bones and marrow of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Shūkō thought that the Buddha Dharma meant that all religious seekers, great or small, can be influenced by the spirit of such natural objects as trees and grasses, and that insight can be gained from that spirit. That is why he could not clarify the Great Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. After he left Engo he did not visit any other masters, and without any real authority he became abbot of a large temple and instructed unsuis. No matter what he said, he did not even touch the edge of the Great Law.

However, those who do not really know about him think that Shūkō is at least equal to other masters of the past. People who do know about him, though, state clearly that he neither clarified nor understood the Great Dharma; he was just babbling incoherently. We can see that Priest Dōchō of Tōzan possessed the correct view without any error. Nevertheless, the disciples of Shūkō are jealous of Dōchō even to the present day. Dōchō refused Shūkō permission to receive the seal, and Tandō was even more severe. Every time Shūkō asked for the seal he revealed his spiritual immaturity. However, his descendants are not jealous of Tandō. Those who are jealous of Dōchō should be ashamed.

There are many self-styled descendants of the Buddhas and Patriarchs in the great Sung Dynasty, but few have had real study and fewer have realized the truth. This is clearly seen in the above story. The Shoko period was like that and the present age is much worse. Recently, people who do not know the Great Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs have become teachers of unsuis.

We must know that the seal of transmission is rightly transmitted from Buddha to Buddha, Patriarch to Patriarch, throughout the east and west in the line of Seigen. From Seigen, it was passed to Tōzan. Others throughout the universe have no knowledge of this. Only the descendants of Tozan have complete understanding. This is what unsuis should respect. shake could not even understand the true meaning of self-awakening and self-enlightenment in his own lifetime. How then could he master any koans? Or how can any of his disciples understand self-awakening?

Therefore, we can say the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs for self and others is surely the body and mind and enlightened vision of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. It is their bones and marrow, and fools cannot even scratch the surface.

This was delivered to the monks of Kippōji in Echizen on February 29, 1244. Transcribed in the chief disciple's quarters on April 12 of the same year, by Ejō.

70. KOKŪ

虚空

“Universal emptiness”

When we reflect upon our experience and practice of Zazen we actualize the life of the Buddhas and Patriarchs and receive their right transmission which has been handed down from generation to generation. Our subject today is universal emptiness^{1-EN} – the universal emptiness that is in our entire body, skin, flesh, bones and marrow. Universal emptiness has numerous meanings and interpretations – the twenty kinds, the 84,000 kinds and so on – [and if you can define it properly you can be said to be a Buddha or Patriarch].

Zen Master Shakyō Ezō once asked Zen Master Seidō Chizō,^{2-EN} who was Shakyō's senior, “Do you know how to comprehend universal emptiness?” “Of course,” Seidō answered. “How?” Shakyō wanted to know. Seidō grasped a handful of air. “Aha! You don't know how to grasp it then!” Shakyō exclaimed. Seidō challenged Shakyō to show him universal emptiness. Shakyō grabbed Seidō's nose and yanked it until he cried out in pain. “Now I've got it!” Seidō said. “Yes, now you know what it is,” Shakyō agreed.

The purpose of Shakyō's initial question was to find whether or not our entire body is hands and eyes [i.e., universal emptiness]. Seidō's “Of course” was a defilement of Buddhism. To say you understand universal emptiness is to defile the truth – universal emptiness falls to the earth. When Shakyō asked Seidō how he understood universal emptiness he was asking him to show the “suchness” of universal emptiness; that is, show the true state of reality. However, we must be careful about this since circumstances are constantly changing the form of “suchness.” When Seidō grabbed a handful of air it revealed that he understood only the head, but not the tail, of universal emptiness. Shakyō then saw that

Seidō's understanding was limited and he could not even dream about universal emptiness. It was too profound and absolute for him. Therefore, Seidō asked Shakyō to show him universal emptiness. Half of the answer was already contained in Seidō's request but he had to discover the rest by himself. Shakyō grabbed his nose; he hid in Seidō's nostril so to speak. At that time universal emptiness in the form of Seidō and universal emptiness in the form of Shakyō were united and only universal emptiness remained. Prior to having his nose yanked Seidō thought that universal emptiness existed outside himself, but now he has cast off body and mind. Yet you must be careful not to cling to such a discovery of universal emptiness – do not defile yourself but practice within your own universal emptiness. Shakyō confirmed Seidō's understanding but did not try to grasp universal emptiness with his hands – universal emptiness cannot be grasped with our hands. After all, the entire world is universal emptiness; there is absolutely no room for doubt. We can now see why this koan is so famous.

After Shakyō and Seidō there were many self-proclaimed masters in the Five Schools [Rinzai, Sōtō, Ummon, Igō, and Hōgen] who took up this koan and the problem of universal emptiness but few understood it properly. They neither experienced universal emptiness as Shakyō did nor had great enlightenment and cast it off like Seidō.

Here I would like to say to Shakyō, “Long ago you pulled Seidō's nose but if you really wanted to understand universal emptiness you should have yanked your own.” If you want to know the fingertip you must use it. Shakyō knew how to understand universal emptiness but he must also learn its internal and external aspects, its ability to enliven and destroy, and its principles of light and heavy, soft and hard. Every practice, each dialogue and every attainment of the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs reveal universal emptiness. My late master said, “The entire body is the mouth hanging in the air.” We can clearly see that the body of universal emptiness is hanging in the air.

Once Ryō,^{3-EN} the head abbot of Seizan in Kōshū, visited Baso in order to ask him a question. However before Ryō could speak Baso asked him, “What sūtra are you lecturing on these days?” “The Shingyō (Mahāpāramitā Hridaya Sūtra)” Ryō answered. Baso then asked, “What mind do you use when you lecture?” “The Mind,” Ryō told him. “In this play the Mind is the main actor, consciousness is the supporting actor, and the six sensations form the rest of the cast,” said Baso. “How can you lecture with those players?” “If my mind is not capable of lecturing on that sūtra how can I be able to explain universal emptiness?” Ryō asked. “Use universal emptiness to explain the sūtra,” Baso told him. Ryō suddenly got up to leave. Baso called out to him and when Ryō looked back Baso said, “From the time you are born until the time you die there is only universal emptiness!” Ryō was enlightened. After that he concealed himself on Mt. Seizan and was never heard from again.

We can now see that all the Buddhas and Patriarchs lecture on the sūtra of universal emptiness. To lecture on the sūtras is to lecture on universal emptiness. If you fail to lecture with the body and mind of universal emptiness you will not be able to explain even one sūtra. You must lecture using universal emptiness. Universal emptiness is not only actualized in the consciousness but emerges even in the state of “non-thinking.” There is wisdom that is awakened with the aid of teacher and wisdom that is found by oneself. There is innate intelligence and intelligence gained from study. Yet all are universal emptiness. To become Buddha or Patriarch is to be universal emptiness. The twenty-first Patriarch Vasubandhu wrote: “Our Mind is the same as the universe, and all dharmas are Mind itself. When universal emptiness is perceived there is no longer any negation or affirmation.”

When you sit in Zazen facing a wall, it appears that the sitter and the wall are two different things, but actually they are not separate. In order to understand this we need the mind of “wall, tiles, and stones” or a “withered tree” – i.e., the mind of universal emptiness. In order to save others we take a body and proclaim the Law. This again is another form of universal emptiness. We utilize the twelve hours of the day and they utilize us—it is the time universal emptiness is experienced and enlightened. A large stone is large, a small stone small; that is the function of universal emptiness. There is no affirmation or negation.

Universal emptiness is the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and the Serene Mind of Nirvana. This is what we must clarify.

Delivered to the monks on March 6, 1245, at Daibutsuji, Echizen. Recopied on May 17, 1279, by Giun at Shizenji, Nagahama, Echizen.

1-EN See Tsuki, note one.

2-EN Hsi-t'ang (735-814).

3-EN Liang, dates unknown.

71. HŌU

鉢盂

“The mendicant bowl”

A mendicant bowl has been transmitted by each of the seven Buddhas and all others of the past right up to the twenty-eighth Patriarch. The twenty-eighth Patriarch Bodhidharma came to China and transmitted his Dharma to the second Patriarch of China Great Master Shoshu Fukaku [Eka] who in turn handed the Dharma to his successor; like this the transmission continued to the sixth Patriarch Sōkei Enō.

Altogether there were fifty-one Patriarchs in the line of transmission in India and China. In each case the master bestowed his kesa and mendicant bowl as the seal of the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and the Serene Mind of Nirvana. This right transmission handed down from the Buddhas and Patriarchs of the past has continued unbroken by each successive Patriarch. Therefore, the better we understand the significance of the mendicant bowl the better we understand the skin, flesh, bones and marrow of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

A mendicant bowl can be understood in many ways : some consider it to be the body and mind of the Buddhas and Patriarchs; some take it as merely a bowl to hold rice; some think it is the very life of the Buddhas and Patriarchs; some say it is Divine Light; some hold it is “the true body of man” (shinjitsuintai) in the Buddhas and Patriarchs; some maintain it is the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and Serene Mind of Nirvana; some contend it is an aspect of total freedom; and some regard it as the actualization of the first principle of causality. We can see that there are many interpretations like these, based on different viewpoints, yet there are still many more possibilities of fruitful study.

My late master Nyojō moved from Jōjiji to Mt. Tendō during the year 1225. The first time he entered the Dharma Hall he gave the following discourse: “There is an old koan : Once a monk asked Zen Master Hyakujō 'What is the most important thing in this world?' Hyakujō answered, Sitting by oneself on this mountain! Do not be surprised by Hyakujō's answer. We must strive to surpass Hyakujō when we sit. If someone were to ask the same question I would probably say 'Nothing!' or 'Bringing my mendicant bowl from Jōjiji to this monastery and using it to eat rice'.”

To be the disciple of a wonderful master is just one of many excellent things in this world. And only a wonderful master can really know what all the wonderful things are. In order to do something wonderful we must make use of the supreme teaching. When we do, all our actions are superlative. Therefore, whenever and wherever anything wonderful or excellent occurs a mendicant bowl, the tool of the Buddhist way, is sure to be found. Even Brahma and the King of Dragons protect this bowl. They gave it to the Buddhas and Patriarchs who then passed it on to their disciples from generation to generation. This is indeed the true standard of the Buddhist Way.

Those who have never practiced under a Buddha or Patriarch or heard the ultimate Buddhist Way say that a Buddha's kesa is just a garment made from silk, cotton or some other material and a mendicant bowl is only a utensil produced from stone, clay, wood or iron.

These people lack proper study and observation of the Buddhist Way. A Buddha's kesa has a special meaning; it has nothing to do with silk, cotton or any other material. Silk, cotton, etc., belong to the mind of discrimination. Similarly, a Buddha's mendicant bowl is never limited to stone, clay, iron, or wood.

A Buddha's mendicant bowl is not artificially made; it has no creation or destruction, coming or going, gain or loss, old or new—it transcends those notions. Even if a kesa and mendicant bowl appear where clouds and water gather it is not restricted by them. Even if grasses and trees are collected and made into a kesa or mendicant bowl they are not bound by those characteristics. That is, water appears as water, clouds appear as clouds, composed of various elements but appearing together as a unified whole. A real mendicant bowl is one that is unified with all things—the mind of Buddha and universal emptiness—yet it is a mendicant bowl, nothing else.

A mendicant bowl carried by an unsui^{1-EN} is the one protected by Brahma and given to Buddha. If this had not occurred such a bowl could not, under any circumstances, exist in the present. Everywhere there are mendicant bowls which have been bestowed as the Eye and Treasury of the True Law. These bowls permeate time, both past and present. Just as this bowl cannot be limited to stone, clay, iron, or wood, theories made with stone, clay, iron, or wood cannot describe it—the mendicant bowl can be made from almost anything. It is not limited to stone, clay etc. This is the true transmission of the mendicant bowl.

Delivered to the monks at Daibutsuji, Echizen, on March 12, 1245. Transcribed on July 27, the same year at the chief disciple's quarters by Ejō.

1-EN “Cloud and water.” A Zen trainee who wanders like the clouds and water seeking the Way.

72. ANGO

安居

“The training period”

My late master Tendō, the ancient Buddha, once said during the summer training period, “Now you monks are forming the structure of true practice and making a cave in universal emptiness. Complete those two things and you will have a lacquer bucket.”

Therefore, if we experience the inner essence of the training period we can push on and all our actions—taking meals, stretching out our feet, and sleeping—will be forms of training throughout our lives. If we grasp this we will be diligent and not relax for even a moment. Such action is the ninety-day training period. This is the key point and original face of the Buddhas and Patriarchs; here we touch their skin, flesh, bones, and marrow. The days and months of a ninety-day summer training period carry the enlightened vision and essence of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Even in just one term of summer training, people become known as Buddhas and Patriarchs. Both the beginning and end of the training period are the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Outside of this there is nothing, neither large nor small. The summer training period is not new, not ancient, and does not come or go anywhere. Its value is that of fist and its form is yanking the nose [i.e., universal and all-pervading].

When we begin a summer training period the entire universe is filled with that training period, nothing else. When the summer training period is finished the great earth has been turned topsy-turvy. Therefore, when the summer training period begins we have the actualization of enlightenment and after it ends all obstacles are broken – it is the same from start to finish. Nevertheless, there are some who are familiar with such practice and become attached to the beginning and end of the training period. Remember no weeds are found originally; do not limit yourself to a ninety-day training period.

Priest Shinshin Oryū said, “My pilgrimage of thirty years resembles a ninety-day training period—give or take a day.” That is, the insight obtained after thirty years of practice can be condensed into a ninety-day summer training period. Even if we add or subtract a day, ninety days are sufficient and complete. Do not try to avoid those ninety days; simply concentrate on those ninety days as ninety days. The ninety days of a summer training period are the instrument of practice. It began before the Buddhas and Patriarchs and has been rightly transmitted by them up to the present day.

Therefore, to participate in a summer training period is to meet and see all the Buddhas and Patriarchs. The amount of time in one summer training period is immense, larger than one, ten, or even a hundred unlimited kalpas. Time functions within unlimited time. The ninety-day training period also functions within unlimited time and therefore someone who practices during a ninety-day training period and sees Buddha surely surpasses unlimited time.

That is why we must study that a ninety-day training period is absolute enlightened vision, nothing else. The body and mind of the trainee is exactly the same. We must both utilize and transcend the liveliness and freedom of the summer training period. It neither comes from, nor occurs at, some other place or time. If you seek the reason for it, or look for its basis, you will find ninety days, nothing else. Ordinary people and saints live within it; it is the root of their lives. Yet it goes far beyond the worldly conditions of either ordinary people or saints and it cannot be fathomed by ordinary thought, non-thought, or thoughtless thought.

The World-honoured One was proclaiming the Dharma for all sentient beings in Magadha. At that time he wished to institute the summer training period and said to Ānanda, “I continually proclaim the Dharma for men, gods, my close disciples, and all sentient beings but they do not respect it properly. Therefore, I will now institute the practice of spending the ninety days of summer in one’s room meditating. If someone has a question about the teaching, answer for me by saying, ‘All things are without creation and without destruction.’” Saying this he returned to his room and began his meditation.

Two thousand one hundred ninety-four years have passed since then (up to the present year, Kangen sannen, [1245] in Japan). All those descendants who have not mastered the inner essence of this interpret the training period in one’s room as “world-less proclaiming.” Present day people also often misinterpret this, thinking that Buddha instituted a special training period in order to emphasize the inadequacy of words in explaining the Dharma; i.e., words are nothing more than “skillful means.” They also say that the ultimate truth can never be explained with words; the truth only appears after the working of the mind has disappeared. Hence, “no words, no thought” is the way to ultimate truth. “Words and thought” lead us astray. The ninety-day summer training period is to be spent completely cut off from all other people. Such an interpretation completely misses Shakyamuni’s real meaning.

Namely, if “words cannot describe the truth” and truth “appears only after the mind has stopped,” then all social and economic activity cannot be explained in words and only appear after the mind has stopped its working. Actually, “beyond words” covers all words; “the mind stops working” covers all workings of the mind. Moreover, this story about Shakyamuni contains nothing about “wordless” proclamation. Shakyamuni entered the dirty water [i.e., this world] and with his entire body proclaimed the Law to everyone over and over. Turning the wheel of the Law was his sole intention. I would like to ask those “descendants” who say that the ninety-day summer training period is a wordless proclamation, “Please show me that ninety-day summer training period.”

Shakyamuni said to Ānanda, “Answer for me by saying, ‘All things are without creation and without destruction.’” Buddha’s intention is not to be taken lightly. Why is the summer training period said to be a “wordless proclamation”? Let us put ourselves in Ānanda’s place for awhile and ask what is the essence of, and how we should explain, “All things are without creation and without destruction.” This is the way we should listen to Shakyamuni’s words.

Buddha’s concern here is with the ultimate and absolute truth of the turning of the wheel of the Dharma, rather than with “wordless proclamations.” If we take his purpose as a wordless proclamation it becomes a pitiful, useless thing, something like Ryūsen’s three-foot sword or an expensive antique sculpture.

Therefore, that is why the ninety-day summer training period is the eternal turning and proclaiming of the Law of the ancient Buddhas and Patriarchs. “At that time he wished to institute the summer training period.” We cannot avoid those ninety days of summer training; anyone who does is a non-believer.

Shakyamuni spent his ninety-day training period in either the Heaven of the thirty-three gods [on the top of Mt. Sumeru] or in a quiet place on Vulture Peak with five hundred bhikkhus. Whenever he was in the five countries of India, he always had a ninety-day summer training period at the prescribed time. Present day Buddhas and Patriarchs also practice it as their most important work. This is the supreme Way of practice and enlightenment. The Brahmajāla-sūtra mentions a winter training period but that has not been established. Only a ninety-day summer training period has been handed down. This has been

rightly transmitted up to the fifty-first Patriarch.

It is written in the Shingi, the rules for Zen monks, "Monks on pilgrimage who wish to participate in the summer training period must come to the monastery a half-month before the training period begins. It is important for monastery officials to note the applicant's behavior when he is served tea and permitted to stay overnight."

"A half-month before" means at the end of March. Therefore one must enter the monastery in the month of March. After the first of April the monks cannot go out and the gates are closed to all would-be entrants. By April 1, all monks should have chosen a monastery for training. Occasionally it happens that monks spend the duration of the training period at a layman's house. This has been done by both Buddhas and Patriarchs and it is permissible to follow their example. Diligent monks will be able to choose the proper monastery or other place for their training.

However, certain malicious people say, "The standpoint of the Mahayana is the essence of Buddhism, and the summer training period is only the practice and custom of sravakas; consequently, it is not necessary to participate in it." People who think like that have never seen nor heard the Buddhist Dharma at all. Supreme and perfect enlightenment is nothing other than the ninety-day summer training period. The ultimate goals in both the Mahayana and Hinayana are just the branches, leaves, flowers, and fruit of the ninety-day training period.

After the morning meal on April 3, the training session begins. The monk in charge of training must prepare a name board with the names and ranks of all the monks by April 1. After the morning meal is finished on April 3, the name board is hung in the monks' quarters on the left side of the window across from the entrance. All the windows must be latticed. After the morning meal the board is hung up and left until April 5 when it is taken down after the hōssu bell (announcing the time allotted to interviews with the master is over) is struck. The board must be hung from the third of April until the fifth and taken down at the same time of day.

There is a special order used in writing this name board. One's rank does not depend on one's position as a chiji or choshu: ^{1-EN} it only depends on one's years as a monk. If a monk has had some experience as one of the chiji or choshu his title should be written after his name. If someone has been chief priest of some temple the title seidō should be written after his name. However, if the temple was very small, and the other monks would not recognize its name, it is not customary to write seidō after his name. Also, anyone who is training under his own master should have no title after his name even if he has been a seidō elsewhere. Occasionally the title jōza (elder) is placed after one's name. The attendant monks in charge of the clothing and incense should assist the master. This is an old established custom. Furthermore, all the other officers must follow the master's instructions at all times. If disciples of other masters or those with some previous administrative experience come to join the training session they should be appointed to some office. This is the proper procedure. It is not good for one to mention his serving as priest of a small temple; the other monks will laugh at him. A good monk will not mention such a thing.

The signboards I saw in China looked like this:

_____ country, _____ province, _____ mountain, _____ temple

Preparations for this year's summer training period are now being made. The ranking of the monks is as follows:

The Venerable Ajntākaundinya^{2-EN}

_____ chief priest

Monks who received the precepts, summer _____:

_____ jōza (elder) _____ zōsu (director of sūtras)

_____ jōza _____ jōza

Monks who received the precepts, winter _____:

_____ seidō _____ ino (director of general affairs)

_____ shusso (director of trainees) _____ shika (guest master)

_____ jōza _____ yusu (bath master)

Monks who received the precepts, summer _____:

_____ shussui (director of maintenance) _____ jisha (assistant priest)

_____ shusso (director) _____ shuso

_____ keishu (director of external affairs) _____ jōza

_____ tenzo (kitchen director) _____ dōshu (director of monastery buildings)

Monks who received the precepts, summer _____:

_____ shoki (director of documents) _____ jōza

_____ seidō _____ shuso

_____ jōza _____ jōza

The above was written with care and respect. If there are any errors please inform me. _____ year, April 3. Written by Bhikkhu _____.

This signboard should be written on white paper in block characters, not cursive or rough-style characters. The width of the string used to hang it should be about the thickness of two rice kernels. Attach the string to the board's edge and hang it

1-EN There are six chiji (officers) in a Zen monastery: tsusu (secretary-general) kansu (secretary), fūsu (accountant), ino (head of general affairs) tenzo (chief of kitchen), and shissui (chief of maintenance). The six chosu are in charge respectively of the trainees, documents, sūtras, guests, buildings, and the bath.

2-EN One of the five monks who became the first disciples of Shakyamuni after his enlightenment. Ajntākaundinya attained the Dharma before Shakyamuni finished his first sermon. He is held up as an ideal for monks.

vertically like a woven straw blind. After the bell is struck to announce the end of opening ceremonies on April 5, the board should be taken down and put away.

A celebration is held on April 8, the anniversary of Buddha's birth. On April 13, after the midday meal all the monks return to their quarters and are served a light dessert. Then they chant some sūtras, acquiring merit thereby. The assistant monks must prepare the hot water and incense. Their rooms should be located in the central part of the monastery while the head instructor's quarters should be on the right side of the Manjusri image. Only the assistant monks should prepare the incense and the other officers should not attend this service. The officer in charge of general affairs should prepare the announcement board beforehand and place it on the upper half of the eastern wall in front of the monastery entrance in the space west of the entrance after the morning meal of the fifteenth.

It says in the Zenen Shingi: "The officer in charge of general affairs must prepare the announcement board beforehand and adorn it with flowers and incense. After the midday meal of April 14, a board listing the names of the ten Buddhas should be hung in front of all the monastery buildings. That evening the monastery officials should offer incense and flowers before the board located in the Dōjidō.^{3-EN} All the monks should gather there to chant the names of the ten Buddhas. It should be done in the following manner. After the monks have gathered, the head priest offers some incense. Then the various officers and officials make their offerings in the same way as done for the ceremony of Buddha's birth. Then the officer in charge of general affairs rises from his seat, goes to the front, bows to the chief priest and finally, goes over to the Dōjidō.

He faces north and chants the following:

"Imperceptibly, the autumn wind gently blows over the fields and the God of Fire [the sun] controls all directions. The Dharma King cannot leave. This is the day of Shakyamuni's birth. All the monks have gathered together and worship the spirits of the gods by chanting the names of the Buddhas that possess immeasurable merit. Pray that the virtue of the gods who protect this monastery and all its buildings will be transferred to us. We ask for protection throughout this training period and pray that it will come to a peaceful conclusion. Together let us chant the names of the Buddhas with respect and honour.

The Pure and Undeified Dharma Body, Vairocana Buddha.^{4-EN} The Perfect and Complete Bliss Body, Vairocana Buddha.

The Unlimited Transformation Body, Shakyamuni Buddha.

The One Who Will Come, Maitreya Buddha.

All Buddhas of the Ten Directions and Three Worlds.

The Great Saint Manjusri Bodhisattva.

The Great Saint Samantabhadra Bodhisattva.

The Compassionate Avālokitesvara Bodhisattva.

All the Honourable Bodhisattvas and Mahasattvas.

The Mahāprajñāparamitā (the Great Perfection of Wisdom)."

The virtue obtained by chanting the names of the ten Buddhas protects the True Law and bestows on us the merit-transference of the earth-gods. We beseech them to share their spiritual power with us, that our deeds will be fruitful, our joy pure, and our bliss eternal and selfless. Let us chant again:

"Praise to all the Buddhas of the ten directions and three worlds,

All the Honourable Bodhisattvas and Mahasattvas,

And to the Great Perfection of Wisdom."

Then the big drum is struck and all the monks take their seats in the monastery while hot water is being offered to the Buddha. The preparation and observance of this service is the responsibility of the secretary general. When the monks enter the monastery they should walk around it in single file before taking their seats. They should face front. One of the chiji will be conducting this part of the service and taking care of the incense.

It says in the Shingi, "Usually the director of the monastery should officiate at the services but the secretary-general may take his place if necessary."

[There is another service held at this time.] A special announcement board is made for this service and taken to the chief disciple. When an officer or official meets with the chief disciple he must wear a kesa and take a zagu (prostration cloth) and make a set of sokurei and ryoten^{5-EN} prostrations before submitting the announcement board. The chief disciple then returns the said number of prostrations. After that the chief disciple takes the board and places it in a box with a cloth on the bottom. Then the chief disciple's assistant takes it away and the chief disciple dismisses the official.

The announcement board must be written in this style :

"This evening the secretary-general will hold a tea ceremony in the monastery. The chief disciple will answer any questions that monks may have, in order to prove his ability to succeed his master. I pray that the light of compassion will shine on us all. Written on April 14, _____ by the secretary-general, Bhikkhu _____."

The head official must initial it. After this announcement board is shown to the chief disciple it should be placed in front of the monastery, on the right hand side, by one of the assistants. On the southern side of the outside gate there is another board where announcements are made. This board should be painted. There is a lacquer box (korusu) for holding documents next to it. This box is hung on a bamboo nail. The characters on the announcement board must not exceed five bun (1.5 cm.). On the front of the lacquer box the following should be written:

"Invitation from the chief disciple to all the monks.

3-EN The hall where the god who looks over the monastery is enshrined.

4-EN A small bell is struck after each name.

5-EN A sokurei prostration is made by folding the zagu cloth into four sections, laying it on the floor, and touching the head to it. A ryoten prostration is made when the zagu is folded in half. A daiten prostration is made with the zagu laid out full length.

Sealed by the Bhikkhu _____."

After the tea ceremony is held the announcement should be taken down.

Before the morning meal of the fifteenth all officers, officials, senior monks, and the chief disciple should greet the chief priest. However, if the chief priest is too busy to compose a gāthā and prepare a formal lecture, he may omit this observance. If he wishes to omit it he should place notices on each side of the entrance to his quarters and in front of the monastery the previous evening.

After the Dharma talk on the fifteenth, the chief priest comes down from the lecture platform and stands in the centre of the temple at the edge of the haishiki (the special straw mat used for prostrations by the chief priest). Then all the officers approach and give three ryoten prostrations. As they open their prostration cloths they chant, "Now we have entered the summer training period when it is forbidden to go out. We practice under you as our master because of the strength of your Law. We sincerely hope to complete our training without difficulty or trouble."

Again there is one more ryoten prostration; then the season's greeting is given, followed by three sokurei prostrations. After the ryoten prostration they fold up their cloths and say, "Summer has begun and it is growing warmer and warmer. You are looking fine, O Priest, and we are full of deep emotion when we consider the significance of this training period." Then they make the three prostrations and say, "It is good fortune that all of us can participate together in this training period. We pray that all the officers and officials will assist one another through the power of the Dharma and not experience any difficulties." Everyone participates in this ceremony.

After this the chief disciple, the officers, officials, senior monks, and all the other monks face north and make a prostration. The chief priest is the only one facing south. The chief priest's prostration cloth is spread out on the haishiki by an assistant. Next, the chief disciple and the rest of the monks make three ryoten prostrations to the chief priest. However, senior priests, top disciples, and novices stand aside (along the eastern wall of the Dharma Hall) and do not make a prostration. If laymen are already present and seated on that side, the senior monks, etc. should stand by the big drum or near the western wall.

After the monks finish their prostrations the officers return to their rooms but remain standing. Next, the chief disciple and the rest of the monks return to their quarters and make three sokurei prostrations. At the same time the senior monks, assistants, and top disciples make three ryoten prostrations to the chief priest. The disciples make three ryoten prostrations which are returned by the chief priest. The senior priests, assistants, etc. make nine prostrations, but the chief priest makes no prostrations in return. Novices should make either nine or twelve prostrations. The chief priest only makes a gassho to them.

The chief disciple now goes to the front of the monastery near the officers' seats (which are on the right hand side), faces south, directly facing the assembly. All the monks who are facing north make three sokurei prostrations to the chief disciple. Then the chief disciple leads the monks around the monastery to their respective seats (which are arranged according to seniority). After that, the officers enter the monastery and make three daiten prostrations before the image of Maitreya Buddha. Then they make three sokurei prostrations to the chief disciple. All the monks return the prostrations. The officers then walk once around the monastery and go to their seats where they stand in shashu (with the left fist held inside the right hand in front of the chest). The chief priest enters, offers incense before the image of Manjusri, makes three daiten prostrations, and then remains standing there. At that time the senior priests are standing behind the image. The rest of the monks follow behind. Then the chief priest makes three sokurei prostrations to the chief disciple and all the monks return his prostrations.

The chief priest walks once around the monastery and then goes out. The chief disciple goes to the southern gate to see the chief priest off. After the chief priest has left, the chief disciple and the rest of the monks make three prostrations to each other and say, "It is our good fortune to share the same training period; perhaps our three karmas [of body, words, and mind] are not good, but let us have compassion for each other."

During the above prostrations use the prostration cloth. After this, the chief disciple and the rest of the officers return to their respective quarters. The remaining officials and monks make three sokurei prostrations. The above chant is repeated.

After this, the chief priest begins to inspect the monks' quarters. All the monks follow behind until they arrive at the chief priest's room; then they return to their own. That is to say, the chief priest first visits the officers' quarters and gives a greeting. Then he continues his inspection with the officers following behind. They proceed to the eastern corridor but do not visit the infirmary. They move from east to west, passing through the main gate. The monks around the main gate then join in the procession. They move to the southern corridor and then towards the west. From there on, the various monks who live in the Anrō (elderly monks' quarters), the Gonkyū (former officers' and officials' quarters), the Idō (quarters for monks over one hundred years old), and the Tairyō (retired monks' quarters), and the other officials and attendants join the procession as it passes their residences. This is called "Daishu Shōsō" the Great Procession.

After all this, the chief priest climbs the western steps towards his quarters and takes a position directly in front of his room. He faces south with his hands folded across his chest. The officers face north in front of him with the rest of the monks lined up behind. All of them make a deep bow to the chief priest who returns their bow. Thereafter, everyone returns to his respective place.

My late master did not bring all the monks to his own room. He went to the Dharma Hall with the others, faced south with his hands folded across his chest, and then the monks made their prostrations. This is the old style. Then all the monks bow to one another.

Also, if it happens that monks from the same district meet in the monastery or in the corridor, they should not just bow to each other but also to the other monks present. They congratulate each other for attending the same training period. They may use the same greeting described above or they may use one of their own choosing. If a junior priest meets his master he must make nine prostrations; when the chief priest's senior disciples meet him they make three daiten or ryoten prostrations, and the other monks also make the same number. In addition, when fellow disciples (both senior and junior) meet, they must make the prescribed number of prostrations. Make prostrations whenever you meet neighbouring monks and old or new friends. In the case of those who have separate quarters – e.g., the chief disciple, the various officials and officers, etc. – we must go to their rooms and make our prostrations. If there are too many people there when you make your visit you may leave a message written on white paper one sun (three cm.) wide and two sun in length. The form is:

a) _____ quarters (your name) congratulations (haiga)

Other acceptable forms:

- b) _____ (official's name) congratulations (haiga)
- c) _____ congratulations (reiga)
- d) _____ congratulations (haiga)
- e) _____ congratulations (raibai)

Actually there are many different styles of writing this greeting, but generally they follow the above forms. That is why there are so many name cards on each gate. They should not be placed on the left hand side but rather, on the right hand side of the gate. The name cards should be removed after the midday meal. On that day all the buildings, large and small, and each residence should have a rattan blind hung before the entrances.

Often, tea is served for the chief priest, or the secretary-general, or the chief disciple. However, if the monastery is in a remote or distant place, this service may be omitted. This service is used to show one's respect and is not absolutely necessary. If it is held, the retired elders and senior disciples should make the arrangements for serving the tea.

Like this, the training period may end but still they continue to practice the Way. Although one may boast of the many forms of practice he has undergone, if he has not attended a summer training period he cannot be a descendant of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Both Jetavana Park and Vulture Peak were actualized by the summer training period. The dojo where the training period is held is the heart of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. It is the world where all the Buddhas and Patriarchs dwell.

The summer training period ends July thirteenth. On the evening of the fourteenth a tea ceremony should be held by that month's director of the monastery. On the following day a lecture should be given by the chief priest in the Dharma Hall. Then there is the same kind of greeting, inspection of the monastery, and tea ceremony as held at the beginning of the training period. The only difference is the wording of the announcements and the chants:

"This evening I will hold a tea ceremony in the monastery to show my appreciation to the chief disciple and all the monks for their efforts during this past training session. I sincerely hope that all the monks will show their compassion and attend this service."

The following verse should be chanted in the Dōjīdō:

"The autumn wind blows across the fields and the god of the autumn equinox controls all directions. The king of enlightenment emerges and on this day the Dharma has been fulfilled everywhere. Nothing disturbed us for ninety days and all monks were at peace. We chant the names of the Buddhas and bow to the god who guards our monastery. Let us say... (the same verses used on the first day are now chanted.)"

After the chief priest finishes his talk, a word of thanks is offered by the officers to the chief priest: "joyfully the Dharma has been fulfilled everywhere and nothing has disturbed us. The power and virtue of your teaching protected us and we are deeply grateful, unable to show our appreciation." Then the head priest replies, "The Dharma has been fulfilled, and I deeply appreciate the efforts of all the officers and officials. I thank everyone from the bottom of my heart."

Then the chief disciple and the director of monks address the chief priest, saying, "All of us have come together for this ninety-day training period. Our karma is not good and we have caused trouble for you, but we now ask for compassion and your forgiveness."

After this the officers and officials say to the monks, "All of us are brothers on the same pilgrimage. Today our training period is over. After our tea ceremony is finished please feel free to go wherever you wish." (However, they may stay if they are incapacitated for some reason.)

This ceremony has been the highest form of Buddhism handed down from the immemorial past. It is the most significant event of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Non-believers or demons cannot obstruct it. All true descendants of the Buddhas and Patriarchs in the three countries [India, China, Japan] have participated in this ceremony. Non-believers have never learned about such a ceremony. Because that ceremony is the main work of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, the summer training period itself contains everything from the attainment of the Way in the morning to the entering of nirvana in the evening. Monks of the five schools in India may disagree, but all who have undergone a ninety-day training period share the same practice and enlightenment. There are nine sects in China but none failed to observe the summer training period. If you do not experience a ninety-day summer training period sometime in your life, you cannot be called a bhikkhu or a disciple of Buddha. Training is not undertaken in order to become enlightened; training itself is practice and enlightenment beyond enlightenment. Shakyamuni Buddha, the World-honoured One of great enlightenment, had practice and enlightenment in every summer training period throughout his life, without missing one. Here, we must know that the practice and enlightenment of Shakyamuni is Buddha's enlightenment beyond enlightenment.

However, those who do not understand the practice and enlightenment of the ninety-day training summer period and still call themselves descendants of the Buddhas are laughable, or worse. We should not listen to the words of such fools, nor talk, sit, or walk with them. In the Buddhist Dharma we should convert such evil people with silence.

Keep in mind that the ninety-day summer training period is nothing but 'Buddhas and Patriarchs. The right transmission has been handed down continuously from the seven Buddhas to Mahākāśyapa, then passed to the twenty-eighth Indian Patriarch. The twenty-eighth Patriarch came to China and transmitted the Law to the second Chinese Patriarch, the Great Teacher Taishō Shōshū Fukaku. The transmission continued intact and without alteration from the second Patriarch up to the present time. I went to China and brought the right transmission of the Buddhas and Patriarchs to Japan. If you spend the ninety-day summer training period as the right transmission, it becomes the right transmission. Whenever the summer training period is spent with experienced monks it is a real training period. Truly, the same training period that existed in the time of Shakyamuni has been rightly transmitted directly, face to face, from the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Since the body and mind of the Buddhas and Patriarchs is bestowed interiorly, to see a training period is to see Buddha. To enlighten the essence of the training period is to enlighten Buddha. To practice in the training period is to practice Buddha. To hear the training period is to hear Buddha. To learn the training period is to learn Buddha.

The ninety-day training period is the one thing that all the Buddhas and Patriarchs must be very careful about. Therefore, that is why kings, Indra, Brahma, etc. become bhikkhus and monks and attend at least one summer training period. In other words, they see Buddha. Anyone – men, gods, dragons – who becomes a bhikkhu or bhikkhuni and has just one summer

training session can see Buddha. Those who join the Buddhas and Patriarchs and spend ninety days in training also see Buddha. It will be our great fortune to have had at last one summer training period because it means that the skin, flesh, bones, and marrow of the Buddhas and Patriarchs becomes our own skin, flesh, bones, and marrow. The Buddhas and Patriarchs come to us and make us practice the summer training period. Our individual practice of the summer training period and the summer training make us practice. Hence, the summer training period can be said to be the origin of countless Buddhas and Patriarchs. The summer training period is the skin, flesh, bones, and marrow of the Buddhas and Patriarchs and comprises their mind and body, their head and enlightened vision, their fist and nostrils, and their complete and perfect Buddha-nature. The summer training period is a fly whisk, a staff, a shippai, and a Zazen cushion. The summer training period is not made of new things nor does it use only ancient things.

The World-honoured One said to Perfect Enlightenment Bodhisattva, a great assembly of monks, and to all sentient beings, "Anyone who experiences a three-month summer training period will attain the state of a pure and undefiled Bodhisattva right from the beginning. That state of mind is different from that of a śrāvaka. Without relying on the power of others, when the day for the summer training period arrives, one may confidently stand before Buddha and say, 'We bhikkhus and bhikkhunis, lay men and lay women, are all living as Bodhisattvas and are practising the way of liberation. We have entered the state of purity and non-defilement, and dwell there. Great and perfect enlightenment is our home, and this body and mind is where we carry out the training period. We are in a state of equanimity; our wisdom and nirvana has no attachment. We respect virtue and without depending on the teaching of śrāvakas join all the Tathāgatas and Bodhisattvas of the ten directions in this ninety-day training period. In order to practice supreme and perfect enlightenment and have great karma, we should not follow foolish people. Virtuous people! This is how to actualize the summer training period of the Bodhisattvas."

Therefore, that is why bhikkhus, bhikkhunis, lay men and women who practice in a ninety-day training period surely practice supreme and perfect enlightenment and great karma with all the Tathāgatas and Bodhisattvas of the ten directions. Here, notice that it specifically mentions that lay men and women should participate in the training period.

Where the training period takes place, great and perfect enlightenment exists. That is why in both Jetavana Park and on Vulture Peak there is the same great and perfect enlightenment of the Tathāgata. All the Tathāgatas and Bodhisattvas of the ten directions practice together in the summer training period in accordance with the instructions of Shakyamuni Buddha.

Once, the World-honoured One held a ninety-day summer training period and on the final day, when forgiveness is asked by all, the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī came to join the training session. At that time Mahākāśyapa asked him, "Where did you spend the training period this summer?" Mañjuśrī replied, "This summer I practiced in three places: [one month in a palace, one month in a nursery school, and one month in a brothel]." Mahākāśyapa was about to strike the byakutsui to cell the monks together and have Mañjuśrī expelled, when suddenly innumerable stupas and temples appeared out of nowhere. In each of the buildings both Mañjuśrī and Mahākāśyapa could be seen, with Mahākāśyapa poised to strike the byakutsui. Then Shakyamuni said to Mahākāśyapa, "Which Mañjuśrī are you going to expel?" Mahākāśyapa was unable to answer.

Zen Master Engo interpreted this story like this: "If the bell is not struck there is no sound. If the drum is not hit we can hear nothing. Mahākāśyapa got the point – that Mañjuśrī actualized unlimited Zazen. Both of them revealed their Buddhist insight but one thing is lacking. That is, when the old sage Shakyamuni asked, 'Which one are you going to expel?' he should have struck the byakutsui himself and said, 'Look! Is there anyone here who can kill both Mahākāśyapa and Mañjuśrī'"

Engo also composed this verse:

"A great elephant cannot walk on a rabbit's path.

How can swallows or sparrows know anything of a great swan?

Both monks observe the rules, like a stonemason at work,

Or an archer taking aim and shattering his target.

This world of relativity is Mañjuśrī,

It is Mahākāśyapa.

Both face Buddha, there is no gap between them.

Why should Mañjuśrī be expelled when the byakutsui is struck?

The Golden Buddha [Mahākāśyapa] drops off all hindrances."

Therefore, that is why Shakyamuni's training period in one place is the same as Mañjuśrī's practice in three places. If there is no training period there are no Buddhas or Bodhisattvas. All descendants of the Buddhas and Patriarchs must practice in a summer training period.

If we participate in a summer training period we are the descendants of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. To practice in a summer training period is to possess the body and mind of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. It is their enlightened vision and the root of their life. If we do not practice in a summer training period we are not the Dharma-heirs of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, and cannot become Buddhas and Patriarchs. All the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas made with clay, wood, gold, or the seven precious jewels are present in the three-month training period. During that training period we live within the Three Treasures of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha; it is our justification and method of teaching.

All who wish to be true disciples of the Buddhas and Patriarchs surely practice the three-month training period.

This was delivered to the monks of Daibutsuji, Echizen, on June 13, 1245, during the summer training period. Transcribed at Shinzenkōji, Nakahama, Echizen, on May 20, 1279, during the summer training period by Giun.

73. TASHINTSU

佗心通

“Reading others’ minds”

The National Teacher Echū (Seikyō Kōtakuji) was a courageous man of Eshū. His family name was Zen. After he received the seal of mind-transmission he went to live in Tōshi valley near Mt. Hakugai in Nanyo. For more than forty years he never left the monastery gate. Word of his strict practice reached the capital and the Emperor Shukushū of the Tang Dynasty dispatched a courier with an invitation to teach in Rakuyō, the capital. This occurred in the second year of Jogen [761]. Accepting the invitation, he moved to Saizen-in, a sub-temple of Senpukuji. Later on, Daishū was crowned Emperor and Echū was asked to come to Kotakuji, where he remained for over sixteen years, using taiki-seppō, teaching according to the ability and capacity of his students.

Once a scholar-monk called Daini [Great Ears] Sanzō from India came to the capital. This monk claimed the ability to read others’ minds. The Emperor wanted to test him and brought him to see the National Teacher. Sanzō greeted Echū with a bow and then stood on Echū’s right. Echū asked him, “I’ve heard that you can read other people’s minds.” Sanzō said, “Only a little.” Echū said, “Well then tell me where this old priest [Echū himself] is right now.” Sanzō said, “O Priest, You are the National Teacher. Why are you at Seisen watching the annual boat races?” Echū asked again, “Please tell me where I am right now.” Sanzō said, “You are the National Teacher. Why are you looking at the monkey grinder on the Tenshin Bridge?” Echū repeated the question a third time, “Where am I right now!” Sanzō thought for a while but did not answer. Then Echū said, “You wild fox. Where is your ability to read others’ minds?” Sanzō remained silent.

Once a monk asked Jōshū, “Why didn’t Daini Sanzō reply to the third question? Where was the National Teacher?” Jōshū said, “On top of Sanzō’s nose.” The same monk asked Gensha, “If the National Teacher is in Sanzō’s nostril Why can’t Sanzō see him?” “Because he was too close to see,” replied Gensha.

Another monk asked Gyōzan, “Why couldn’t Daini Sanzō see the National Teacher the third time?” Gyōzan said, “The first two answers were concerned with the objective world. Sanzō lacked jiyū-samādh, the self-enjoyment of one’s awakening, and he couldn’t see the National Teacher.” not answer. There was no reply, and no solution.

Kai’e Shitan said, “Why couldn’t Sanzō see the National Teacher if he was on top of Sanzō’s own nose? Because he didn’t know that the National Teacher was already in his eye.”

Gensha said, “Did you [Sanzō] really see the National Teacher the first two times?”

Zen Master Secchō Juken said about this, “Sanzō failed.”

As we can see there are many commentaries and interpretations about the testing of Sanzō Daini by the National Teacher Echū. We have chosen five by different masters. However, none of these correctly indicate the essence of the story, nor grasp the condition of the National Teacher. Most people in both ancient and modern times think that Sanzō’s first two answers were not mistaken and correctly gave the National Teachers’ location. This is a great mistake, and we must clarify this point. We may consider the live commentaries from two aspects: 1) that Sanzō did not know the real meaning of the National Teacher’s questions; and 2.) Sanzō did not know the body and mind of the National Teacher. In the first case we can say that the meaning of National Teacher’s first question, “W here am I now?” was to test whether or not Sanzō possessed the enlightened vision that enabled him to see and hear the Buddhist Dharma, i.e., was Sanzō able to read others’ minds through the Buddhist Dharma. If Sanzō had possessed the Buddhist Dharma at that time, he could have answered from his experience of Buddhism and made free use of it profitably. When the National Teacher asked, “Where am I now?” he was actually saying, “Who am I?” “What time is this?” or “What am I?” There is a reason Echū used the expression “old monk.” He was not necessarily old at that time; an old monk is [one who possesses the original Buddha-mind].

Although Daini Sanzō came from India he did not understand the [Buddha] mind since he had not learned Buddhism properly only but studied the teaching of non-believers and Hinayānists. The National Teacher asked “Where am I now?” The second time Sanzō gave a useless answer and the third time he was silent. Then Echū scolded him saying, “You wild fox! Where is your ability to read others’ minds?” Although he was scolded like that he still did not answer. There was no reply and no solution.

However, our predecessors thought that Sanzō was scolded by the National Teacher only because he did not know the answer to the third question. This is a great mistake. Sanzo was scolded because he did not have the slightest idea where the Buddhist Dharma is. Do not think that Sanzō knew the answer to the first two questions. That is an error.

Sanzō did possess some self-proclaimed power to read others minds but lacked understanding of that power. That is why he was scolded. First of all, Echū wanted to test Sanzō by asking in essence, “Is there the power to read others’ minds in the Buddhist Dharma.” The reply was “[I know there is] a little.” The National Teacher assumed he did, but he found that even if such power exists in the Buddhist Dharma if it does not become part of it we have people like Sanzo.

Even if Sanzō had replied to the third question in the some fashion as the first two his answer would have been useless. All of Sanzō’s answers should be scolded. The National Teacher questioned a third time because he still had some hope that Sanzō might get his point.

In addition, it is said that ancient people did not know the body and mind of the National Teacher. Sanzō could neither easily see nor comprehend the National Teacher’s body and mind. Since even the ten saints and three sages, Bodhisattvas and pratyekabuddhas are unable to clarify it how could such an ordinary scholar of the Tripitaka possibly know the entire body of the National Teacher?

We must clarify this principle. If we talk about the body and mind of the National Teacher to Tripitaka scholars we will be slandering the Buddhist Dharma. If scholars of the sūtras and abhidharma think that they are equal to the National Teacher it is pure insanity. Those who want the power to read others’ minds should not think they have learned where the National Teacher is.

In India the power to read others’ minds is a convention possessed by some people. However, this has nothing to do with the enlightenment seeking mind and is not the true insight of the Mahāyāna. There has never been a case where the Buddhist Dharma was revealed by the power of reading others’ minds. And even if we happen to possess the ability to read others’ minds we still are obligated to develop the ordinary mind of resolve and practice to gradually enlighten the Buddhist Way. If it were possible to perceive the Buddhist Way through the power of reading others’ minds all the saints of the past should have

possessed such an ability and immediately comprehended the efficacy of Buddhism. However, this has never occurred among all the countless Buddhas and Patriarchs. If we do not know the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs what help can reading others' minds be? Such an ability is not necessary in the Buddhist Way. This holds true for everyone regardless if they possess a power or are just ordinary people who do not. Both ordinary people and those with the power to read others' minds possess the same Buddha-nature. Those who study Buddhism should not think that those who possess the miraculous powers^{1-EN} of non-believers and Hinayānists are superior to ordinary people. Rather, those who simply possess a mind for the Way and study the Buddhist Dharma are superior to those who possess such miraculous powers. [The Buddhist Dharma] is like an egg of a kalavinka^{2-EN} bird? This bird produces a sound superior to all other birds. Furthermore, those people of India who use the power to read others' minds should be more accurately called those who read others' thoughts. The ability to pick up others' superficial thoughts is a totally useless and laughable talent. "Mind" is not necessarily "thought" and vice versa; even when they are, it is not possible to read others' minds.

Therefore, that is why the miraculous powers of India do not equal our own country's work of clearing the earth and making rice paddies. Miraculous powers are completely useless. That is why east of China such miraculous powers were not used. A one foot thick wall is useful, but miraculous powers are not. That wall is not precious, but even a small amount of time is very important. Consequently, how can someone who knows that even a short amount of time is important waste time trying to attain miraculous powers? We have carefully evaluated that the power to read others' minds does not surpass Buddhist wisdom.

Nevertheless, all the honourable monks quoted above thought that Sanzō's first two answers correctly gave the National Teacher's location, but this is a great mistake. The National Teacher is a Buddha and Patriarch and Sanzō is just an ordinary person so how could they see and have a meeting of minds with each other?

The National Teacher first said, "Where is this old priest right now?" Nothing is hidden in this question; indeed the answer is revealed in the question. Sanzō should not be blamed for not knowing [since he was an unenlightened person] but if the honourable priests above have no idea about the answer it is very bad. The National Teacher said, "Where is this old priest right now?" not "Where is the mind?" or "Where is the thought?" of this "old priest." We must be very careful about this point.

However, the honourable priests mentioned above failed to find the essence of the National Teacher's question and therefore were unable to know his body and mind – they only knew his words. If the National Teacher did not say anything, they think that is all, there is nothing else. How can they know the body and mind of the National Teacher, if they cannot transcend large and small, self or others. It is like forgetting the face and nostrils of the National Teacher. Although the National Teacher practiced ceaselessly he did not try to become Buddha. Therefore, he had no purpose or desire to become a Buddha. The National Teacher already possesses the body and mind of the Buddhist Dharma; it cannot be measured by practice and enlightenment based on miraculous powers, cognition, or karma. It is beyond cognition or non-cognition. The National Teacher is not Buddha-nature, not not-Buddha-nature, not a universal body – the body and mind of the National Teacher cannot be found. Beside Seigen and Nangaku there is only one Buddha and Patriarch, National Teacher Daisho, who came after Sokei [Eno]. The honourable priests mentioned above must clarify this same point.

Jōshū said that the National Teacher was on top of Sanzō's nose but Sanzō could not see him. This interpretation misses the point. How can the National Teacher be so close to Sanzō when Sanzō cannot even see his own nose [i.e., his own essence]? If Sanzō could see his own nose then the National Teacher could have seen Sanzō. Even if we allow that Sanzō saw the National Teacher it was merely a physical juxtaposition. Sanzō has yet to really see and meet the National Teacher.

Gensha said, "He was too close to see." True, he was too close, but it misses the point. What does "too close" mean? It seems that Gensha neither knew the meaning nor clarified it. He only knew that "too close" meant that there was no meeting of minds and vice versa. We should rather say that it is too far from the Buddhist Dharma. If the third question is too close the first two are too far. Let us ask Gensha, "What exactly is too close? Is it a fist? Is it enlightened vision? From now on you had better not say that something is too close to see."

Gyōzan said, "The first two answers were concerned with the objective world; Sanzō lacked jijiyū samādhi and couldn't see the National Teacher." Gyōzan, you lived in China but people in India think you are a little Shakyamuni. Nevertheless, your interpretation is very mistaken. There is no difference between the objective world and jijiyū samādhi. Therefore we should not say we cannot see one the other because of some difference. There can be no adequate reason for distinguishing between the two. If we say that, when we are in jijiyū samādhi others cannot see us. Then we will be unable to experience jijiyū samādhi itself and not have practice and enlightenment. O Gyōzan, if it is true that you actually thought that Sanzō knew where the National Teacher was in the first two answers you cannot be said to be a true student of the Buddhist Way.

Daini Sanzō did not know where the National Teacher was not only in the third case but also in the first two answers – he neither knew nor saw him. If Gyōzan said that Sanzō did see him it means that Gyōzan did not know where the National Teacher was either. Let us question Gyōzan, "Where is the National Teacher now?" Before he opens his mouth to answer give him a loud "katsu!"

Gensha censured Sanzō by saying, "Did he know where the National Teacher was the first two times?" He had better think over his own words. They seem to be good, but actually it is like saying he saw something he did not. Gensha missed the point.

Myokaku Juken said about this, "Sanzō failed." This can only be properly said if Gensha's words were correct; if his words are mistaken then such a thing cannot be said.

Kai'e Shitan said concerning this, "Why couldn't Sanzō see the National Teacher if he was on top of Sanzō's own nose? Because he didn't know that the National Teacher was already in his eye." This comment is also only concerned with the third question, The first two answers should also be criticized. How can the National Teacher know about being on top of Sanzō's nose or in his eye? If it is like that, we must conclude that Kai'e did not comprehend the National Teacher's words. Sanzō lacks both a nose [i.e., the essence of Buddhism] and eyes [i.e., enlightened vision]. Even if Sanzō attempts to keep his nose and eyes they will be shattered if the National Teacher penetrates them. If they are shattered then the National Teacher cannot remain there.

The five honourable priests mentioned above know nothing of the National Teacher. The National Teacher is an ancient

1-EN For example, walking without touching the earth, reading others' minds, seeing all, coming without being called, passing through rocks, etc.

2-EN An Indian bird with a melodious voice found in the Himalayas.

Buddha for all generations and a Tathāgata for all the world. He illuminated and transmitted the Eye and Treasury of the True Law of Buddha and preserved the eye of enlightenment. He transmitted Buddha for himself and others. Although he lived in the era of Shakyamuni Buddha he has also practiced under all the Buddhas of past eras. Essentially he attained the Way before Kūō Buddha [the Buddha who existed before any worlds were created]. Although the National Teacher's home is originally in this world, this world is not always the ordinary world, not is it covered by the ten directions of the entire universe. Shakyamuni is master of this world but the National Teacher still keeps his home here and nothing obstructs him. For example, all of the Buddhas and Patriarchs who both preceded and came after Shakyamuni Buddha attained the Way together without obstructing one another.

There is proof that Sanzō did not know the National Teacher, and this also shows that śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas and Hinayānists cannot even understand the outermost surface of Buddhas and Patriarchs. Remember this. We must clearly understand why the National Teacher scolded Sanzō. Why should the National Teacher only scold him the third time if he knew the answers the first two times? That is very strange.

If someone understands two-thirds of a question that is sufficient; then Sanzō should not be scolded. The scolding the National Teacher gave differs from that where nothing at all is known. If Sanzō thinks like that it is an insult to the National Teacher. If the National Teacher scolded him only because Sanzō could not answer the third question no one will have any confidence in the National Teacher. Rather, if Sanzō knew the answers to the first two questions the strength of those answers should cause us to scold the National Teacher.

The main point of the National Teacher's scolding of Sanzō lies in the fact that from the first question to the third, Sanzō did not know the whereabouts or body and mind of the National Teacher. He was scolded because he had never studied or learned the Buddhist Dharma properly. That is why the National Teacher repeated the same question three times.

Sanzō answered, "Why are you at Seisen watching the boat races?" The National Teacher did not say, "O Sanzō, you do know where I am," but rather only repeated his question. Without properly clarifying this principle many elders have formulated their own self-centred opinion of it for hundreds of years after the National Teacher.

Everything such elders have said runs counter to the intentions of the National Teacher and does not fit with the essence of the Buddhist Dharma. It is pitiful that such elders make such a mistake. If the ability to read others' minds exists in the Buddhist Dharma there also must be a corresponding ability to read others' bodies, fists, heads, and eyes.

If this is so there also must be the ability to read one's own mind and body. Like this, to freely control one's mind is to read one's own mind. If we can actualize such an understanding we can freely read others minds. Let us ask this question:

"Which is better: the ability to read others' minds or the ability to read our own? Answer quickly, quickly!" Yet it requires some time. "You possess my marrow," is the ability to read others' minds.

This was delivered to the monks at Daibutsuji, Echizen, on July 4, 1245.

74. ŌSAKUSENDBABA

王素仙陀婆

“The master’s Wish”

Speaking and silence, wisterias and trees, horses and donkeys, Water and clouds; the relationship is the same. Therefore, we have the following story in the [Mahaparanirvana-Sūtra.]

The World-honoured One said, “When a king gives the order ‘bring sendaba’ to his attendants, that one word has four meanings: 1) salt; 2) a chalice; 3) water; 4) a horse. Like this, four things are contained in one word. A wise attendant knows this well. If the king wants to wash and says sendaba, the attendant brings water. If he wants to eat and says sendaba, the attendant brings salt. If after eating he wants to drink and says sendaba, a chalice is brought. If he wants to go out and says sendaba, his horse is prepared. Like this, a wise attendant understands the four inner meanings of the king’s words.”

This ōsakusendaba is the king’s need and shinbusendaba is catering to the king’s request. Such a custom has been practiced for a long time and it is similar to the transmission of the Buddhist kesa. Since Shakyamuni took up this subject, all of his descendants should study it. If we reflect upon this, we see that all who study under Shakyamuni practice sendaba. Those who do not study with Shakyamuni must continue their pilgrimage, and attain the first step of practice. Sendaba was first used between Buddhas and Patriarchs for a number of generations and then adopted by royal families.

The ancient Buddha Wanshi Shogaku of Mt. Tendō in Keigenfu of Sung Dynasty China said to an assembly, “Once a monk [Secchō] asked Jōshū, ‘What is ōsakusendaba; Jōshū folded his hands over his chest and bowed. Secchō said, ‘Salt was requested but a horse was brought.’ ” Wanshi said, “Secchō was a great priest of a hundred years ago and Jōshū was a hundred and twenty year-old ancient Buddha. If Jōshū’s answer is correct then Secchō is wrong and vice versa. Which answer is best?” Wanshi gave this interpretation: “If a mistake is made it will be huge. Using only words is like striking the grass to frighten a snake. Not using words is like melting coins to make the demons come out. Neither of them chose a wild field to roam in. They are like Gutei holding up one finger.”

My late master, an ancient Buddha, once said about this story, “Wanshi is an ancient Buddha.” However, the ancient Buddha Wanshi was only seen as an ancient Buddha by my late master. In Wanshi’s time there was another Zen master called Dai’e shake of Kinzan. He was in the line of Nangaku. Most people of Sung Dynasty China thought that Wanshi and Dai’e were much the same. Occasionally, some people considered Dai’e superior to Wanshi. Such a mistake occurred because monks and laymen of the Sung Dynasty studied superficially, did not open their eyes to the Way, and lacked the ability to know others’ inner states.

Wanshi’s expression shows real determination. We must study the principle of the ancient Buddha Jōshū’s folding his hands over his chest and bowing. At that time was Jōshū’s action ōsakusendaba or shinbusendaba? We must also study the essence of Secchō’s “salt was requested but a horse was brought.” That statement is both ōsakusendaba and shinbusendaba. The answer to Shakyamuni’s sendaba was Mahākāśyapa’s smile. In answer to the first Patriarch’s sendaba the four disciples brought a horse, salt, water and a chalice. When a horse, salt, water and a chalice became sakusendaba [i.e., were needed], they also became bosendaba [they were brought]. We must study this point.

One day, Toinchō came to see Nansen. At that time, Nansen pointed to a water pitcher and said, “There is a pitcher with water in it. Without moving the pitcher bring the water over here to this old priest.” Toinchō brought the pitcher and poured the water over Nansen’s head. Nansen said nothing.

We can see that Nansen asked for “water” [the water from an ocean that has completely dried up] and Toinchō brought a “chalice” [he poured out every drop in the pitcher]. Even if this occurs, however, we still must study “there is water in the pitcher” and “a pitcher in the water.” Neither the water nor the pitcher has moved.

Once, a monk asked Great Master Kyōgen Shuto, “What is ōsakusendaba?” Kyōgen said, “Go over there!” The monk left. Kyōgen said, “That monk is making a fool of me.”

Let’s pose this question: Is Kyōgen’s “Go over there!” sakusendaba or bosendaba? Please answer! Is “the monk left” sakusendaba or bosendaba or simply a statement in itself, independent of the initial question and answer? No matter if it is or not, we should not say “he is making a fool of me.” Although this answer is based on the power of Kyōgen’s entire life, it is like a general who has lost the war but is still proud in defeat. Often, [Buddhas and Patriarchs] say black when they mean yellow, and try to reveal enlightened vision. They explain saku [request] and ho [compliance] sendaba in very subtle and refined ways. Who can say that holding a staff or a fly whisk is not a type of sendaba? However, there are people who glue the bridge to the base of the koto or tighten the string too much [i.e., foolish people cannot understand sendaba].

One day, the World-honoured One sat on the lecture platform without speak-king. Then Mañjuśri struck the gong announcing the end of the discourse, and said, “This is how to clarify the Law of the King of the Dharma.” Then Shakyamuni left the platform.

Zen Master Myōgaku Juken of Mt. Secchō said about this, “Only the wisest sages among that assembly correctly perceived the Law of the King of the Dharma. However, if someone in that assembly knew about sendaba why was it necessary for Mañjuśri to strike the gong?”

What Secchō meant was that if one strike of the gong is completely sufficient, then whether it is struck or not is still total detachment. If this is so, then one strike of the gong is sendaba. Then [Mañjuśri] is the man who understands sendaba and all the sages in that assembly are his guests. They understand that “this is the Law of the King of the Dharma.” The twelve hours of the day freely utilize and are utilized by sakusendaba. Requesting a fist brings a fist, requesting a fly whisk brings a fly whisk.

However, present day elders all over Sung Dynasty China cannot even dream of sendaba. This is very pitiful; the Way of Patriarchs has disappeared. Do not avoid difficult study; you must transmit the lifeblood of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. For example, if we say “What is Buddha?” there is the answer “Our mind is Buddha.” What is the essence of this? It is sendaba, is it not? “Our mind is Buddha” must be studied in more detail. However, how many people truly know the meaning of sendaba?

This was delivered to an assembly of monks of October 22,1245 at Daibutsuji, Echizen.

75. SHUKKE

出家

“Renunciation of the world”

In the Zenen Shingi^{1-EN} it says: “All the Buddhas of the past, present, and future have renounced the world and found the true Way. The twenty-eighth Indian Patriarch and the sixth Chinese Patriarch, who were both shamons, transmitted the seal of the Buddha-mind. All shamons have kept the precepts and kept their body and mind pure. Their behavior has been an example for the three worlds. Therefore, when we begin to seek the Way and practice Zazen the precepts must come first. If we have not separated ourselves from illusion or evil actions and have failed to keep the precepts how can we hope to become Buddhas and Patriarchs?”

“When one is about to receive the precepts he must prepare three kinds of kesa, a mendicant bowl, a zagi, and a joei.^{2-EN} If he does not have a new joei he must thoroughly wash the old one. When he ascends the ordination platform to receive the precepts he must not have borrowed anyone else’s kesa or mendicant bowl.

“Devote your entire body and mind to the Buddhist Way – do not be concerned with anything else. Sit like Buddha, vow to follow the precepts, and make Buddha’s mind your own. This is of the utmost importance and not to be taken lightly. If you do take it lightly or use someone else’s kesa or bowl it is as if you have never received the precepts at all even if you have been on the ordination platform. Further, if you receive the precepts but fail to follow the regulations it renders your vow meaningless; your study of the Way will be fruitless and any offerings you receive will be wasted. Similarly, if the master fails to instruct his new disciples properly he will lead them down the evil path.

“Therefore, follow this exhortation, never forget it and keep it constantly in your mind. If you have already received the Hinayana precepts strive to receive the precepts of the Bodhisattvas. This is the way to progress in the Dharma.”

You must know that all of the Buddhas and Patriarchs have attained the Way by renouncing the world and receiving the precepts. The very life of the Buddhas and Patriarchs is based on their reception of the precepts. People who have not renounced the world can never be Buddhas and Patriarchs. However, when you renounce the world and receive the precepts you will be among the Buddhas and the Patriarchs.

Mahākāśyapa wanted to join Shakyamuni and renounce the world. One day Shakyamuni told him and some other monks, “O monks! You’ve come so far!” Suddenly the hair on their heads fell off and kesas appeared on their bodies. This is an example of how we are separated from illusion when we study the Buddhist Way; we must renounce the world and receive the precepts.

In the third chapter of the Mahaprajñā Pāramitā Sūtra we find: “Shakyamuni said, ‘Bodhisattvas should follow my example. I renounced my kingdom and attained supreme enlightenment. I turned the wheel of the Law in my discourses and caused countless beings to abandon the dust and dirt of the world and cut their innumerable passions; I led them to the pure eye of the Dharma and helped them attain the wisdom of detachment and the eternal bliss of enlightenment. If any of the Bodhisattvas wish to emulate those deeds they must study the prajñāpāramitā.’”

Supreme enlightenment is attained the moment you truly renounce the world and receive the precepts. There is no other way. When you renounce the world the wheel of the Law begins to turn. Supreme enlightenment and renunciation of the world are synonymous. Renunciation of the world bestows the eternal bliss of enlightenment on countless beings. The total harmony of the perfectness of the Buddha’s virtues in our self and others is what leads to supreme enlightenment and eternal bliss. And this can only come about when the world is renounced and the precepts are received.

When supreme enlightenment is actualized the renunciation of the world occurs. There is no opposition between our initial awakening of the mind, supreme enlightenment, and the act of renouncing the world. The moment we renounce the world we are in the midst of innumerable kalpas – time moves freely throughout unlimited worlds, and the endless wheel of the Law turns. This “time” is not the “time” of a day; it cannot be measured in terms of kalpas or seasons. It is beyond any measurement of time. Nevertheless, in this state where all attachments have been severed and body and mind have fallen off renunciation of the world is only that and nothing else; similarly, the actualization of the Way is only that, nothing more or less.

In the thirteenth chapter of the Mahaprajñā Paramitopadeśa Sūtra it is written: “Once when Shakyamuni was staying at the garden of Jetavana an intoxicated Brahmin came up to the Buddha and asked to become his disciple. The Buddha instructed some monks to shave his head and give him a kesa. The next day the Brahmin awakened from his drunken stupor and was shocked to find his appearance so drastically changed. He immediately got up and ran away. Soon after this several monks approached the Buddha and asked, ‘Why did you allow that drunken man to receive the precepts? He has already run off.’ Shakyamuni replied, ‘I knew he had no intention of renouncing the world and receiving the precepts and that he did so last night only because he was drunk; nevertheless, because he was moved to renounce the world – even for such a short time – he will someday become a true monk. You must be aware of how close the relationship between renunciation of the world and the eventual attainment of supreme enlightenment is. Further, since the precepts of a layman can never lead to complete liberation the breaking of the monastic precepts is superior to the keeping of a layman’s.’”

Shakyamuni meant that the essence of his teaching is contained in the act of renouncing the world. If we do not renounce the world the Buddhist Law can never be found. When Shakyamuni was in this world various non-believers abandoned their evil ways and devoted themselves to the Buddhist Law. Sometimes they told Shakyamuni they wanted to renounce the world and receive the precepts; in some cases they were awakened by Shakyamuni telling them, “O monks! You’ve come so far!” They preserved the Dharma contained in the renunciation of the world and received the precepts in their bodies and minds. The teaching of the Buddha actually permeates their bodies and minds so they naturally accept the shaving of their heads and the wearing of a kesa. If the Buddha had not allowed others to renounce the world then no one would now be able to shave their head, wear a kesa, or receive the precepts. Therefore, we can see that renunciation of the world and the reception of the precepts is the juki of the Buddhas and Tathagatas.

Shakyamuni also said, “Oh devoted people! After I saw so many who were satisfied with inferior teaching, lacked virtue, and had bodies and minds full of dirt I renounced the world when I was young and attained supreme enlightenment. Although I

1-EN A collection of rules and regulations covering daily conduct in a Zen monastery.

2-EN The three kinds of kesa are daiei, sbichijoei, and a gojoei; a zagu is a special mat used for prostrations, and a joei is a kimono type underwear.

had actually been enlightened for a long time prior to that, I made use of those means in order to lead sentient beings to enlightenment, and used this explanation to help them enter the Way.”

Therefore, “I actually had been enlightened a long time prior to that” means he renounced the world when “young” and attained enlightenment. This means that sentient beings who lack virtue, or are dirty in body and mind can also renounce the world when “young.” When we renounce the world when “young” we can experience and clarify supreme enlightenment. When we lead sentient beings who follow the Hinayana to enlightenment it is the time of renunciation of the world and supreme enlightenment when “young.”

However, we should ask what are the real virtues of renouncing the world? Unsurpassed, absolute, limitless, and endless.

This was delivered to the monks on September 15, 1246, Eiheiji, Echizen.

76. SHUKKE KUDOKU

出家功德

“The virtue of renouncing the world”

The following is taken from the Daichido-ron: “Nagarjuna said, ‘I was once asked, ‘When lay trainees can gain rebirth into the celestial world, become Bodhisattvas, and enter nirvana, why is it necessary to take monk’s ordination.’ I answered, ‘Although your observation is correct, you have failed to realize that the difference in path lies not in the objective, enlightenment, but in the degree of difficulty in attaining this. A layman must earn a living. To do this and concentrate on Buddhist practice is impossible; any that try would soon be [financially] ruined. To do the alternative, concentrate only on making a living, would subject their Buddhist practice to the same fate.

“Thus it is clear that devotion to the Buddhist Way is extremely difficult, if not impossible for a lay man. A monk, on the other hand, removed from the seeds of suffering and illusion, can fully devote himself to practice. A monk is free to go deep into the mountains and practice the Way. Here, sitting in Zazen, he can attain the state of no-mind, and with it gain freedom from covetousness, anger, delusion, and all other forms of distraction and attachment.”

The following quotation is also from the Daichido-ron: “Practice Zazen in the solitude of a forest, and destroy the various evils of mind. This is not a device enjoyed by celestial beings, but a practice for those who wish to transcend delusion and attachment. Laymen seek fame and fortune. They are anxious to own good furniture and clothes. Their inordinate desires know no limitations. None of these things, however, lead to real peace of mind. In contrast, monks wear simple clothes and beg for food, and their life is stable and strong. With right observation, a monk accepts this as the true life. He experiences all things as actualization of the Buddha, and he has wisdom to recognize the truth. Nothing can go beyond this mind.” Keeping the precepts and devotion to the Way are inseparable with entering the monkhood. Quickly, on realizing this to be the easier path, we should enter the monkhood, for it alone leads to limitless good and satisfaction. It should be added, however, that the way of a monk is not easy, and of the two paths is definitely the more arduous. The following story illustrates this.

“At the time of the Buddha Shakyamuni there lived a Brahman named Jambuksadaka. Once, standing before Śariputra, this Brahman asked, ‘Oh Śariputra, what is the most difficult thing in the world.’ Śariputra replied, ‘To renounce fame, fortune, one’s property, and family and enter the Buddhist monkhood.’ The Brahman continued, ‘After taking ordination are there any difficulties?’ Śariputra answered, ‘Yes, even after one has renounced all worldly possessions, to attain spiritual awareness and the ability to recognize the truth may still prove difficult. The Brahman questioned further, ‘Once spiritual awareness has been awakened and the truth apparent, then are all difficulties surmounted?’ Śariputra replied, ‘No, even at this stage one may still find it difficult to practice good in one’s daily life.’ ” The preceding dialogue shows the difficulties encountered on entering monkhood while at the same time stressing the importance of doing so.

Ma-ō^{1-EN} seeing an initiate monk would be moved to comment. “Free of all passion and delusion, he must surely attain nirvana. This person before me is truly a monk.”

Even transgression of the precepts, provided there is repentance, will not prevent a monk or nun from entering nirvana. The following extract from the Upalavarna-Jataka Sūtra shows this: “At the time of the Buddha Shakyamuni there lived a nun who had realized arhathood and attained miraculous powers.^{2-EN} It was the habit of this nun to visit the homes of noble women with a view to encouraging these ladies to forsake their present way of life and enter the nun-hood. Once, the woman she was addressing said, ‘We are still young and very beautiful, so it would prove far too difficult for us to adhere to the precepts, and we would almost certainly break them.’ The nun replied, ‘Do not concern yourselves with this.’ The ladies protested, ‘But surely, if we break the precepts we will fall into hell, and of this we are very frightened’ (they shook their bodies to demonstrate their fear). ‘If this is what is required,’ replied the nun, ‘then fall into hell.’ The noble women laughed and the nun continued. In a past life I was a prostitute. I wore immoral clothes, and enjoyed telling lecherous stories. On one occasion, however, I put on a Buddhist kesa as a joke; as a result I was able to perceive the Way and enter the nun-hood in my next life.’

“This time I was born of noble descent and possessed great beauty and pride. I broke the precepts many times. I again returned to hell and suffered greatly, but due to the deep compassion of Shakyamuni, I was finally able to leave that place. Once again I was born into the human world, again I perceived the Way, and again entered the nun-hood. Finally I attained the six miraculous powers and realized arhathood.’ ” The lesson to be learned is: Breaking the precepts, provided repentance follows, is not a barrier to enlightenment for those who are ordained.

“I repeated to do wrong, and fell many times into hell. At times my life was so profane I could not even touch a part of enlightenment. From my own experience, though, I can personally vouch that an ordained person, even if he breaks the precepts many times, provided he repents, will finally awaken to enlightenment. A layman who does the same will be unable to do so.”

“While staying at the Jetavana Vihara in Śrāvastī in Kośāla, the Buddha was approached by a drunk Brahman. This Brahman requested permission to enter the monkhood and become one of the Buddha’s disciples. The Buddha agreed, and asked Ānanda to shave the Brahman’s head and dress him in monk’s robes. When the Brahman finally became sober he was

1-EN An evil spirit, who is believed to be lord of the highest of the six heavens in the world of desire. Together with his followers, he attempts to hinder a trainee’s practice.

2-EN The six kinds of miraculous powers: (1) free activity; (2) eyes capable of seeing everything; (3) ears capable of hearing every thing; (4) insight into other’s thinking; (5) remembrance of former lives; (6) perfect freedom.

horrified at his uncharacteristically humble form; he ran away and hid. At this time the Buddha's disciples said, 'Oh honourable Buddha, why did you allow the drunk Brahman to enter the monkhood?' The Buddha answered, 'For countless lives this Brahman had never even dreamed of entering the monkhood, while drunk, however, his mind was moved just a fraction towards doing so. Although, unfortunately, on this occasion he ran away, the merit for once having entered the monkhood will not diminish in time. He will undoubtedly arouse the Buddha-seeking mind in a future life.'

"Shakyamuni allowed the drunk Brahman to enter the monkhood, even though aware that the request to do so was only a result of his condition. He seized the golden opportunity, and in so doing lay the foundations for the Brahman to perceive the Way and realize enlightenment in a future life."

There are many similar stories regarding entry into the monkhood, and many that comment on the merit of being a monk. The merit gained by a man who enters the monkhood is truly immeasurable, far more than that of a Buddhist layman who fully observes the five precepts.

By permitting the drunk Brahman to enter the monkhood, Shakyamuni paved the way for the Brahman to perceive the Way in a future life. This is the true reason for the Buddha emerging in the world. Whether in the past, present, or future, sentient beings should have confidence to experience the Buddha's teachings.

Awakening to the Way occurs in an instant. Thus the Brahman's entry into the monkhood, albeit brief, was merit worthy. We would be at a loss, therefore, to even imagine the amount of merit afforded to those who renounce the world, receive the precepts, and spend their life in devotional service of the Buddha.

Tenrinnō^{1-EN} ruled over the four continents and three thousand worlds. India was among his domains. He appeared in this world when he was 84,000 years old. He reigned well and amicably – his four continents were comparable with the pure land and he was highly exalted by all his subjects. He possessed clothes and treasures beyond the wildest imagination, and lived a life of luxury and splendour beyond description. It is also said he never committed any of the ten kinds of wrong. Although he enjoyed a life of such splendour, when he found one white hair on his head, he forsook all of this in favour of his prince. He put on the Buddhist kesa, went into the mountains, and began to practice the Buddhist Way. When he dies he will be reborn into the celestial world as Daibonten.

Before he abdicated, Tenrinnō placed his white hair in a silver case for his prince to inherit, so that he too, on discovering his first white hair, would abdicate and follow in his father's footsteps. Tenrinnō lived to an age incomparable with ordinary men. As already stated, he did not appear in this world until he was 84,000 years old. When he did appear he was endowed with thirty-two different forms. These forms are unimaginable to latter day people..

Tenrinnō found one white hair on his head. He awoke to the impermanence of life, and, intent on securing merit, entered the monkhood. Present day kings cannot even conceive of the life of Tenrinnō. Most merely idle away their lives in covetousness, and even to consider entering monkhood is beyond them. They will undoubtedly deeply regret this attitude in future lives.

In this small country [Japan] there are kings, but kings in name only. There is no virtue in their title. Their greed is without limitation. If only they would realize their foolishness, renounce the world, and enter the monkhood, all the gods would rejoice and protect them, and the Dragon King respect and guard them. This act would be acknowledged by all the Buddhas, and, greatly satisfied, they would display their pleasure.

The previously mentioned prostitute once put on a Buddhist kesa for a joke. Although her irreverence did not pass unaccounted, and she fell into hell, the merit for having worn the kesa enabled her to meet Kāśyapa Buddha and enter the nun-hood in her next life. She broke the precepts and again fell into hell. The non-diminishing merit of the kesa, however, gained her an audience with Shakyamuni in her next life. As a result she renounced the world and entered the nun-hood. Finally she realized arhat-hood, was endowed with insight into former lives and awoke to supreme enlightenment. Therefore a person who, from the very beginning has a pure mind, who takes the precepts, and who enters ordained practice must surely gain incalculable merit. Only humans can attain these highest virtues.

In India and China there are many Bodhisattvas, Patriarchs, monks, and lay people, yet none surpass the Patriarch Nāgārjuna. The preceding stories regarding the Brahman and the prostitute were expounded by this Patriarch. He mentioned such stories to encourage all sentient beings to enter monkhood. The words of this Patriarch are those of the Buddha himself.

The Buddha said, "Those who inhabit the land south of Mount Sumeru are fortunate in four ways: They can practice the Way, listen to the teachings of the Buddha, enter the monkhood, and gain enlightenment. With these four things, this, the southern continent, is far superior to any other continent or the celestial world. Realizing that it is a result of past good deeds that we have been born into this world, we should with great joy renounce the world and enter the monkhood; when we do this we break free of the wind of illusion and regain our original state of pure being. To train as a monk over successive lives accumulates great merit.

Shakyamuni said that the merit for entering the monkhood is incalculable. Even if a man were to build a tower of the seven precious elements equal in height to Mount Sumeru, he would not gain merit anywhere equal to that of entering the monkhood. A tower, irrespective of grandeur, can easily be destroyed by those who are malicious and foolish enough to do so. Merit for entering the monkhood cannot.

It is because he is aware of the extent of the merit associated with entering the monkhood, that Shakyamuni taught the preceding. After listening to this teaching, a rich man named Punyavadharna, although 120 years old, entered the monkhood and began practice among the young monks. He was a diligent student and trained hard. Later he attained great arhat-hood.

We should be aware that our present physical body exists merely as a result of a temporary fusion of the four elements and five skandhas. With each passing instant, our bodies, constantly subject to the eight sufferings, undergo the incessant action of death and rebirth. In the time it takes a man to click his fingers, sixty-five instants take place, and in twenty-four hours 6,400,099,980 pass. We are all, however, ashamedly ignorant of this. Even though there are many enlightened people, it is only Shakyamuni and Śāriputra among them who totally realize the change which occurs in one instant.

Through the action of constant death and rebirth karma is created; moreover it enables realization of the Way and awakening to enlightenment. This is equally true in respect to death and rebirth of man's physical existence. No matter how hard we may resist, we cannot escape the effect of this law, no one has ever done so. Thus we must conclude that our "own bodies" do not, in reality, belong to us. Renunciation of the world and entering monkhood opens the gateway to eternal

1-EN One of the "Wheel-turning King" (Cakravartin) who rules heaven.

enlightenment, an enlightenment acknowledged by the all Buddhas in the three worlds.

Having realized this, all eight princes of Nichigatsu Tomyo-Butsu^{1-EN} relinquished their claim to the throne in favour of entering monkhood. All sixteen princes of Daitŷchishō Butsu^{2-EN} did the same and, while their father was meditating, expounded the Lotus Sūtra to all assembled. As a result, all set forth to promulgate this sūtra in the ten corners of the world, and all became Buddhas. When they saw the prince's renunciation, Tenrinnō's 80,000,000,000 subjects requested and received permission to do likewise. King Myosogon, his two sons, father, and wife also entered the monk and nun-hood respectively.

The actions of these enlightened people shows, unquestionably, that renouncing the world and entering ordained practice is the true Way. Do not think that these people renounced the world out of ignorance, for this is a mistake; rather understand that they were wise to do so and follow their example.

Rāhula^{1-EN} and Ānanda were among the first to enter the monkhood; soon they were followed by all Shakyamuni's relatives and a few other devotees. Finally the number of ordained reached twenty thousand. What excellent exemplars they are! All the devotees, from the first five monks to the last, took the precepts and entered the monkhood. The merit for doing so is inestimable. If we truly love our parents and children, we must surely encourage them to enter the monkhood.

The following verse was delivered to refute the opinion prevalent among non-believers that there is no past:

Denying the existence of the past

Denies the existence of past Buddhas.

Without past Buddhas

There could be no present monks.

We may have confidence that entering the monkhood accords with the Dharma of all past Buddhas. Why we do not do so is indeed difficult to understand. A man who enters monkhood, regardless of his present worldly status, is assured limitless merit. Our bodies soon fade and perish; thus it is imperative that we quickly take the precepts and enter monkhood.

The following is taken from the Daibibasha-ron, "An ancient master once said: 'Even if a monk breaks his precepts, he still gains merit far superior to a lay person who fully observes all the lay precepts.'" This sūtra supports the many others that promote ordination. We are so greatly indebted to this sūtra it is difficult to even imagine how we could ever express our gratitude. To encourage others to enter monkhood is worthy of merit far in excess that of kings Yama,^{1-EN} Tenrinnō or Indra. Even a sūdra^{2-EN} or a vaisya^{3-EN} will, once he has entered monkhood, be far superior to both those in the ksatriya^{4-EN} class and the aforementioned kings. Only by taking the precepts and entering the monkhood can we gain this, the supreme merit.

The words of Shakyamuni are beyond rational comprehension. We should know this. Five-hundred great arhats did, however, make a compilation of his teachings, and it is through this work that we know the greatness of the merit associated with entering monkhood. Even the wisdom of one arhat endowed with miraculous insight is inconceivable to present day monks, let alone that of five hundred. Present day monks who live in ignorance and darkness should not criticize these brilliant teachings.

Chapter 120 of the Daibibusha-ron states, "A newly pledged monk is worthy of the title 'sacred,' not to mention those of a higher state of awareness. We too, upon awakening the Buddha-seeking mind and entering monkhood will merit this epithet"

Before his great enlightenment, Shakyamuni established five-hundred great vows: Vow 137 states, "I vow that after my future enlightenment, should any man be prevented against his true will from entering the monkhood by forgetfulness, insanity, selfishness, lack of respect, ignorance, delusion, or distraction then my enlightenment cannot be considered true."

Vow 138 states, "I vow that after my future enlightenment, should any woman be prevented against her true will from entering nun-hood and thus jeopardizing her future enlightenment then my enlightenment cannot be considered true."

Vow 314 states, "I vow that after my future enlightenment, should any sentient being be prevented against his true will from entering ordained practice because of lack of good deeds, and I, at this time, an unable to lead him to the Buddhist Way then my enlightenment cannot be considered true."

It is because of these vows that all true seekers are able to enter the monkhood.

The Buddha said, "Suppose there is a man who has shaved his head and face and become my disciple, but as yet not taken the precepts. If others venerate this man they will, as a result, finally awaken to enlightenment themselves."

The Buddha said, "Suppose there is a man who has renounced the world, shaved his head and face, and wears the Buddhist kesa. If another insults or slanders this man, they will, by this action, be destroying the true reward body^{1-EN} of all the Buddhas in the three worlds of evil."

The Buddha further said, "A man who renounces the world, wears the sacred kesa and shaves his head and face, even without having taken the precepts of monkhood, is already enlightened. Therefore, anyone who abuses or criticizes him is at the same time slandering the Buddha. Suppose there is a disciple of the Buddha who has not yet taken the precepts of a monk. If others resort to violence against him, using sticks or a sword to cause him suffering, or deprive him of his kesa, mendicant bowl or other necessities, they will also be destroying the reward body of all the Buddhas in the three generations, gouging out the eyes of all sentient beings, and extirpating the seed of both the True Law and the Three Treasures. A man who deliberately causes another to lose his way in his search for the truth and, thereby, fall into the three evil worlds, will find

1-EN Candra-sūrya-pradipa-buddha. The Buddha with the brilliance of the sun, moon. He is mentioned in the Saddharma-pundarika-Sūtra as having expounded the same teaching innumerable kalpas before.

2-EN Mahābhijñānānā-bhibhū-buddha. A Buddha mentioned in the Saddharma-pundarika Sūtra. He is said to have attained enlightenment three-thousand aeons ago.

1-EN Ragora. The son of the Buddha born before his renunciation of the world.

1-EN The king of the dead. Yama judges the dead to determine whether they have committed any wrong during their lifetime.

2-EN The lowest of the four classes in India. In this class are the deformed, beggars, the homeless, etc.

3-EN The third class of the four classes. In this class are merchants and general workers.

4-EN The second class of the four classes. In this class are kings and soldiers.

1-EN (Sanskrit Sambhogakaya; Japanese Hojin)

that he also will be born into that place.

It should now be clear that a man who shaves his head and face and wears the Buddhist kesa, even without having taken the precepts, is already enlightened. Any person who deliberately sets out to disrupt any practice will be causing injury to all the Buddhas in the three worlds. That is to say, committing one of the five wrongful acts.^{2-EN} The merit of renunciation is very close to all the Buddhas in the three worlds.

Buddha said, "A monk should do no wrong. If he does he is not worthy to be called a monk. A monk should live by his word. If he does not he is unworthy to be called a monk." The Buddha continued, "Out of a deep desire to seek the truth, I left my parents, brothers, sisters, wife, children, relatives, and teachers. That was a time for true practice only; a practice of compassion, like a mother's love of her children." The essence of a monk's practice is compassion. He should show compassion to all sentient beings equal to that of a mother's love of her children. He should have an undefiled mind and be true to his word. The merit for living accordingly is truly immeasurable.

The Buddha said, "Śāriputtra, if a Bodhisattva wishes to attain non regressional enlightenment, free his mind of delusion, and gain clear observation, thus enabling him to realize the truth, turn the Wheel of the Dharma, and consequently save all sentient beings from the suffering of death and rebirth, then he should study the *prajñāpāramitā*. If he does this, he will join the successive line of Patriarchs, all of whom realized perfect enlightenment. Inexperienced trainees often believe enlightenment to be the result of countless kalpas of practice. This is a mistake. Enlightenment transcends the dualisms of limited and unlimited [time]."

The Buddha said, "If a Bodhisattva wishes to awake to non regressional enlightenment simultaneously with renouncing the world, if he wishes to turn the Wheel of the Dharma and thereby save all sentient beings, and if he wishes to lead all sentient beings to perfect enlightenment, then he should study the *prajñāpāramitā*." Shakyamuni here is referring to himself. As a Bodhisattva in the latter stage prior to awakening to perfect enlightenment, he was born into a palace destined to be a king. He forsook, all this, however. He renounced the world, awoke to perfect non regressional enlightenment, and turned the wheel of the Dharma, thus enabling him to save all sentient beings.

The following is taken from the *Butsu-hongyō-jikyō Sūtra*, chapter twenty-two. "Siddhartha took a sword, highly adorned with many precious gems and carvings, from his coachman. He pulled it from its scabbard with his right hand. With his left hand he lifted up his blue scarf clad top knot [hair] and, with a swipe, cut it off and threw it to the air. His companion, Indra, seeing this was filled with a deep joy. He held out his beautiful robe and caught the top knot before it hit the ground. All the celestial beings who witnessed this were overjoyed, and displaying their robes, venerated the prince."

This occurred during Shakyamuni's younger days while he was still a prince. He left his palace at midnight, cut off his top knot, and went into the mountains. On his arrival at noon of the following day he encountered a being from the Jugo Ten Heaven.^{1-EN} This enlightened being had emerged to shave Shakyamuni's head and bestow upon him the Buddhist kesa – a sign that the Tathāgata had emerged. This is a teaching of all the Buddhas of the three worlds. Not a single Buddha in the three worlds ever awoke to enlightenment while still a layman; only a monk can do this. The merit associated with entering monkhood exists purely as a result of there being past Buddhas; thus it is limitless. It has been stated that lay people can become Buddhas. This, however, is incorrect. Only after renouncing the world and entering the monkhood can one become a Buddha. Do not doubt this, for it is a transmission of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Dhitaka, the son of a rich man, visited the fourth Patriarch of India, Ubakikuta. He prostrated before the Patriarch and requested to enter the monkhood. In reply Ubakikuta questioned, "Is it for the sake of your body or your mind that you wish to enter the monkhood?" Dhitaka answered, "Neither." "Then for whom?" Ubakikuta asked. To this Dhitaka answered, "Renunciation transcends both the self and what is possessed by the self. It is beyond the cycle of life and death. Transcendence of the dualities of death and rebirth is the Way of the Buddhas, and there exists no form of either mind or body." Hearing this account, Ubakikuta consented to his request adding, "The gate to enlightenment is open to you. Act in accordance with the Three Treasures and thereby cultivate the seed of your innate Buddha nature."

Renunciation done in the name of the Buddha is an act worthy of the highest merit. Do not enter the monkhood for the sake of oneself, others, or for the body and mind. Only when these dualities have been transcended does renunciation become the Way of the Dharma of all the Buddhas. Because this is so, renunciation is beyond the limitations imposed by subjectivity, objectivity, the body and mind, and the three delusive worlds.

It is for this reason that renunciation is the ultimate Buddhist teaching. Entry into the monkhood is imperative. It is an act that is not confined to "gradual" or "sudden," "permanent" or "impermanent," "coming" or "going," "active" or "inactive," "wide" or "narrow," "small" or "large," neither does it have any relation to "function" and "non-function." There has never been a Buddha or Patriarch who has transmitted the Buddhist Dharma that was not a monk. It is because this is so that Dhitaka prostrated before Ubakikuta, requested permission to receive the precepts, entered the monkhood, and continued to train under him. Finally he became the Fifteenth Patriarch.

The Seventeenth Patriarch, Honourable Sōgya Nandai, was the son of King Hoshogon of Śrāvasti castle. He was able to speak from birth and from a very young age, showed great affection for Buddhist objects. At the age of seven he lost all interest in worldly affairs, and, wishing to enter the monkhood, presented his parents with the following verse:

My most respectful father,

My mother who gave me my physical body,

I ask you to allow me to renounce the world,

Please, with compassion, permit me.

His parents, however, flatly refused to give their permission. In response their son began a fast, a course of action which he maintained until finally his parents agreed. They did so, however, only on condition that he train at the palace. He was given the Buddhist name of Sōgya Nandai, and a priest by the name of Zenrita was assigned his master. He studied earnestly at the palace under Zenrita's guidance for nineteen years. He was never happy with this arrangement, though, and constantly

2-EN (1) Killing one's father; (2) killing one's mother; (3) killing an arhat; (4) causing disunity in the community of monks; and (5) injuring the body of the Buddha.

1-EN The fourth dhyana heaven in the world of form. One who attains the third stage of enlightenment in Hinayana Buddhism is reborn in this heaven.

questioned the worth of renouncing the world while remaining within the confines of the palace. One evening while he was gazing from his window, he saw a long flat road illuminated by the setting sun. Without a moment's hesitation he left the palace and began to follow this road. After he had travelled some distance of about forty kilometres, he came across a large cave. He entered, positioned himself in the Zazen posture, and began to meditate. When his father heard of his son's disappearance he was furious. He summoned Zenrita, questioned him regarding his son's whereabouts, and instigated a search. His efforts led to nothing, and finally he was forced to abandon his search. Sōgya Nandai trained hard and diligently, and within ten years awoke to enlightenment. Later, this was certified as genuine by Rahula and went on a pilgrimage to Madhi.

It is said that the terms *zaike* [at home] and *shukke* [leave home] originated with Sōgya Nandai. He had perceived the Way and, with the help of merit compiled over previous existences, was able to see the road illuminated by the sun, leave the castle, and find a cave in which to begin true practice. He is a true paragon for the world. Concern with worldly affairs and attachment to the five desires is not the way of the enlightened, but that of the deluded.

Although emperors Daishu and Shukushu of the Tang Dynasty were earnest students of National Teacher Echu and often associated with other monks, they were far too attached to their status to ever renounce the world. Layman Lo left his mother, renounced the world, and finally became the Sixth Patriarch. This is the merit of entering monkhood. Layman Ho was a diligent student of the Way, but was too attached to the delusive world to entrust himself to the monkhood. What a foolish man he was! Lo's great determination and total emergence in the Way and Ho's mere token effort is beyond comparison. A true seeker inevitably renounces the world, while those attached to the delusive world remain in the dark as laymen.

Once Zen Master Nangaku said, "Renunciation is the absolute Way; it transcends the dualities of life and death and is unsurpassable in either the celestial or terrestrial world." Renunciation accords with the Dharma of the Buddhas; thus it is non-equalled in either celestial or terrestrial world. The celestial world is a composite of the following three parts: The world of desire, which includes six heavens; the world of form, which includes eighteen heavens; and the world of no form, which has four heavens. None of these, however, is equal in merit to that associated with entering the monkhood.

Zen Master Hojaku, the first disciple of Baso, said to the assembled monks, "Oh virtuous trainees, the Buddhist Way is like the earth holding up a mountain, not able to realize the extent of its peak, or like a rock which contains a gem, not able to know the beauty held within. These allegories describe a true monk." To understand renunciation is not necessary; it is the Dharma of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, no more need be said.

Zen Master Gigen of Rinzi-in in Chinchu said, "A monk should ensure he can discern Buddhism from evil, truth from falsehood, and sacred from profane. If he can recognize these he is called a true monk. If he cannot, then he is still deeply rooted in the profane world, and is unworthy to be called so."

A sagacious monk has faith in the law of karma and in the Three Treasures. To realize the Buddha means to be aware of the karmic law and to be able to discern sacred from profane. Without ability to differentiate good from evil, one's practice of the Way is subject to falter and retrogress; with ability, one's practice is strong and inexorable. The latter is unquestionably the way of the true monk.

Many latter day people are unable to discern evil from Buddhism and, as a result, render their practice useless. This kind of grave error is characteristic of the present times. Buddhist trainees should quickly learn to discern good from evil; consequently their practice will flourish, and they will realize enlightenment.

At the time the Tathāgata was about to enter Mahāparinirvāna, Bodhisattva Mahākāśyapa said to him. "You are endowed with the powers to perceive the roots of good. You undoubtedly were aware that Zensho, who denies the karmic law, would not cease from doing wrong. Why did you consent to his entry into monkhood?" Tathāgata replied, "I renounced the world at the age of twenty-nine, and three years after my enlightenment my half-brother Nanda, my cousins, Ananda and Devadatta, and my son, Rahula came to me in Kapila and followed my example. With their entry into the monkhood it was probable that Zensho would accede to the throne. If he did this, he would undoubtedly have used his authority to destroy Buddhism. That is why I permitted him to enter the monkhood. Further, he had turned away from doing good and had accumulated no merit. As a result he would inevitably continue to do wrong for countless lives. On the other hand, as a monk, he observes the precepts, venerates those of higher virtue, and has attained the first to fourth stages of samadhi. All these are worthy of great merit. Good thoughts and good action produce good law; moreover it enables one to find the true path and finally awaken to supreme enlightenment. Kāśyapa, it was for these reasons I permitted Zensho to enter the monkhood. Had I not done so, I would be unworthy to be called the Tathagata with the ten miraculous powers."

It is clear the Buddha realized men to be capable of both good and bad, yet he still allowed those who tend toward the latter, as he did with Zensho, to enter monkhood. He did this so that they may gain merit and commence doing good. It is because a man does not associate with good friends, think purely, or live according to the Buddhist Dharma that he cannot do good. If you wish to begin doing good you must keep company of good friends; that is those who deeply believe in the Buddha and have strong conviction in the law of karma. Such people are indeed more than good friends, they are also our great teachers; their words echo the true Dharma. Listen to what they say, and act accordingly, for this promotes both good thoughts and right action.

Encourage others to renounce the world and enter the monkhood. Do so regardless of whether they are close friends or not, or whether you consider them capable of maintaining good practice. This is a teaching of the Buddha Shakyamuni. The Buddha said to the assembled monks, "King Yama once said, 'It is my greatest wish to be born from this world of suffering into the human world. There I will immediately renounce the world, shave my head and face, wear the three kinds of kesa, and follow the Buddhist Way as a monk.' When we realize this to be King Yama's greatest aspiration, you, who have been fortunate on each account, should inject even greater determination into your practice in body, speech, and mind. You should destroy the five kinds of delusion^{1-EN} and cultivate, through correct perception of the five sense organs, the five roots^{2-EN} of good conduct. Heed these words and practice accordingly." When the Buddha finished, the monks were filled with a deep joy and accepted this as the true path.

Thus we realize that even King Yama wishes to be born into the human world in order to enter the monkhood. We, then, who are already fortunate in regard to the former, should certainly waste no time in renouncing the world and entering the monkhood. The merit for doing so is superior to anything else in any other world. Even though this is so, still many squander their valuable time. They spend their lives seeking fame and fortune, or trying to win favour with kings and governments.

1-EN Greed, anger, slander, jealousy, and cruelty.

2-EN (1) Right mind; (2) right effort; (3) right determination; (4) right concentration; and (5) right wisdom.

Without confidence to break free of such delusive chains, these people unknowingly condemn themselves to a life of darkness. How foolish they are!

To be born a human is a most fortunate occurrence, for it is not easy to do so. To be born a human being and to encounter the Buddhist Way is indeed more than rare. We, then, who have been fortunate on both accounts must surely renounce the world, take the precepts, and enter the monkhood. We can meet ministers, kings, wives, children, and other relatives on any occasion. To contact the Buddhist Way, however, is as difficult as seeing an udumbara blossom. When, in a sudden moment, we experience the storm of impermanence [death], we are beyond the help of kings, ministers, relatives, wives, children, treasures, or servants. No matter how hard we may cling to our present physical body, nothing can prevent this simple transfer from this life to the next, and with us we take only our good or bad karma. While opportunity to enter the monkhood still exists [physical existence], we should, without hesitation, do so. This is the way of the Dharma.

There are four rules pertaining to a monk's practice: (1) to sit in Zazen under a tree throughout life; (2) to wear a kesa made only from discarded cloth throughout life; (3) to beg for necessities throughout life; and (4) to use only discarded medicine at times of sickness throughout life. These rules are the codes of practice for a true monk. Any man who takes ordination, but does not observe them, cannot be called a monk.

In India and China these rules were transmitted by the Buddhas and Patriarchs. In both countries they are strictly observed by full time devotees of the Way. Some people have claimed there to be five rules for a monk's practice. This, however, is a wrong transmission, for only those four taught by the Buddhas and Patriarchs express the True Law. Those who practice in accordance with these receive the highest of merit.

Although noble princes of the Ksatriya class, the six grandchildren of King Simhahanu, Nanda, Ānando, Devadatta, Aniruddha, Mahānāma, and Bhadrīka all renounced their titles in favour of entering the monkhood. What excellent exemplars they are! Why is it that those of less noble descent hesitate, remaining attached to their meagre worldly existence? Surely they realize that a man who renounces the world becomes the highest of nobles, not only in this world but in the three worlds.

There are many insignificant tribal kings who cannot even conceive entering the monkhood. They are proud of that which does not merit their pride, and are too attached to their status and wealth. Indeed, they are more than foolish!

King Suddhodana wished to abdicate his throne in favour of his grandson, Shakyamuni's son, Rahula. Shakyamuni, however, ruled his son should enter the monkhood; thus we realize the importance of entering the monkhood. Rahula later become known as a strict disciplinarian and advocate of total observation of all codes of practice. He sacrificed his own entry into nirvana in order to lead all sentient beings to the Way.

In India, many who renounced the world were of royal parentage. One such noble was the third son of King Kancipura. He had no hesitation in renouncing his status, taking the precepts, and entering the monkhood. Later he transmitted the Dharma into China and became the first Patriarch of that country. Such is the value of renunciation. It is extremely difficult to understand why those of less noble descent hesitate to renounce the world. Why do they wait until tomorrow? If they were wise they would renounce the world without even so much as a pause for breath. The magnanimity of a master who initiates us into the monkhood is equal to the love bestowed on us by our own parents. We should realize this.

The first chapter of the Zen-en-shingi states: "None of the Buddhas in the three worlds ever awoke to enlightenment without having first entered the monkhood. The Twenty-eighth Patriarch in India, Bodhidharma, and the Sixth Patriarch in China, Enō, are excellent examples of this. Both transmitted the Buddha-mind seal and both closely observed the precepts. To guard against evil and prevent oneself from doing wrong, we must take the precepts.

Even a monastery that practices a degenerate form of Buddhism is still like the Chambaka garden: refreshing and pure. It is like milk diluted with water. If one is thirsty and there is no other milk, then one must take the lesser mixture. All the Buddhas in the three worlds were monks. This is because entering the monkhood embodies the essence of the Dharma, enlightenment, and wisdom, and those that do so undoubtedly realize enlightenment. This transmission is the supreme teaching of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

(Compiled by Dōgen's disciple in the summer of 1255)

77. JUKAI

受戒

“Receiving the precepts”

The Zen-en-shingi states, “Without exception, all the Buddhas in the three worlds had once been monks. The twenty-eight Patriarchs in India and the six in China who transmitted the Buddha-mind seal were all monks.” If one does not take the precepts and therefore guard against defilement, it is unthinkable that one could become a Buddha or Patriarch. A monk indeed commands an exalted role; he is an excellent example for the three worlds.

The manner in which one takes the precepts runs as follows: First prepare three kinds of kesa, a mendicant bowl, zagu,^{1-EN} and a pure white kimono. All the aforementioned should be new. If, however, new are unavailable then old ones, which have been made pure by washing, may be used. Borrowed kesas and bowls are not permitted. The event of receiving the precepts is a most sacred occasion; do not treat it lightly.

One should be mindful at each moment of the ceremony and receive the precepts as one’s own. A man who mounts the dais and receives the precepts while using another’s bowls or kesa will render his ordination void. In this case he is like a man without precepts, and his continued practice useless, merely a waste of laymen’s donations. An initiate monk who lacks both knowledge of the precepts and a good master is liable also to become like a man without precepts. I have taught this for I wish it to be deeply implanted in everyone’s heart. Once you have taken the precepts of a śrāvaka you should then take those of the Bodhisattva. This is the correct way to realize Buddhahood.

All the Buddhas and Patriarchs taught that receiving the precepts is the first step of the Way. When we take the precepts we guard against doing wrong. How then can someone who is not protected in this way be a disciple of the Buddha or a follower of the Patriarchs? Heed these words, and without hesitation take the precepts. The words, “Receive the precepts first” embody the meaning of the Eye and Treasury of the True Law. All the Buddhas and Patriarchs initially took the precepts and have transmitted this as the true Dharma. They received the precepts either from the Buddha himself, from a Patriarch, or from a true disciple; whichever, they all received a true transmission, and all realized enlightenment.

These precepts, which have been transmitted by the Buddhas and Patriarchs alone, were introduced into China by Bodhidharma and then passed down by the four successive Patriarchs to Enō on Mount Sōkei. This transmission, which was continued by Enō’s successors Seigen and Nangaku, extends right down to the present day. Many latter day senior monks, however, fail to realize the value of these precepts. How regretful!

Receiving the precepts of the Bodhisattva is the first step to following the Way. True seekers should know this. Only those who have trained diligently and continuously over a long period of time are taught the manner of receiving the precepts, not those who have been lazy or shown indifference to practice. The manner for receiving the precepts runs as follows: First the initiate burns incense; he prostrates before the ordaining master, and then requests his permission to receive the precepts. Next, if permission is granted, he bathes to purify his body and dresses in a new clean kesa. If a new kesa is unavailable, then an old one may be used which has been purified by means of the initiate having washed it, scattered flowers and burned incense around it, and finally prostrated before it. Having done this, he prostrates before the various Buddhist images, before the Three Treasures, and again before the ordaining master. In this way his mind and body are purged of all obstacles. This procedure is a transmission of the Buddhas and Patriarchs; thus it embodies the pure essence of the Buddhist Way.

In the ceremonial hall the master and his assistant instruct the initiate to prostrate three times. He is then instructed to kneel [in a vertical thigh position], place his hands in gassho, and repeat the following verse: “I take refuge in the Buddha, I take refuge in the Dharma, I take refuge in the Sangha. I take refuge in the Buddha, the most exalted one; I take refuge in the Dharma, the alleviator of desire; I take refuge in the Sangha, the most honourable community. I have taken refuge in the Buddha; I have taken refuge in the Dharma; I have taken refuge in the Sangha. He repeats this three times.

Next he repeats: “The Tathāgata realized supreme enlightenment. He is my great teacher. I have taken refuge in him, and, because of his compassion, from this moment I will never take refuge in any evil or profane teachings.” He repeats this three times.

The master then says, “Oh good disciple, you have cast off evil and taken refuge in good; the three precepts are fulfilled. You must now take a further three.”

“The first is to commit no evil. Will you abide by this from now until you awake to Buddhahood?” The initiate replies, “Yes, I sincerely promise.”

“The second is to do good. Will you abide by this from now until you awake to Buddhahood?” The initiate replies, “Yes, I sincerely promise.” “The third is to propagate good among all sentient beings. Will you abide by this from now until you awake to Buddhahood? The initiate replies, “Yes, I sincerely promise.”

The master continues, “You must not break any of these three precepts from this time until you awake to Buddhahood. Will you abide by this?” The initiate replies, “Yes, I sincerely promise.” The master answers, “Abide by this as promised.”

The initiate then prostrates three times, kneels, and places his hands in gassho. The master continues, “Good disciple, already you have received the three kinds of pure precepts. Next you must receive the ten rules of practice, the great precepts of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.” The master begins. “Do not kill. Will you abide by this from now until you awake to Buddhahood?” The initiate replies, “Yes, I sincerely promise.”

“Do not steal. Will you abide by this from now until you awake to Buddhahood.” The initiate replies, “Yes I sincerely promise.”

“Do not engage in improper sexual relations. Will you abide by this from now until you awake to Buddhahood?” The initiate replies, “Yes I sincerely promise.”

“Do not engage in improper sexual relations. Will you abide by this from now until you awake to Buddhahood?” The initiate replies, “Yes I sincerely promise.”

“Do not lie. Will you abide by this from now until you awake to Buddhahood?” The initiate replies, “Yes I sincerely promise.”

“Do not handle intoxicating beverages. Will you abide by this from now until you awake to Buddhahood?” The initiate replies,

1-EN A mat for sitting

"Yes, I sincerely promise."

"Do not criticize a Bodhisattva. Will you abide by this from now until you awake to Buddhahood?" The initiate replies, "Yes, I sincerely promise."

"Do not praise yourself or defame others. Will you abide by this from now until you awake to Buddhahood?" The initiate replies, "Yes, I sincerely promise."

"Do not crave for either spiritual or material wealth. Will you abide this from now until you awake to Buddhahood?" The initiate replies, "Yes, I sincerely promise."

"Do not become angry. Will you abide by this from now until you awake to Buddhahood?" The initiate replies, "Yes, I sincerely promise." "Do not decry the Three Treasures. Will you abide by this from now until you awake to Buddhahood?" The initiate replies, "Yes, I sincerely promise."

"You must not break these ten rules. Will you abide by this from now until you awake to Buddhahood?" The initiate replies, "Yes, I sincerely promise." All these questions and answers are repeated three times. The master then says, "Abide by this as promised," the initiate prostrates three times.

The master continues, "These three refuges, three precepts, and ten rules for practice have been received and adhered to by all the Buddhas. Good disciple, can you abide by these sixteen precepts from now until you awake to Buddhahood?" The initiate replies, "Yes, I sincerely promise." All questions and answers are repeated three times. The master then says, "Abide by these as promised;" the initiate prostrates three times.

Finally the master chants, "The world around us is as vast as the sky, and as pure as a lotus above the murky waters from whence it has grown. My mind is pure and transcends the ordinary world." "We take refuge in the Buddha, we take refuge in the Dharma, we take refuge in the Sangha." The initiates then leave the Zendō.

The manner for receiving the precepts is a great transmission of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Both Yakusan and Tennen received and adhered to these sixteen precepts. Although some Patriarchs never received the śrāvaka precepts all received and observed the aforementioned sixteen precepts of the Bodhisattvas.

[Date of writing unknown]

78. KESA KUDOKU

袈裟功德

"The merit of wearing the Kesa"

The Buddhist Kesa, which has been correctly handed down through the successive line of Buddhas since Shakyamuni, was transmitted into China only by Bodhidharma of Mount Sū, the twenty-eighth Patriarch.

In India there were a total of twenty-eight transmissions of the kesa. The twenty-eighth Patriarch, Bodhidharma, upon his transmission in China became the first Patriarch of that country. There were a further five transmissions to Sōkei Enō, who became the thirty-third Patriarch in the lineage of Shakyamuni and the sixth in China. Sōkei Enō was later given the title of Daikan Enō by the emperor. He received the kesa at midnight from Kōnin on Mount Obai and treasured it his entire life. This kesa is preserved even now at Hōrinji temple on Mount Sōkei.

Successive emperors requested that this kesa be brought to their palaces in order that they might make venerative offerings to it. The emperors of the Tang dynasty, e.g. the fourth, Chusho, the seventh, Shukusho, and the eighth, Daishu, were known to have held it in particular high regard. Each frequently received it at their palace and each dispatched an imperial messenger to accompany it both to and from the palace. On one occasion, on its return to Hōrinji, the emperor Daishu had his messenger convey the following edict: "Forthwith, I assign general Ryusakei as protector and guardian of this most highly esteemed kesa. He is at present in charge of maintaining peace in our land. I further designate it as a national treasure. Please enshrine it at your temple. Ensure that all monks are aware of its great significance and take all necessary precautions to prevent the possibility of loss."

Emperors of this small country who see and make venerative offerings to a Buddhist kesa are far more fortunate, and lead far more excellent lives than those emperors whose lands extend over three thousand myriad worlds. Buddhist kesas are found wherever Buddhism is in evidence.

Among the Patriarchs, it was Bodhidharma alone who had the kesa personally bestowed on him. This is the only true Way of transmission, and those who receive it accordingly join the Patriarchal lineage of Shakyamuni. An example of an incomplete transmission was that between Hannyatara and his disciple Bodhisattva Buddhadrā. The latter received transmission of the Dharma but not the kesa. Bodhisattva Buddhadrā later transmitted the Dharma to Dharma teacher Sōjō, and in doing so initiated a lateral stream. Even though the fourth Patriarch of China, Daii Dōshin, transmitted the Dharma to Hōyū on Mount Gozu, he did not transmit the kesa with it, this being transmitted to the Fifth Patriarch, Zen Master Kōnin.

The merit for receiving the Buddhist Dharma alone is incalculable, let alone for receiving it together with the kesa. Ensure that the kesa one receives belongs to the lineage of Shakyamuni.

During the two successive periods after Shakyamuni, when the True Law was in evidence, even lay people in India and China wore kesas. In Japan, however, remote country from India, even those who shave their head and face and call themselves disciples of the Buddha do not do so. What a great tragedy that they deny its transmission. Not only do these people not realize that the kesa should be worn, but they are also ignorant of all facts regarding its design and manner of attire.

Since ancient times the kesa has been called "the robe of detachment." When a man wears the kesa he is relieved of the effects of bad karma, delusion, and desire. A dragon that merely obtains one thread of a kesa can free itself of the three kinds of suffering, and an ox that only touches a kesa with its horns will be exonerated from the effects of its past bad deeds. The Buddhas all wore a kesa at the time of their enlightenment. Surely, this is evidence enough that the merit for wearing the kesa is immeasurable.

It is regretful that we have been born in a country so far from India, but how fortunate to have encountered the kesa and Dharma of the Buddhas. What other religion or sect possesses and correctly transmits the sacred kesa of Shakyamuni? Surely no one could not stop to venerate the kesa and Dharma whenever they encounter it. Even at the cost of one's physical existence, which, after all, reoccurs as many times as the sands of the Ganges, one should do this.

Living in Japan, we are separated by thousands of miles from the birthplace of Shakyamuni, and for most journeying there would be impossible. However, as a result of past good actions, neither being separated by many mountains and oceans from India, nor living on an island inhabited by a primitive people has prevented us from contacting the Way. And now we are both able to receive, wear, and respect the kesa, and earnestly practice the Way day and night.

One does not perceive the Way and receive the kesa merely by chance, nor does one do so as a result of training under one or two Buddhas; rather it occurs as a result of having practiced the Way under Buddhas as immeasurable as the sands of the Ganges.

Even though it is only our own efforts that have enabled us to encounter the kesa, this should not undermine the great pleasure that we undoubtedly feel for having done so. Respect and revere the kesa always. Truly, we, as seekers of the Way, are eternally indebted to the Patriarchs, the transmitters of the Dharma.

Even animals are appreciative of kindness shown to them. How then can humans justify ignoring benignity bestowed on them, especially with regard to receiving the Dharma and kesa, the most esteemed act of compassion? If we are unaware of this, then we are indeed more foolish than animals and should be considered their inferiors.

The Patriarchs alone are aware of the true merit of the Dharma and kesa. People who wish to follow in their footsteps should take refuge in the right transmission of the Way and fully immerse themselves in Buddhist practice. The Buddha has taught that correct transmission of the Way comprises the essence of the truth; even the passing of a thousand years will not change this fact. Correct transmission of the Way should not be compared to diluted milk. Rather it is like a crown prince acceding to the throne. If thirsty, and there is no milk available other than that which has been diluted with water, then take this lesser mixture. This, however, only applies if water alone has been added. Do not accept milk which has been mixed with any other substance, such as oil, lacquer, or alcohol. A master who, although having received right transmission of the Dharma, is a poor instructor, should be thought of as diluted milk; both contain the essence of the whole. On the other hand, a master who has received right transmission of the Dharma and is a good instructor is comparable to the crown prince acceding to the throne. A lay prince says, "On inheriting the throne, I will wear only clothes appropriate to a king." If even lay people wear clothes befitting their rank, how then could a Buddhist trainee wear anything other than the kesa?

Since the tenth year of Eihei [A.D. 67], during the reign of Emperor Komei of the Later Han dynasty, there has been a continuous stream of monks and lay people travelling between India and China. None, however, spoke of having met the

Patriarchs who transmit the true Dharma and kesa. They merely memorized the various Sanskrit sutras they had learnt from the many teachers of the sutras and abhidharma. It is clear none of them did any more than merely scratch the surface of the Dharma.

When the Buddha Shakyamuni bestowed the Eye and Treasure of the True Law on Mahākāśyapa, he did so together with the Buddhist kesa handed down from Kāśyapa Buddha. Together with details regarding the dimensions and colour of a kesa, this kesa continued to be transmitted through the ensuing line of Patriarchs to Zen Master Daikan Enō on Mount Sōkei, the Thirty-third Patriarch. All the successors to Seigen and Nangaku received the same. Only those who receive direct transmission from a Patriarch are taught how to wash and wear a kesa.

There are three kinds of kesa: The gojo-e, the shichijō-e and the kūjō-e. Consecutively, these are made of five, seven, and nine strips of cloth. All devotees who receive right transmission wear only these kesas; no others are required, for they are within themselves complete.

For daily use, samu, and when alone in our rooms, the gojo-e kesa is worn. The shichijō-e is worn when staying with other monks, or when participating in a ceremony. The kūjō-e is worn when teaching, whether in a palace or in a humble home.

In times of warm weather the gojo-e kesa is sufficient; during colder periods the shichijō-e should be worn over the former, and during times of severe cold, the third, the kūjō-e, made of nine strips, should be added as the final insulator.

The manner for wearing the kesa runs as follows: Draped over the left shoulder with the right shoulder exposed is the regular way to wear a kesa. An alternative way, and that used by Shakyamuni and senior monks, is to cover both shoulders. In this latter way it is optional whether the upper part of the chest is exposed or covered. When both shoulders are covered, the large rokujō-e kesa is worn. When putting on a kesa, one first places the two ends together on the lower part of the left arm. The arm at this time should be held in front of the body in a bent horizontal position. The remainder of the material is then draped over the arm to the left shoulder. Next, separate the ends, the right end remaining in its original position, while the left is unfolded and hung from the left shoulder over the back.

In the case of the large kesa, the arm is placed in the bent position previously described and the left end of the material hung over the back. The remainder of the material is draped over the left shoulder to the lower part of the left arm, where the right end has been placed. There are in addition to the preceding other methods for wearing the kesa. These are learnt on furthering one's training.

Over a period of several hundred years, covering the Ryo, Chin, Zui, To, and So dynasties, many scholars of both Mahāyānist and Hinayānist schools realized mere academic study not to be true Buddhism. They discarded their lectures, received the kesa of right transmission, and began practice of the Way – they abandoned the false and returned to the true.

The true Dharma of Tathāgata originated in India. Unfortunately, many masters have proclaimed the teachings based on their own limited mistaken views. Originally the dualistic concept of the world of Buddha versus the world of non-Buddha, limited versus unlimited did not exist. Truly the teachings of the Mahāyānist and Hinayānist schools are far beyond the understanding of the ordinary person. In China there were many who, because of their limited understanding, failed to recognize the true Dharma in India. They distorted the teachings to conform to their own misguided interpretations which they contested to be true Buddhism. This was most unfortunate.

Those who aspire to enlightenment should ensure the kesa they receive is of right transmission, not one of recent transmission. The former belongs to the lineage of Shakyamuni. After being initiated by the Tathāgata, the kesa continued to be transmitted by successive Patriarchs to Bodhidharma on Mount Su, Enō on Mount Sōkei, and through their successors to the present day. All Patriarchs in the lineage of Shakyamuni wear the Buddhist kesa. Those of recent innovation in China are not of this true lineage. We should know this. The monks who travelled from India into China all wore the true kesa, not one recently initiated by the Vinaya sects in China. Only those ignorant of the true kesa follow the way of these sects, while those familiar with them unquestionably reject them.

Transmission of the Buddhist kesa has been correctly performed by the Patriarchs from Shakyamuni to the present day; thus its form remains recognizable and its existence is apparent. The kesa which has been correctly passed from master to disciple acts as a seal of enlightenment; the kesa we make must conform to this. Lay and holy people, terrestrial and celestial beings, and the dragon gods all innately realize this to be a true transmission.

Having been born at a time when Buddhism is widely accepted, we have ample opportunity to encounter the kesa. Quickly then, we should wear it, for if we do so, even for a moment, we will gain protection in our search for the truth; furthermore, if we fully believe just one word or verse of the Dharma, this will act as a guiding light leading us to enlightenment.

Our bodies are in a constant state of flux, subject to incessant existences and non/existences. Even though this is so, the merit accrued by wearing the kesa and by consistent practice of the Way will finally lend itself to our realization of the true meaning of the kesa; we will be able to transcend the cycle of life and death, and finally we will realize Buddhahood. A person who has failed to do good in a previous life will be prevented from seeing, receiving, or comprehending the significance of a kesa for one, two, or even innumerable lives.

In both China and Japan there are those who wear the kesa and those who do not. Whether one does or not has no relation to one's social rank, nor is it determined by one's level of intelligence; rather it is decided by one's actions in past lives. Those who have been fortunate enough to wear the kesa should know this. They should not question the merit attained, but instead rejoice in having done these good deeds. People who wish to wear the kesa, but as yet have not done so, should immediately begin to cultivate their innate seed of good; as a result their wish will be actualized in the future.

A man who is obstructed against his true will from wearing the kesa should offer repentance to the Three Treasures, Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. He should do this by repeating: "How many people in how many other lands wish, as my fellow countrymen, that the Buddhist kesa be correctly transmitted into their countries, so that they too may have personal contact with it." How ashamed and sad we would be had the kesa not been transmitted into our land. Both the kesa having been transmitted into our country and our having encountered it may be attributed to our past good action.

In this final age of degenerate Buddhism there are many people who show no remorse in not having received right transmission of the kesa. At the same time these people are envious and resentful of those that have. Indeed they are no better than devils! Their lives cannot be considered of value merely the result of past bad deeds. Without a moment's pause these people should take refuge in the Dharma and return to the truth.

The kesa, in which all the Buddhas have taken refuge, is known as a symbol of the Buddha mind and body. It is also known as the robe of detachment, good fortune, no form, supremacy, perseverance; as the robe of Tathāgata, great compassion, mercy, transcendence of evil; and the robe of supreme enlightenment. It is the personification of Buddhism. Treat the kesa at all times with utmost respect and reverence, and in no way alter its form.

The kesa may be made either of silk or cotton. Cotton should not be thought pure and silk impure, nor should silk be thought preferable to cotton. Indeed is it laughable to discriminate in this way. According to the Buddhist rules, the most suitable robe, called a funzo-e is made entirely of an assortment of discarded cloth. This cloth may be of either ten or four kinds. The four kinds of cloth are: That which has been (1) charred by fire, (2) chewed by an ox, (3) gnawed by mice, or (4) used as a shroud.

People in the five directions in India throw away this cloth in the forests and fields, as they do with their excreta. The name funzo-e is derived from the similarity in custom. Brahmin collect, wash, sew together, and wear this cloth in the form of the kesa. It may be of either silk or cotton. The kind of material used, however, is of no matter, and is a waste of time considering; rather we should focus on the real meaning funzo-e.

Long ago when the Shan Yana was washing his kesa, the dragon king, out of deep respect and praise, rained many various flowers upon him.

The Hinayānists make a point that silk, being derived from a living source, is the superior material. The Mahāyānists laugh at this knowing it to be utter nonsense. What cloth is there that does not originate from a living source? But still they express doubt, failing to acknowledge what is apparent before their very eyes.

The cloth used in India is as numerous as the customs and religions of that country; it would be impossible to distinguish between the varieties. Among those we collect, there is bound to be some of silk and some of cotton; therefore we should not discuss such trivia, but simply refer to it as funzo-e.

Excreta is a part of life for both humans and celestial beings. There is nothing either can do about it, it is natural. Just accept excreta as excreta, no further consideration is necessary. Pine trees and chrysanthemums grow among excreta. This also is beyond their control and must be accepted. Excreta is excreta, nothing more or nothing less. Similarly, funzo-e is just funzo-e; it is not silk, cotton, gold, silver or any other precious stone. Until this principle is understood, and we cease from discriminating between silk and cotton, we cannot hope to realize the profound meaning of funzo-e.

Long ago a monk questioned an ancient Buddha, "Was the kesa that was transmitted from the Fifth to the Sixth Patriarch on Mount Obai made of silk or cotton?" The ancient Buddha replied, "Neither of silk nor cotton. The Buddhist kesa bears no relation to either material." This is a true teaching of the Buddhist Dharma.

Honourable Shonawashu, the third Patriarch of India, was born wearing a lay robe. Later, when he renounced the world this was transformed into a Buddhist kesa. The nun Senbyaku once made an offering of a red carpet to Shakyamuni. As a result, she was able to wear the kesa in every subsequent life. Like Honourable Shonawashu, we too on entering the monkhood will find our lay clothes changed to a Buddhist kesa. Thus it is clear that the kesa is not made of silk, cotton, or any other material; moreover it's merit is not restricted to Shonawashu and Senbyaku alone, but extends, in variable degrees, to all beings. Only after we have practiced continuously over a long period of time can we fully understand this.

At the time Mahākāśyapa appeared before Shakyamuni to receive the precepts, it is said he was endowed with a kesa made neither of cotton nor silk. The Buddhist teachings are far beyond the comprehension of ordinary people and likewise is the merit of the kesa. Carefully study the kinds, colours, and sizes of kesa, as well as all aspects relating to its form and no form, its measurability and immeasurability. This is something the Patriarchs of India and China never failed to study and transmit.

Even though they do not dispute that the kesa has been correctly transmitted from Patriarch to Patriarch, many still make no attempt to receive it. This course of action, a result of their foolishness and lack of faith, is unforgivable. They have mistaken the true for the false – the branches of the tree for the trunk. Truly, these people scorn the Buddha.

Those who have awoken their Buddha-seeking mind must surely receive the kesa of right transmission. To do so is no less an act than actually seeing the Buddha himself, listening to his teachings, gaining direct insight into his mind, and realizing his pure essence; we are covered in a kesa bestowed on us by Shakyamuni himself. It is clear, then, that all true devotees humbly accept the kesa.

The method of washing the kesa runs as follows: Without folding, place the kesa in a clean wooden tub. Fill the tub with boiling fragrant water and leave the kesa in it for about two hours. An alternative method involves placing the kesa in a tub of boiling water mixed with ash and leaving it until the water has cooled. These days this latter method, known as kunoyu, is the most favoured. When the water has cooled and the ash settled, pick up the kesa in both hands and begin washing. With the utmost care continue to do this until all the grease and dirt has been completely removed. Neither crumple the kesa nor trample upon it. When this has been done, rinse the kesa in water containing either jinko^{1-EN} or extract of the Aramaic Sudan tree and hang it over a pole to dry. Next, when thoroughly dry, fold the kesa and place it in a lofty place. Burn incense before it, scatter flowers around it, and then, in a clockwise direction, walk several times around it. Prostrate before it three, six, or nine times, and finally, kneeling and with hands held in gassho, recite the following verse:

"How magnificent this our kesa leading us to detachment and happiness beyond all form. We must concentrate on the Tathāgata's teaching and vow to save all sentient beings."

Having said this, stand and put on the kesa according to the prescribed manner.

Shakyamuni said to the assembled monks, "When I was practising under Hōzō Bodhisattva,^{1-EN} I was known as Bodhisattva Kannon. At that time I made a vow to this Bodhisattva. 'Oh most honourable Bodhisattva, suppose that after I have awakened to enlightenment someone renounces the world, enters the monkhood, and wears the Buddhist kesa. Further suppose that this person, whether lay or ordained, as a result of lack of faith, once broke the ten rules for practice, harboured impure thoughts, and scorned the Three Treasures, but later, realizing their error repented and honoured the Three Treasures and kesa. If at this time as a result of having no final guarantee of attaining Buddhahood, their practice retrogressed, then it would mean I have deceived the innumerable Buddhas and my enlightenment is untrue.

"Honourable Buddha, suppose that after my enlightenment there is a being among the heavenly dragons, demons, humans

1-EN incense made from agar tree

1-EN The name of Amida before his enlightenment

and non-humans that venerates the Buddhist kesa. That being will, as a result, gain deep insight into the meaning of the kesa and will continue their practice unhindered in the three vehicles.

“Suppose that a being among the hungry or thirsty sentient beings, poverty stricken demons, humans of humble descent, or any among the hungry ghosts obtains even as much as four tsun^{2-EN} of the Buddhist kesa, they will immediately be relieved of all suffering and even their greatest aspirations will be fulfilled.

“Suppose there is a being among the dragons, heavenly musicians, fighting demons, garuda birds, kimnaras,^{3-EN} snake-headed gods, earthly demons that devour human beings, heavenly demons that devour human beings, or among the human and non-human beings that are hostile towards others and resentful of their attainments. If this being merely thinks of the kesa respectfully, he will gain a compassionate, tender, unresentful, eternally peaceful, content mind; in other words he will be purified.

“Should circumstances dictate that a man be involved with either the armed or unarmed forces, he need only respectfully hold a small piece of kesa to gain protection from all harm and to surmount all difficulties.

“Oh honorable Buddha if my kesa is without these five sacred merits, then I have deceived all the Buddhas in the ten directions, my enlightenment is untrue, I remain powerless to lead sentient beings to the Way, the Dharma will be lost, and the destruction of evil doctrines will be impossible

“Oh good disciples, at that moment Hōzō Bodhisattva held out his golden right arm, patted me on the head, and praised me saying, ‘Oh how wonderful! Your words are like a magnificent treasure full of wisdom. Already you have attained supreme enlightenment and your kesa, endowed with the five sacred merits is able to bestow innumerable benefits on all beings.’

“Oh good disciples, Hōzō Bodhisattvas words moved me deeply. I was filled with deep joy. His hand felt like it was covered in delicate pure silk, his fingers like a smooth celestial robe. When his hand touched my head, my body felt like that of a twenty year old youth.

“Oh good disciples, at this time all the celestial beings, dragon kings, gods of music, and human and non-human beings prostrated before me and made venerative offerings of exotic flowers. Much merriment and music was enjoyed, before finally complete serenity and calm returned.” The five sacred merits previously referred to are those which form the core of all merits pertaining to the kesa. These are detailed in the sūtras and precepts of the Bodhisattvas. This is as true today as at the time of Shakyamuni. The kesa, the robe of the Buddhas in the three worlds, truly possesses merit of incalculable proportions.

A kesa in the lineage of Shakyamuni is the only true kesa, its merit being far superior to any belonging to a lateral stream. Ensure the kesa you accept is of the former kind. While under the instruction of Hōzō Bodhisattva, Shakyamuni, as the Bodhisattva Kannon, made five hundred great vows among which special provision was given to the merit of the kesa. Unquestionably, then, its merit is immeasurable and far beyond rational understanding.

The Buddhist kesa embodies the pure essence of Shakyamuni. That is why the Patriarchs never fail to receive it together with transmission of the Dharma. Its merit is undiminishing, and those who wear it unquestionably awaken to enlightenment within two or three subsequent lives. Even if a man only puts on a kesa for a short time or does so in jest he will, as a result, finally realize enlightenment. The Patriarch Nāgārjuna said, “Even a monk who transgresses the precepts or commits a crime, provided he repents, will still attain enlightenment.” Such is the undying merit of the kesa.

“This is further illustrated by the following story. At the time of Shakyamuni lived a nun called Renge-shiki. This nun was an arhat and was endowed with the six miraculous powers. Once when she was visiting the house of a noble woman praising the act of renunciation, the ladies she was addressing said, ‘We are still young and beautiful; for us to adhere to the precepts would be impossible. Undoubtedly we would break them.’ The nun replied, ‘Do not concern yourself with this, for it is better you enter the nun-hood, even if unable to observe the precepts, than to remain as lay people.’ The ladies protested, ‘How can you say that, when you know that if we broke the precepts we would fall into hell and suffer greatly. [They shook their bodies to demonstrate their fear].’

“In reply the nun related her own experience. ‘In a past life I was a prostitute. I wore immoral clothes and enjoyed to laugh and joke with my associates. On one occasion, however, in jest, I put on a nun’s kesa. As a result I met Kāśyapa Buddha, and in my next life perceived the Way and entered the nun-hood. I was, however, born into a noble household and possessed great pride and beauty. I broke the precepts many times and again returned to hell, where I suffered greatly. Owing to the great compassion of Shakyamuni, however, I was again reborn into the human world, again perceived the Way, and again entered the nun-hood. I practiced hard and diligently and, finally, realized arhathood and was endowed with the six miraculous powers. Therefore, I can assure you that an ordained person will, even if she breaks the precepts, realize enlightenment. A lay person will not. I myself repeatedly did wrong, falling many times into hell. At times my life was so depraved I could not even touch a part of enlightenment. But now I truthfully say that any one who breaks the precepts, if she has entered the monkhood, will still finally awaken to enlightenment. Such is the merit of the kesa.”

It was the merit of wearing the kesa, albeit done so in jest, that resulted in the nun Renge-shiki finally being endowed with the six miraculous powers, the three brilliant observations, and realizing great arhathood. First she met the Buddha Kāśyapa, was reborn into the world, perceived the Way, and entered the nun-hood. Finally, after she met the Buddha Shakyamuni, she attained arhathood, and was endowed with the six miraculous powers and three brilliant observations. The three brilliant observations are: (1) tengentsu, eyes able to see all things; (2) shukumyotsu, the power to remember past lives; and (3) rojintsu, release from the cycle of life and death. The six miraculous powers are, with the inclusion of the aforementioned three brilliant observations; (4) jinkyotsu, freedom from detachment; (5) tennitsu, the ability to observe both the joy and suffering in the six worlds; and (6) tashintsu, the ability to understand other’s thoughts.

Those who put on the kesa undoubtedly realize enlightenment. The nun Renge-shiki, who broke her vows of ordination many times and who first wore the kesa in jest, did so in only three life times. How then could someone who receives the kesa sincerely and with a pure heart fail to do likewise?

Those who have already perceived the Way should quickly receive the kesa. To let slip such an opportunity to sow the seed of enlightenment would be more than a tragedy. How foolish we are if after being born a human, having experienced Shakyamuni’s teachings, and having received the kesa of Patriarchal transmission, we do not recognize our good fortune and

2-EN A Chinese unit of measure: one tsun equals approximately three centimetres.

3-EN Being with a horse’s head and human body

spend our lives meaninglessly.

Only those who receive a kesa from a Patriarch follow in the lineage of Shakyamuni. Those who do not receive a kesa in this way are in no way their equals. To receive a kesa at all is no mean feat with great merit; how much more so if we receive one directly from a Patriarch. A kesa of right transmission embodies the essence of the Buddha Shakyamuni, and those who receive it are his sons and daughters. The Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and śrāvakas in the three worlds and ten directions never fail to protect a kesa of right transmission.

A kesa must be made according to the manner established by Shakyamuni. The material used should be a rough, unrefined cotton. If this is unavailable, then a plain silk may be used. If neither are available, then it is permitted to use a lightly patterned cloth. In a country where none of the aforementioned cloths can be found, an animal skin may be used as an alternative.

A kesa should be dyed either blue, yellow, red, black, purple, or a blended combination of those colours. The Tathāgata always wore a flesh coloured kesa. A kesa made of cotton from the core of a cotton ball and dyed a bluish black was the first kind to be transmitted into China. This kesa, which was correctly transmitted through the entire twenty-eight Patriarchs in India and the first five in China, is now enshrined on Mount Sōkei. All the disciples of Sōkei Enō transmitted the kesa, and thus the lineage is preserved. There is no comparison between this kesa and that of another stream or sect.

There are three kinds of kesa: (1) that made of discarded cloth, (2) that made of animal fur or bird plumage, and (3) that made of repaired, worn out cloth. Luxurious or worldly favoured cloth should not be used.

Once, the venerable Upāli^{1-EN} asked Shakyamuni, "Oh honorable Buddha, how many strips of cloth make up the sōgyari kesa?" Shakyamuni replied, This kesa consists of nine, eleven, thirteen, fifteen, seventeen, nineteen, twenty-one, twenty-three, and twenty-five strips of cloth. Each strip of the first three kinds is made of two long pieces of cloth and one short piece of cloth. Each strip of the next three kinds consists of three long pieces of cloth and one short piece, and the last three kinds are made of four long and four short pieces of cloth. Any other kind of kesa than these detailed here are not permitted."

Upali questioned further: "Honorable Buddha, how many sizes of sōgyari kesa are there?" The Buddha replied, "There are three sizes – large, medium, and small. The large is three chu^{2-EN} long and five chu wide; the small is two and a half chu long and four and a half chu wide; the medium is proportionately between these."

Upāli continued, "Honourable Buddha, how many strips does the uttarasō kesa have?" The Buddha replied, "seven strips, each consisting of two long and one short piece of cloth."

Upāli then asked: "Honorable Buddha, how many different sizes of the seven strip kesa are there?" The Buddha replied, "Three sizes – large, medium, and small. The large is three chu in length and five chu in width; the small is half a chu smaller in both length and width, and the medium is proportionately between these."

Upali continued, "How many sizes of gojo-e kesa are there?" The Buddha replied, "Three sizes – large, medium, and small. The large is three chu long and five chu wide; the medium and small are respectively the same size as the previously referred to kesa. There are another two kinds of gojo-e kesa; their dimensions are two chu in length by five chu in width, and two chu in length by four chu in width."

These kesas are also known by other names: respectively, the sōgyari kesa, the uttarasō kesa, and the gojo-e kesa are known as the large kesa, the outer kesa, and the under kesa. The former, the sōgyari, is also known as the double kesa; this is worn when visiting a palace or when teaching the Dharma. The uttarasō, also called the seven strip robe or medium size kesa, is worn for daily work and when training. These kesas, together with the sixty strip kesa, must be eternally respected and preserved. Remember this.

It is generally believed that in the past man lived to be around eight- thousand years old. Now the average life expectancy would be nearer a hundred years. Many argue that man's body size has changed as a direct result of this decrease, others say not. The latter, however, is the correct transmission.

There is a vast difference between the height of a Buddha and that of a man; a man's body size is measurable, a Buddha's is not. Kāśyapa Buddha's kesa is neither too long nor too large for Shakyamuni. Similarly, Shakyamuni's kesa is neither too short nor too small wide for Maitreya^{1-EN} Buddha. A Buddha's body is beyond such restrictions as those imposed by measurement. Even though king of the Trayastrimsa heaven^{2-EN}, Brahma is unable to see the top of the Buddha's head. Once, in an attempt to define the limits of the Buddha's voice, Mokkenren, skilled in the practice of abhijñā, went to the world of the Brilliant Banner. He was, however, still able to hear the Buddha. Thus we realize the Buddha to be beyond the limits of rational understanding and his true virtue is apparent.

There are four correct methods of making a kesa: (1) katsu-e, (2) chyo-e, (3) shoyo-e, and (4) man-e. The first, the katsu-e, is made of a collection of small pieces of cloth; the second, the chyo-e, is made of larger pieces; the third, the shoyo-e, of only a few large pieces; and the last, the man-e, of only one piece of cloth. All these are of right transmission, therefore all should be honoured.

Shakyamuni said, "The kesa that the Buddhas of the three worlds wear is made of a clean, pure material and is sewn together using back stitching. Funzo-e, considered the cleanest and purest material, is the most suitable. Cloth bought with devotees' donations is also acceptable. In the past strict rules governed the time spent in making a kesa. Now, however, being a time of degenerate Buddhism, we should simply accept a kesa that has been made by faithful devotees, regardless of the time taken.

It is a great secret of the Mahāyāna that both laymen and celestial beings receive the kesa. Both Kings Brahma and Indra did so. They are excellent examples for the terrestrial world. In the human world, where lay Bodhisattvas wear the kesa, there

1-EN One of the ten great disciples of the Buddha. He became a monk together with Ānanda and was known for his strict observation of the precepts.

2-EN The distance between the elbow and the finger tip.

1-EN He is believed to be living in the Tusita heaven awaiting the time when he will appear in this world and succeed Shakyamuni Buddha. This is held to be five billion six hundred and seventy million years after Shakyamuni entered Parinirvana.

2-EN The heaven of the thirty-three gods. It is located on the top of Mount Sumeru.

are many cases such as these. In China the Emperors Bu^{1-EN} of the Liang dynasty and Yang^{2-EN} of the Sui dynasty wore the kesa, as did the emperors Tai-tsung and Su-tsung. The latter two emperors also received instruction from Buddhist priests and took the Bodhisattva precepts.

In Japan, Prince Shotoku wore the Buddhist kesa and gave discourses on the Lotus and Shoman Sutras. It is said that while he delivered these talks he experienced a sensation of many flowers being rained on him. It was subsequent to this period that Buddhism became widely accepted in Japan. In addition to being regent in Japan, Prince Shotoku was also a teacher of all humans and celestial beings, a messenger of the Buddhas, and both father and mother of all sentient beings.

Even though the kesa found in Japan often differs from standard ones in both colour and form, it is entirely due to Prince Shotoku that even the name "kesa" is known. How terrible it would be had he not denied falsehood and established truth. Later, the Emperor Shōmu^{3-EN} also wore the kesa and received the precepts. All men, whether emperors or subjects, should quickly receive the precepts and wear the Buddhist kesa. The human world affords no greater joy than this.

A layman's kesa is called *tampo*, single-stitched, or ordinary robe. It is so called because no double stitching is used when it is made. A layman who enters monastic life should possess three kinds of kesa, a tooth cleaning stick, mouth rinse, eating utensils and *zagu*.^{4-EN} He should then begin to train according to the rules of a monk's practice. This is the way taught by many past sages. The pure doctrines of the Buddha, however, disagree with this. They state that the kesa transmitted to kings, ministers, soldiers, and ordinary lay people be made using backstitching. Sōkei Enō is an excellent example of one who transmitted a true Buddhist kesa.

The kesa is the symbol of a Buddhist disciple, and those who receive it should honour it day and night. Before we put on a kesa, we must place it on our heads, hold our hands in *gassho*, and recite the following verse:

"How magnificent this robe of detachment, like a field expounding great joy and happiness.

Venerating Tathāgata's teachings we vow to all sentient beings."

This kesa is worthy of the highest honour. Respect it as you would your own master or a Buddhist stupa. The preceding verse is also chanted when venerating a newly washed kesa.

The Buddha once said, "A man who shaves his head and wears a Buddhist kesa gains the protection of all the Buddhas, and if even a relative receives ordination we will be venerated by all the celestial beings." Thus it is clear, once we shave our heads and wear the kesa, we gain the protection of all the Buddhas, our practice becomes free of obstructions, and we will finally realize enlightenment; furthermore, we will be respected and honoured by all celestial and terrestrial beings.

Shakyamuni once said to the monk Chiko: "The kesa has the following ten wondrous merits:

1. It covers the body, prevents embarrassment, awakens the repentant mind, and causes good practice.
2. It protects the body from extreme temperatures, mosquito, poisonous insects, venomous snakes, and dangerous animals; thus allowing continuous, unhindered practice.
3. It offers immediate recognition of a monk, and causes great joy and release from delusion to those who see it.
4. It is the highly esteemed symbol of both humans and celestial beings, and through respectful veneration enables rebirth as King Brahma.
5. It absolves all crimes and causes unlimited happiness., and when we wear it, we realize it to be the true symbol of the Buddhist Way.
6. It eliminates the five wrongful desires and all forms of greed. This occurs as a result of dyeing the kesa a dull colour at the time of making.
7. It transforms delusion into eternal joy, for it contains the pure essence of the Buddha.
8. It purges the mind of evil and causes those who wear it to perform the ten good deeds.
9. It germinates the innate seed of the Bodhisattva, just like rice in a fertile paddy.
10. It shields those who wear it from the poisonous arrow of delusion.

"Chiko, it is because of these merits that when all the Buddhas in the three worlds, *pratyeka-buddhas*, *śrāvakas* and all the pure monks wear the kesa, they are together on the same seat of detachment, hold the same sword of wisdom, overcome covetousness, and enter the same nirvana. Shakyamuni continued with the following verse.

"Chiko, listen carefully,

The Buddhist kesa has ten most wondrous merits. A layman's clothes increases covetousness, Tathāgata's robe does not.

Buddhist robes protect us from embarrassment and cause endless joy. They protect us from extreme temperatures and poisonous insects, And enable our Buddha-seeking mind to grow.

Finally we will realize enlightenment.

They give instant recognition of a true monk, and free us from all forms of greed;

Furthermore, they destroy the five wrongful views,^{1-EN} and assist good practice.

Acknowledge and venerate the kesa, the symbol of enlightenment, For this causes King Brahma to rejoice.

1-EN Emperor Wu: 464–549 A.D. A devotee of the Way. He built many temples and is known for his dialogue with Bodhidharma concerning merit.

2-EN 569–618. Known for his study of literature and the arts.

3-EN 701–756. Ardent believer of Buddhism. He is responsible for having temples, called *Kokubun-ji*, built in each province in Japan. After reigning for twenty-five years he entered monkhood.

4-EN A sitting cloth.

1-EN (1) The heretical belief in the self (personality); (2) the heresy of holding extreme views; (3) holding false views; (4) attachment to heresy and; (5) attachment to practices and observance of heresy.

My disciple, think of your kesa as you would a Buddhist stupa,

For this causes great joy, purges the mind of evil, and leads both humans and celestial beings to enlightenment.

A true monk is diligent and respectful, he conducts himself appropriately to his role, and remains unsoiled by delusion and crime. All the Buddhas praise the kesa like they would a fertile paddy,

For it is the greatest bestower of peace among all celestial beings and humans.

The kesa is endowed with miraculous powers,

For it can plant the seed of enlightenment.

It helps the new sprout of the Buddha-seeking mind to flourish like a spring plant in a fertile paddy.

The results of Buddhist practice are like the harvested crop in autumn.

The power of enlightenment protects, like armour made of diamond. And we are safe from the poisonous arrow of delusion.

I have given a brief account of the ten most wondrous virtues of the kesa,

Though enough can never be said, and I could continue for an eternity.

If a dragon has occasion to merely hold a thread of the kesa, he will be protected from being devoured by a garuda bird.

Those who cross vast oceans need wear only a piece of the kesa to be protected from the perils of dragons, fish, and demons.

When great thunderstorms shake the heavens,

Those who wear the kesa need have no fear.

A layman who wears the kesa will keep all evil at bay,

And having perceived the Way, received ordination and relinquished the world, will cause the palaces of all the demons to shake. And that person will soon emerge in the body of true form [enlightenment].”

Those ten benefits possess the various merits attributed to the Buddhist Way. Study them at length, word for word – a mere general impression is no way adequate. These merits are associated with the kesa alone; they have no relation to a monk’s diligent training. The Buddha said, “The merits of the kesa are incomprehensible.” This is true whether one is an ordinary, sacred, or wise person. Enlightenment can be realized only by those who wear the kesa. This is an unquestionable fact, as true now as in ancient times.

Funzo-e is the purest and cleanest material for making a kesa. The sūtras, vinayanas, and abhidharmas of both the Mahāyāna and Hinayāna schools state this to be so. For further details regarding this and for information on permitted alternative materials, we should consult a Buddhist master. Only the Buddhas and Patriarchs can fully clarify and rightly transmit a Buddhist kesa.

The Mādhyam-āgama-sūtra^{1-EN} states, “Oh honorable men, suppose there is a man who acts purely, yet speaks and thinks impurely. If a wise man who sees this person becomes angry, then he must quickly extinguish his anger. Suppose there is a man who acts impurely, yet speaks and thinks purely. If a wise man who sees this person becomes angry, he must quickly extinguish his anger. How can he do this? He can do so by following the example of a solitary monk who picks up discarded cloth to make a funzo-e. When he finds worn out cloth soiled with excreta, urine, or mucus, he picks it up with his left hand and with his right removes those parts least soiled and worn. A man who becomes angry at the sight of another whose thoughts and speech are impure but actions pure should study this, and in a similar way remove his anger.”

This is the correct way to collect cloth for making a funzo-e. The cloth used may be of either four or ten kinds. The ten kinds are: (1) cloth chewed by an ox; (2) cloth gnawed by mice; (3) cloth charred by fire; (4) cloth stained with menstrual blood; (5) cloth stained with blood after birth; (6) cloth which has been discarded at a shrine; (7) material used as shroud; (8) material given in offering; (9) material discarded by court officials; and (10) material used to cover the dead.

These ten kinds of cloth, being of no value to ordinary people, are abandoned in quantity. When washed, however, they prove the purest and most suitable material for making a Buddhist kesa. All the Buddhas in the three worlds praise this cloth, and in the form of a kesa it receives the respect and protection of all humans, celestial beings, and dragons. Unquestionably, then, it is this cloth that we should use to make our kesa.

Being a small and remote country, Japan is unfortunate in not having this form of cloth. Even if we searched, we would not find a ready source of supply. Alternatively, material donated by devotees, ordinary humans, or celestial beings should be used. Cloth bought with money acquired through leading a pure life is also suitable. Material used for a kesa is neither cotton nor silk, neither is it gold, silver, woven silk, fine silk, brocade, or embroidery. Simply it is unwanted, discarded cloth, whether beautiful or worn is of no consequence. The manner detailed here for making a kesa is a teaching of the Dharma; ensure the kesa you make accords with this. Additional information regarding its merit should be sought only from the Buddhas and Patriarchs, not from humans and celestial beings.

When I was training at a temple in Sung China, I noticed that at the end of each morning Zazen session the monk sitting next to me would place his kesa on his head and, with hands held in gassho, chant the following verse:

“How magnificent this robe of detachment,

Like a field expounding endless joy and happiness,

Venerating Tathāgata’s teachings we vow to save all sentient beings.”

When I saw this I was deeply moved. My collar became wet with the tears of joy. Although I had read the Agama-Sūtra many times and the verse relating to placing the kesa on one’s head was familiar to me, I had been ignorant of the manner in which it was to be done. I was sad that there had been no one in Japan to show me this, and I lament the time lost when it was unknown to me. Now, however, as a result of past good action, I have been able to witness it. Surely had I remained in Japan

1-EN 1 One of the four agamas, early collections of the teachings of the Buddha. It consists of sixty sections, five adhyayas, eighteen Vargas and two-hundred and two sutras.

such an opportunity would not have arisen, and the true meaning of the Agama- Sūtra would have remained unknown to me. With mixed feelings of sadness and joy, I cried, the tears wetting my kesa. At that time I vowed to myself, "Unworthy as I am, but out of deep compassion, I vow to receive the right transmission of the Buddhist Dharma, so that my fellow countrymen may have opportunity to experience the True Law which has been correctly transmitted together with the kesa."

This wish was actualized, and many lay and ordinary people now wear the kesa. Those who do so should respect and venerate it at all times, for its merit is supreme among all things. With a correct mind it is not difficult to experience the true word, even the trees and stones are our teachers. Experiencing the merit of the kesa of right transmission for even a single day or night is the most precious occurrence in our lives.

In October 1224 two Korean monks, Chi-gin and Kei-un came to Keigen-fu^{1-EN}. Both these monks taught the sūtras merely from their own erudite interpretations. They were no different from lay people. They had neither robe nor mendicant bowl. How regretful to be a monk in name only. I imagine this occurred because these monks came from a small remote country. I fear Japanese monks who visit other countries also appear in this way.

Shakyamuni Buddha ceaselessly venerated and preserved the kesa. As his disciples we should cease from worshipping kings, ministers, gods, heavens, and from pursuing fame and fortune, and follow his example. This world cannot afford greater joy than to venerate and respect a kesa.

This was delivered to the assembly of monks at Kannondōri, Kōshōhōrinji on October 1, 1240. It was recopied by Gien at the summer session of 1255, and transcribed July 5 of the same year. It was again recopied in 1275, finally being completed on May 25.

1-EN Chingyuan-fu. Present day Ningpo fu in Chekiang province.

79. HOTSU BODAI-SHIN

發心菩提

"Awakening the Buddha-seeking mind"

There are generally considered to be three kinds of mind: citta, the discriminating mind; karit, the mind of grass and trees [the non-discriminating mind]; and irita, the mind of truth. Of these minds it is the discriminating mind which causes one to awaken the Buddha-seeking mind [Bodhi-mind]. "Bodhi" and "citta" are both Sanskrit words. The former, "Bodhi" translates as "the Way"; the latter, "citta" as "discriminating mind." Although one cannot awaken the Buddha-seeking mind without a discriminating mind, these minds are not the same and should not be confused. The latter is only a means of attaining the former. Putting another's enlightenment before one's own is the way of those who have themselves awakened the Buddha-seeking mind. Although humble in appearance, these men are already the leaders of all sentient beings.

This mind is not innate nor does it arise through recent experience, neither is it single nor plural, definable or undefinable, within ourselves or universal. It bears no relation to the future or past, and neither can we say it "is" or it "isn't" nor is it the essence of ourselves, others, or both, nor does it suddenly occur, but it arises as the gradual result of a spiritual link between ourselves and the Buddha. This mind cannot be transmitted by the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas nor can it be induced through our own efforts. Only a spiritual link between ourselves and the Buddha can awaken the Buddha seeking mind.

As a rule only humans can awaken the Buddha-seeking mind, though it is known that a small number of beings in the eight difficult worlds have also done so.

Those who have awakened the Buddha-seeking mind sometimes continue to practice for innumerable kalpas before they finally decide to become either a Buddha or to remain and help others to find the Way.

Using right speech, action, and thought as a means of arousing the Buddha-seeking mind in others is the Way of all who have themselves awoken this mind, and to do so complies with the wishes of the Bodhisattvas. To merely satisfy an others worldly desires is not the true Way.

Bodhisattva Kāśyapa praised Shakyamuni with the following verse:

Although the Buddha-seeking mind and enlightenment are one, of the two minds, it is the Buddha-seeking mind that is the most difficult to awaken,

For this is the mind which promotes the enlightenment of others before our own.

I honour and respect this mind above all else.

Those who have awakened the Buddha-seeking mind are already teachers of all sentient and celestial beings, and are superior to both śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas.

In the three worlds, this mind is respected and exalted above all else, and its merit unequalled.

Awakening the Buddha-seeking mind means to assist all sentient beings to attain enlightenment before we consider our own. When we encounter the teachings of innumerable Buddhas, our Buddha-seeking mind will grow like frost settling on snow.

A comparison between awakening the Buddha-seeking mind and enlightenment could, in the first instance, be like that between the light generated by a firefly and that of a vast raging fire. This immense difference, however, immediately disappears once those who have awakened the Buddha-seeking mind also vow to promote the enlightenment of others before their own.

It states in the Lotus Sūtra that Shakyamuni Buddha is always considering ways to lead all sentient beings to supreme enlightenment. This is the eternal life of Shakyamuni. To altruistically forsake one's own enlightenment and entry to Buddhahood, even if one has attained enough merit to do so, in favour of guiding others, to salvation is the way of all who have themselves awakened the Buddha-seeking mind. This mind, as previously stated, is neither the result of our own or another's conscious effort.

Once this mind is awakened our perspective of all things will be changed. The earth will become gold and the oceans nectar. Even the earth, stones and sand will manifest the Buddha-seeking mind, as will the ocean's spray and flames.

The Lotus Sūtra further states we should offer our castle, wife, family, seven treasures, servants, head, flesh, brain, and limbs in the service of another's enlightenment. When we undertake to lead others to the other shore [enlightenment] before we consider our own salvation, the discriminating mind, which is neither near or far nor within ourselves or others, becomes the equivalent to the Buddha-seeking mind.

The awakened Buddha-seeking mind is neither the consequence of our own nor another's effort. When we awaken the Buddha-seeking mind, even if only for a moment, all things become conducive to its growth. Awakening the Buddha-seeking mind and experiencing enlightenment may occur and perish momentarily. If this were not so momentary past wrongs could not disappear and subsequent good could not appear. The Tathāgata alone understands this fully, for it is only he who can utter an entire word in an instant.^{1-EN}

With the passing of each instant we undergo the incessant action of existing and non-existing. In the time it takes an average middle-aged man to "click" his fingers, sixty-five such instants pass, and over the space of twenty-four hours, 6,400,099,980 take place. The ordinary person, totally unaware of these facts, is unable to awaken the Buddha-seeking mind. Without faith in the Buddhist Dharma, people find the principle of subsequent existing and non-existing unacceptable. With faith, the principle is both obvious and apparent. When some people encounter the Tathāgata's teachings, they believe they have fully understood them. This is a mistake. In reality only a period of time longer than a hundred and twenty instants has been understood.

Our inability to understand the Tathāgata's teachings in their entirety is similar to our misconception and lack of knowledge of an instant. Having failed to realize the extremities of time, Buddhist trainees should not be proud of their understanding.

The power of Shakyamuni's enlightenment enables all sentient beings to see the three thousand worlds. No one is beyond the continuous cycle of existing and non-existing. This is true in both the context of physical death and rebirth and of momentary

1-EN Setsuna: a measure of time equal to 1/75 of a second.

change. Being the result of karma, this action is entirely outside our control and continues irrespective of our wishes. Surely, man has no other option than to quickly arouse the Buddha-seeking mind and vow to help all others attain enlightenment. If those who so desperately cling to their physical life would only stop to consider birth, old age, sickness, and death, they would realize all these to be beyond their control and conclude that their "own bodies" do not in reality belong to them.

The following is taken from the Daibibasha-ron: "A monk visited Shakyamuni. He prostrated before him, and then standing to his side asked, 'Why does life pass so swiftly?' The Buddha replied, 'Even if I explain, you could not understand.' The monk continued, 'Could it not be explained through a parable?' The Buddha said it could and related the following: 'Suppose there were four skilled archers, each standing back to back intending to fire their arrows in the four directions. And, further, suppose a fast runner were to appear claiming that should each fire their arrows simultaneously he would catch all four before they hit the ground – do you consider this person a fast runner?' 'O Shakyamuni, indeed I do,' replied the monk. The Buddha continued, 'Of course no one could deny this. His speed, however, would be incomparable to a yasha^{1-EN} running on the ground, and a yasha running on the ground could in no way hope to equal the speed of a yasha flying in the air, and even the latter would be unable to surpass the speed of the Shitteno.^{2-EN} The Shitteno, in turn, would be unable to match the chariots of the sun and moon, and even they would be unequal in speed to the celestial beings who pull their chariots. All these are of course exceedingly fast; however none would appear so if compared to the speed which life, constantly subject to existences and non-existences, passes by. Buddhist monks should maintain awareness of this, and unceasingly endeavour to help others to cross to the others shore before doing so themselves. Act accordingly, for this guarantees the virtue of eternal life.'"

Without awakening the Buddha-seeking mind, we can not become a Patriarch. All the Buddhas in the three worlds and in the ten directions, the seven Buddhas prior to Shakyamuni, the twenty-eight Patriarchs in India, the six Patriarchs in China, and all other Patriarchs who have transmitted the Eye and Treasure of the True Law did so.

Koan 120 in the Zen-en-shingi asks, "Is awakening for enlightenment the same as arousing the Buddha-seeking mind?" We should know that awakening the Buddha-seeking mind comprises the initial stages of training in the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs and complies with their teachings. To awaken the Buddha-seeking mind is to fully understand the Buddhist Way: in other words enlightenment. It is not, however, the same as the enlightenment of the Buddhas. Even if we realize the ten steps to enlightenment, we are still no more than Bodhisattvas. The twenty-eight Patriarchs in India, the six Patriarchs in China, and all the other great Patriarchs were all Bodhisattvas, not Buddhas, śrāvakas or pratyekabuddhas.

There are no latter day trainees who realize themselves to be Bodhisattvas, not śrāvakas. What a great shame that the Way of the Patriarchs has lost all meaning. It is for this reason that we, whether lay, ordained, or a celestial, or whether subject to pain or joy, should quickly begin to assist others to arrive at the other shore. Even though the sentient world is neither limited or unlimited, we should arouse the mind to save sentient beings before we consider our own salvation. This is the Buddha-seeking mind – enlightenment.

It is said that before appearing in the world, Issho-Fusho-Budhisattva^{1-EN} imparted the following words to the celestial inhabitants of the Tusita Heaven. "Because it embodies the Three Treasures, the Buddha-seeking mind is the gateway to the truth." Thus we understand that the Three Treasures are preserved by the power of the Buddha-seeking mind. Once this mind is awakened it should be strictly guarded to prevent retrogression.

Shakyamuni once said, "A Bodhisattva must never fail to protect his Buddha-seeking mind. He should do this with no less fervor than ordinary people protect their children, a man with one eye protects his good eye, or a traveller passing through a wilderness protects his guide, for it is the Buddha-seeking mind that finally lends itself to one awakening to supreme enlightenment." It is for this reason that a Bodhisattva so earnestly protects this mind and is the reason why Shakyamuni taught the preceding.

The following comparisons further illustrate the necessity of protecting the Buddha-seeking mind. There are three things that often fail to mature. One is fish eggs, another is the fruit of the amra^{2-EN} tree, and the third is the Buddha-seeking mind. We should thus afford our awakened Buddha-seeking mind the greatest of protection and ensure it develops. Many people who arouse their Buddha-seeking mind fail to retain it simply because, having failed to meet and study under a good master during their initial stage of training, they have been unable to contact the True Law. They deny causality, enlightenment, the Three Treasures, and the three worlds. They remain attached to the five desires, and are prevented from attaining enlightenment in the future.

With the intention of disrupting a monk's practice, it is known for demons to sometimes take on the semblance of those we trust. Appearing as Buddhas, parents, teachers, relatives, or celestial beings, they deceitfully argue, "The Buddhist Way is long and arduous, and those who follow this path are subject to severe pain and suffering; surely before assisting others to arrive at the other shore, it is more beneficial to secure your own enlightenment." Bodhisattvas should realize these words for what they are—false and malicious teachings. A monk heeding these words will become indifferent to practice, and his Buddha-seeking mind regress until it is finally lost altogether.

There are four kinds of evil: (1) The evil of desire; (2) the evil of the five aggregates; (3) the evil of death; (4) demons in the form of celestial beings. The evil of desire is comprised of between 108 and 84,000 desires. The evil of the five aggregates consists of the causes of desire and is based on the four elements and six sense organs. This is known as the rūpa-skandha. The source of the 108 desires is known as the vedanā-skandha. The mental process of discriminating between the various thoughts is called samjñā-skandha. Samskara-skandha, the mental process associated with the prejudicial mind, and with its preoccupation with likes and dislikes, ugliness and beauty is the 'Instigator of greed, anger and foolishness; it is responsible for our distorted view of all form. The six consciousnesses which arise from the action of the six sense organs and that lead to an unlimited mind is known as vijñāna skandha.

The evil of death causes discontinuity of the five aggregates and drains the body of consciousness, warmth and life. A demon in the form of a celestial, attached to the world of desire, is resentful and jealous of the wisdom of others. Mara [the Devil is a Sanskrit word that translates into Chinese as one who deprives others of life. Of the four kinds of demons, it is the demon of death alone that can directly cause cessation of life. The others merely prevent acquisition of knowledge and wisdom. Hence this demon is known as 'the destroyer.'

1-EN A devil. One of the Hachibushu. Sometimes regarded as protectors of Buddhism.
2-EN The four Quarter Kings who live in Shi-ō-den
1-EN The Bodhisattva who became Shakyamuni Buddha.
2-EN A variety of mango.

It has been asked, "Since the three evils are included within the evil of the five aggregates, why has it been necessary to subdivide them into four categories?" This was answered, "In actuality there is only one basic evil. The division into four has been made merely for the purpose clarification."

This discourse was presented by the Patriarch Nāgārjuna. Devotees should study it in detail and work to ensure that their Buddha-seeking mind is preserved and remains free of defilement. This is the meaning of protecting the Buddha-seeking mind.

This was delivered to an assembly of monks at Yoshimine-Shōja, [vihara] Yoshida-gun, Echizen, on February 14, 1244, and recopied by Ejō on April 9, 1256.

80. KUYO SHOBUTSU

供養諸佛

"Veneration of the Buddhas"

The Buddha Shakyamuni composed the following verse :

"With no past

There are no past Buddhas.

With no past Buddhas

There are no present monks."

Thus it is clear that Buddhas exist in the past, present, and future. Those in the past neither had nor did not have a beginning. Even to discuss this is wrong and contrary to the Dharma. A man attains Buddhahood as the result of having entered the monkhood, having observed the Dharma and having venerated various Buddhas. Venerating the Buddhas is an intrinsic part of attaining Buddhahood: no one has ever become a Buddha without having done so.

The Butsu-hon-gyō-kyō^{1-EN} states: "The Buddha said to Honorable Mokuren, 'In the past, wishing to realize supreme enlightenment, I planted good seeds while training under innumerable Buddhas. In the past, when I was King Tenrinnō, I encountered three billion Buddhas all named Shakyamuni. From the Tathāgatas to the śrāvakas I venerated each and everyone. I offered the four venerative offerings, clothes, food and drink, bedding, and medicine. Even so however, none of these Buddhas predicted I would finally realize supreme enlightenment be called a Sekenge^{2-EN}, a Tenninshi,^{3-EN} or become a Buddha, or a Bhagavat.

"Mokuren, in the past, when I was King Tenrinnō, I encountered eight hundred million Buddhas all named Diparmkara.^{1-EN} From the Tathāgatas to śrāvakas, I respected and venerated each and everyone. I made offerings of clothes, food and drink, bedding, medicine, banners, canopies, flowers, and incense. Even so, however, none of these Buddhas predicted I would finally realize supreme enlightenment; be called a Sekenge, Tenninshi; or become a Buddha or Bhagavat.

"Mokuren, in the past, when I was king Tenrinnō, I encountered three hundred million Buddhas all named Pusya Buddha. From the Tathāgatas to the śrāvakas, I made offerings that fully satisfied the needs of each and everyone. Even so, however, none of these Buddhas predicted that I would finally attain Buddhahood.' "

When he was King Tenrinnō, Shakyamuni, besides venerating the aforementioned Buddhas, also venerated innumerable other Buddhas. King Tenrinnō, king of the entire world plus three thousand other worlds, had a source of offerings so immense and he made offerings so many times that it would be inconceivable to the ordinary person: even an attempt to explain the amount of times he made an offering would be useless.

The eighth section of the Buddhagarbha-Sūtra^{2-EN}, entitled "Pure understanding," states: "The Buddha Shakyamuni said to Śāriputra, 'In the past, seeking supreme enlightenment I encountered three billion Buddhas named Shakyamuni. At that time, as King Tenrinnō, I made venerative offerings to each of them and their followers of clothing, food and drink, bedding, and medicine for my entire life. Having done so, however, with a view to attaining enlightenment, none of these Buddhas predicted I would realize my objective.

"Oh Śāriputra, in the past, seeking supreme enlightenment, I encountered eight thousand Buddhas named Diparmkara. At that time, as King Tenrinnō, I made venerative offerings to them and their disciples of clothing, food and drink, bedding and medicine. Having done so, however, with a view to attaining enlightenment, none of these Buddhas predicted I would realize my objective.

"Oh Śāriputra, in the past, seeking supreme enlightenment, I encountered sixty thousand Buddhas named Kuang-ming. At that time, as King Tenrinnō; I made venerative offerings to each of them and their disciples of clothing, food and drink, bedding and medicine. Having done so, however, with a view to attaining enlightenment, none of these Buddhas ever predicted I would realize my objective.

"Oh Śāriputra, in the past, seeking supreme enlightenment, I encountered three hundred million Buddhas named Pusya. At that time, as King Tenrinnō, I made venerative offerings to each of these Buddhas of clothing, food and drink, bedding and medicine. Having done so, however, with a view to attaining enlightenment, none of these Buddhas predicted I would realize my objective.

"Oh Śāriputra, in the past, during the upper eight kalpa age, I, seeking supreme enlightenment, encountered eighteen thousand Buddhas named Shan-wang. Although I shaved my head, wore monks robes, and trained under each Buddha, none predicted I would become a Buddha, for I had done so attached to attaining enlightenment.

"Oh Śāriputra, in the past, I encountered five hundred Buddhas named Hua-shang. At that time, as King Tenrinnō, I made venerative offerings to each of them. Having done so, however, with a view to attaining enlightenment, none predicted I would realize my objective.

"Oh Śāriputra, in the past, I encountered five hundred Buddhas named Wei-tê. At that time, as King Tenrinnō, I respectfully made offerings that fully satisfied the needs of each of them. Having done so, however, with a view to attaining enlightenment, none predicted I would realize my objective.

"Oh Śāriputra, in the past, I encountered two thousand Buddhas named Kaundinya. At that time, as King Tenrinnō, I respectfully made offerings that fully satisfied the needs of each of them. Having done so, however, with a view to attaining enlightenment, none predicted that I would realize my objective.

1-EN A sixty section biography of the Buddha and his foremost disciples. Translated into Chinese by Jnanagupta. It is the most comprehensive of the Chinese biographies.

2-EN One of the ten epithets of the Buddha. "One who understands the world".

3-EN One of the ten epithets of the Buddha. "One who teaches gods and men.

1-EN Nentō Butsu. A Buddha who prophesied Shakyamuni would ultimately attain enlightenment.

2-EN A three or four section work. Translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva. It is designed to show that Bodhisattvas should not train together with śrāvakas.

“Oh Śāriputtra, in the past, I encountered nine thousand Buddhas named Kāśyapa. I respectfully offered these Buddhas the four venerative offerings: clothes, food and drink, bedding, and medicine. Having done so, however, with a view to attaining enlightenment, none predicted I would realize my objective.

“Oh Śāriputtra, in the past, there was a period ten thousand kalpas long when no Buddhas appeared. The first thousand kalpas saw only the emergence of pratyekabuddhas, nine hundred thousand during the first five hundred kalpas and eight thousand four hundred billion during the second. Whole heartedly, I respectfully offered each one of them the four venerative offerings.

“Oh Śāriputtra, with the passing of these one thousand kalpas, no more pratyekabuddhas appeared. My time in the human world ended, and I was born as King Brahma in the Brahma Heaven. I continued to be born as King Brahma for five hundred kalpas before I was born respectively as king of the human world, as an inhabitant of the heaven of the Four Quarter Kings, and as King Śakrendra in the Trāyastrimśa.^{1-EN} A thousand kalpas then followed, the first five kalpas of which I spent in transmigration and the latter five hundred as a human, before again I was born as King Brahma in the Brahma Heaven.

“Oh Śāriputtra, the next nine thousand kalpas, with the exception of one period in the human world, I spent entirely in various heavens. At the end of this period, I was born into the Ābhāsvara^{2-EN} before again being reborn into the Brahma Heaven. Śāriputtra, during this nine thousand kalpa period innumerable beings fell into the three evil worlds because they were neither Buddhas nor Pratyekabuddhas.

“Oh Śāriputtra, at the end of this ten thousand kalpa period, only a single Buddha, named P'u-shou, emerged. This Buddha had the following ten epithets: one who (1) has come from the world of truth, (2) is worthy of oblation, (3) is omniscient, (4) sees the truth and follows the path well, (5) has entered the world of enlightenment, (6) understands the world, (7) is paramount, (8) controls men, (9) teaches both celestial beings and terrestrials, and (10) is revered by men. After the Brahma world, I became King Tenrinnō. I entered the human world, and there was known as Kung t'ien. During this cycle, which continued for ninety-thousand kalpas, I did not cease from making venerative offerings to the Buddha P'u-shou and nine billion other monks. Even so, this Buddha did predict I would attain enlightenment in the future, for, as yet, I had not realized the true nature of the universe, and I sought enlightenment based on selfish views.

“Oh Śāriputtra, during the seventh hundredth asamkhya-kalpa^{1-EN}, I encountered one-thousand Buddhas named Jambudvipa. Throughout my life, I earnestly venerated each of these. Having done so, however, with a view to attaining enlightenment, none of these Buddhas predicted I would realize enlightenment in the future.

“Oh Śāriputtra, during the same kalpa, I encountered six million two hundred thousand Buddhas named Chien-i-ch'ieh-i. At that time, as King Tenrinnō, I earnestly made venerative offerings to each of them throughout my entire life. Having done so, however, with a view to attaining enlightenment, none of these Buddhas predicted I would realize my objective.

“Oh Śāriputtra, during the same kalpa, I encountered eighty-four Buddhas named Ti-hsiang. At that time, as King Tenrinnō, I earnestly made venerative offerings to each of them throughout my entire life. Having done so, however, with a view to attaining enlightenment, none of these Buddhas predicted I would realize my objective.

“Oh Śāriputtra, during the same kalpa, I encountered fifteen Buddhas named Canda. At that time, as King Tenrinnō, I earnestly made venerative offerings to each of them throughout my entire life. Having done so, however, with a view to attaining enlightenment, none predicted I would realize my objective.

“Oh Śāriputtra, during the same kalpa, I encountered sixty-two Buddhas named Shan-chi. At that time, as King Tenrinnō, I earnestly made venerative offerings to each of these throughout my entire life. Having done so, however, with a view to attaining enlightenment, none predicted I would realize my objective.

“I continued to transmigrate many times until, finally, I encountered Diparmkara Buddha and realized mushōbōnin^{2-EN}. This Buddha predicted that, after innumerable kalpas, I would attain Buddhahood. I would be known as Shakyamuni Buddha, and my epithets would be: one who (1) has come from the world of truth, (2) is worthy of oblation, (3) is omniscient, (4) sees the truth and follows the path well, (5) has entered the world of enlightenment, (6) understands the world, (7) is paramount, (8) controls men, (9) teaches both celestial and terrestrial beings, and (10) is revered by men”

From his first encounter with Buddhas, three billion named Shakyamuni, until his final encounter, a single Buddha named Diparmkara, King Tenrinnō, who lived to be over eight thousand years old, earnestly made venerative offerings to every Buddha he encountered. The Buddha Diparmkara is also known as Ting-Kuang. Both the Butsu-hon-gyō-kyō Sūtra and the Buddhagarbha-Sūtra concur that the Buddha Shakyamuni encountered the forenamed Buddhas.

During the first asamkhya-kalpa, Shakyamuni a Bodhisattva respectfully venerated seventy-five Buddhas, the first of whom were named Shakyamuni and the last Ratnaśikhi. In the second same kalpa he respectfully venerated seventy-six thousand Buddhas, the first of whom were named Ratnaśikhi and the last Diparmkara. In the third same kalpa he respectfully venerated seventy-seven thousand Buddhas, the first of whom were named Diparmkara and the last Vipassi. It was during the next ninety-one kalpas that he realized the principle of causality and respectfully venerated six Buddhas, the first of whom were named Vipassi and the last Kāśyapa.

Throughout the previous three asamkhya-kalpas, he respectfully venerated Buddhas of every kind. In a manner inconceivable to ordinary people, he unhesitatingly offered to each his life, country, castle, wife, children, seven precious gems, ministers, and servants. On some occasions he even offered platinum bowls filled to overflowing with natural golden rice, while on others he offered bowls made of gold and silver filled with millet equal to the seven treasures. In addition, he offered red aduki beans, various flowers of both land and water, and incense made from the aromatic candana and agara trees. Once, he made an offering to the Buddha Diparmkara of a five stemmed blue lotus flower that he had bought for five hundred gold pieces. On another occasion he offered him a deer skin.

Quickly, then, we should make venerative offerings to the Buddhas. Do this without concern for the worldly value of the offering, for this is of no consequence. What need would the Buddhas have for gold and silver anyway, or, for that matter, incense and flowers. The Buddhas simply accept these out of deep compassion, for they wish to increase the merit of all

1-EN Tōri-ren. The heaven of the thirty-three Gods. It is located on top of Mount Sumeru. Śakrendra palace is located here.

2-EN Koon-ren. The third of the three heavens comprising the second group of dhyana heavens in the world of form.

1-EN Asamkhya, a Sanskrit word, means numberless or infinite.

2-EN The stage attained by a Bodhisattva in which he perceives the dharmatā.

beings.

The twenty-second section of the Mahāparinirvāna-Sūtra^{1-EN} States: "The Buddha once said, 'Innumerable kalpas ago the Buddha Shakyamuni lived in the world we live in. At this time his ten epithets were: One who (1) has come from the world of truth, (2) is worthy of oblation, (3) is omniscient, (4) sees the truth and follows the path well, (5) has entered the world of enlightenment, (6) understands the world, (7) is paramount, (8) controls men, (9) teaches both celestial and terrestrial beings and, (10) is revered by men. Often at this time, the Buddha would expound the Mahāparinirvāna-Sūtra for the benefit of all beings. A friend suggest I go and listen to him. I did, and was so overjoyed by what I heard I immediately wished to make a venerative offering to him. Being extremely poor and lacking virtue, however, I had nothing to give. Even attempts to raise funds by selling myself amounted to nothing.

"I left. On the return journey home, however, I had occasion to meet and converse with a man. I referred to my attempts to sell myself and asked whether he would be interested. He answered he would, but doubted that anyone could meet his needs. I asked, "What are your needs?" He replied, "I suffer from a very serious disease and, under instruction from the doctor, am required to eat three Liang^{1-EN} of human flesh daily. If you can satisfy this requirement, I will pay you five gold coins." I was overjoyed and said to him, "Please give the money and seven days to see to my affairs." "Seven days is too long," he replied. "I'll give you just one day."

"Honorable men! Receiving the money, I immediately returned to the Buddha and, prostrating before him, offered all I had been given. I then sat attentively and listened to him expound the Mahāparinirvāna-Sūtra. Unfortunately, though, stupidity prevented me from remembering any verse other than the following.

Awakening to the truth,

Tathāgata smashed the cycle of life and death.

Listen to him whole heartedly,

for this unfolds infinite joy.

"I returned to the sick man's house and set about honoring my agreement. Constantly I bore this verse in mind and, even though I daily gave him three Liang of my flesh, I felt no pain. At the end of one month, the man had fully recovered and my own body had healed of all scars. When I saw my unscathed body, I awoke the supreme Buddha-seeking mind. When the merit of just one verse of this sūtra is so powerful, it would be difficult to even conceive the merit for remembering and reciting it in its entirety.

"Aware of the great power of this sūtra, both my Buddha-seeking mind and my desire to become the Buddha Shakyamuni multiplied. Oh honorable men! This sūtra contains the greatest secrets of the Buddha's teachings, it is truly unimaginably profound and its merit incalculable. Even the retention of one small verse has enabled me to finally proclaim this sūtra to all celestial and terrestrial beings.' "

The Bodhisattva who sold himself was the predecessor of the present Buddha Shakyamuni. The other sūtras state that this Bodhisattva venerated the past Buddha Shakyamuni at the beginning of the first asamkha-kalpa. At this time he was a tile maker named Ta-kuang-ming. He made three venerative offerings to this Buddha and his disciples: a meditation cushion filled with straw, water sweetened with honey, and candles. In addition, he made the following vow: "At the time I attain Buddhahood, I wish my name, disciples, and country to be like those of the Buddha Shakyamuni."

Because this vow was actualized, we realize our personal or family wealth to be of no consequence when making a venerative offering to the Buddhas. The Buddha Shakyamuni once sold himself to make an offering: we should be prepared to do the same. Making a venerative offering is a virtuous act that unfolds the greatest joy. To daily give three liang of one's flesh to a sick man is something even the most virtuous would find difficult, let alone ordinary men. The Bodhisattva Shakyamuni could do so because he had true determination to make an offering. Shakyamuni's teachings exist today as a result of him selling his flesh in this way.

The virtue of the preceding verse can in no way be evaluated by five gold coins. The Buddhas have correctly transmitted this verse over innumerable kalpas of time; thus its merit is paramount. We trainees of the Way should constantly revere and preserve these words. The Buddha has shown that retention of even a single verse results in incalculable merit. We should reflect, then, on still how much more it would be for retaining this sūtra in its entirety.

The Lotus Sūtra states [taken from the section entitled skillful means]: "If we venerate the Buddha by building a stūpa, offering flowers, incense, or canopies to an image of the Buddha; or if we offer music by striking drums or gongs, playing wind instruments of reed or bamboo, or by strumming stringed instruments we will finally realize the Way. We will achieve the same if, in praise of the Buddha, we sing joyfully or think silently. Even a man who, in a confused state of mind, makes an offering of as little as a single flower to an image of the Buddha will meet innumerable Buddhas. Should a man of similar disposition fully prostrate before an image of the Buddha, place either one or both hands in gassho, or merely lower his head in respect, he will finally realize supreme enlightenment and ultimately assist all sentient beings to find the Way.

Making venerative offerings is the essential function of all the Buddhas in the three worlds. Based on these profound acts, we should endeavour to attain the Buddhist Way, and, as Zen Master Shih-t'ou Wu-chi^{1-EN} once said, we should not spend our lives uselessly. Those who make venerative offerings ultimately become Buddhas; the Way is but one not two or three.

The Patriarch Nāgārjuna said, "Those who seek supreme enlightenment should make venerative offerings. Burning a pinch of incense, offering a single flower, or prostrating before an image of the Buddha are all acts that lead to Buddhahood."

Although these words originated with Nāgārjuna [not Shakyamuni], they unquestionably express the essence of the Buddha Shakyamuni's teaching; thus we should honour them. How fortunate we are to have climbed the treasure mountain and emerge ourselves in the sea treasure of the Buddhist Way. We should be joyful that we venerated Buddhas over innumerable kalpas of time, for it is due to this that we now hold this treasure in our hands. Finally, we will realize Buddhahood. We should not doubt this, but inject even greater determination into our practice. This is a teaching of the Buddha Shakyamuni.

1-EN A Mahāyāna discourse which is thought to be the last sermon of the Buddha. Only the Chinese version exists, the Sanskrit original having been lost

1-EN A Chinese unit of weight equivalent to approximately 0.5 ounce [15 grams].

1-EN 700-790. The Buddhist heir of Ch'ing-yuan, under whom he is said to have realized enlightenment.

Nāgārjuna continued, "A small cause can produce a great effect; likewise a small good deed can produce great reward. A man who recites the verse 'We take refuge in the Buddha,' or burns a pinch of incense in honour of the Buddha will unquestionably realize Buddhahood. How, then, can a man who has realized the essence of all things fail to do likewise."

This transmission of the Patriarch Nāgārjuna is a teaching of the Buddha. Even those teachings which originate with Nāgārjuna are far superior to those of other Dharma masters. If only the extent of our good fortune were known [in respect to encountering Tathāgata's teachings], we would truly be filled with the deepest joy. These profound teachings are incomparable to those mistaken doctrines of so called Chinese priests.

Nāgārjuna continued, "All the Buddhas honour the Dharma: that is why they venerate it. Furthermore, they acknowledge it as their possession because they have realized the essence of all things. A question was once asked: 'Why do the Buddhas in the three worlds venerate the teachings of another when they themselves have realized the ultimate truth?' The reply was, 'Because it is customary to do so. A monk should not venerate the Dharma that is within him, but should venerate those who understand and preserve the Dharma.' Another question asked was: 'The Buddhas possess the ultimate merit; yet, they venerate others. Why do they do this?' The reply was, 'Over innumerable kalpas the Buddhas have compiled much merit. It is out of respect for this merit of virtuous deeds that the Buddhas venerate the merit of others.'

"At the time of the Buddha Shakyamuni lived a blind monk. Once, while this monk was sewing his robes his needle became unthreaded; he called out, 'If there is anyone among you who seeks eternal joy and virtue [through the merit of good deed], please rethread my needle.' The Buddha Shakyamuni hearing his call answered, 'I am such a person. I shall rethread your needle.' The blind monk, immediately recognizing the Buddha, stood, and prostrating before him said, 'Your merit is complete, why do you seek more?' The Buddha replied, 'I awoke to supreme enlightenment as a result of merit; thus I am more than aware of its power. It is out of profound respect for merit that I continue to do good.' The Buddha continued to speak on the Dharma. As a result the blind man could see the true nature of all things, far more clearly than had he regained his physical sight."

I first heard this story while taking tea in my late master's [Nyōjō's] room one evening. Later, I discovered the tenth section of the Mahāprajñāparamitā Treatise^{1-EN} concurs with it. I also learnt that the Patriarchs transmit the Dharma free of error, that the Buddhas accept the Dharma as their master, and that Shakyamuni taught that taking the Dharma as one's master means to respectfully venerate the Three Treasures. Without seeking reward, all these Buddhas have planted good roots over innumerable kalpas. Thus they compiled great merit. Even though the Buddha Shakyamuni had awoken to supreme enlightenment, he rethreaded the blind monk's needle out of respect for even a little merit. This is the true merit of Buddhahood.

Neither the merit of enlightenment nor the spirit of the Dharma is understood by latter day people. They [mistakenly] believe even bad action to be incorporated in the Truth and see nothing wrong with training to gain enlightenment, or done with a view to some kind of reward. Even a period of eighty thousand kalpas fully comprehended would be insufficient to correct such beliefs. They even contest that bad action has no reflection on future events. Why can they not grasp the meaning of the Dharma? Is it because, unlike the Buddhas, they have failed to realize all things manifest the truth?

There are ten ways to venerate a Buddha: (1) making venerative offerings to the body of the Buddha, (2) making venerative offerings to a caitya, (3) making venerative offerings to a stūpa, (4) making venerative offerings to the Buddha in the absence of a religious monument, (5) personally making venerative offerings, (6) encouraging others to make venerative offerings, (7) making offerings of material goods, (8) making offerings with sincerity, (9) making offerings without attachment to doing so, and (10) making one's practice an offering.

The first way of veneration means to make an offering to the actual body of the Buddha. The second means to make an offering to a caitya according to the Mahāsamghikā-vinaya^{1-EN}. This treatise states a stūpa is so named because it houses relics of the Buddha. A caitya does not. For convenience, however, both are sometimes referred to as caitya. Stūpa, a Sanskrit word, pronounced chih-cheng in Chinese, translates as a tomb or mausoleum. The Āgama-Sūtras also refer to a caitya.

Although stūpas and caityas are similar and both sometimes called caitya, Zen Master Eshi of Nangaku referred to them in the Fa-hua-ch'ari-fa in the following way. "We respectfully prostrate before the relics and images of the Buddha, caityas, stūpas, Prabhūtaratna-Tathāgata, and pagodas." This clearly shows that stupas, caityas, relics and images of the Buddha are different.

The thirty-third section of the Mahāsamghikā-vinaya states. "The following story tells of how a stūpa was made. Once, when the Buddha Shakyamuni was living and teaching the Dharma in Kośala^{1-EN}, he had occasion to pass a Brahman tilling his field. This Brahman, seeing the Buddha, held out his staff and prostrated. The Buddha smiled. His disciples, noticed this reaction and said, 'What caused you to smile?' The Buddha replied, 'When that Brahman prostrated, he did so to two Buddhas.' Surprised the monks said, 'Two Buddhas?' 'Yes,' replied Shakyamuni. 'When the Brahman held out his staff to prostrate, he placed it on a buried stūpa dedicated to the Buddha Kāśyapa.' The monks said, 'May we not see this stūpa?' The Buddha replied, 'Yes you may. Go and seek the Brahman's permission to dig around this site.' The monk's did so and the Brahman consented.

"Just as work was about to begin, the Buddha revealed a stūpa one yojana high and twenty li wide dedicated to the Buddha Kāśyapa. When the Brahman saw this he exclaimed, 'Oh honorable Buddha, I have the same name as the Buddha to which this stūpa is dedicated: my name is Kāśyapa.' Hearing this, the Buddha instructed a second stūpa, also dedicated to the Buddha Kāśyapa be built close to the Brahman's house. Before they began [on this construction] some of the monks wanted to know whether mud was an appropriate material to use. They asked the Buddha. The Buddha replied that it was and composed the following verse:

'A small amount of mud

Given sincerely

1-EN A hundred section commentary on the Mahāprajñāparamitā Sūtra. Written by Nāgārjuna and translated into Chinese by Kumarajiva.

1-EN The rules for a monks training followed by the Mahasāmghita sect,(Jap. Daishu-bu) one of the two principle Hinayana schools. It is also called Makasogī.

1-EN One of the sixteen larger countries that existed in India at the time of the Buddha. Present day Oude in the Gogra valley.

Is superior to

Vast quantities of gold

Given with thoughts of reward'

"The new stūpa consisted of a square base and a two stored circular tower. Around the base ran a handrail, while attached to the sides of the tower itself were four tusk like poles used for displaying banners and canopies. On the very top of the structure was a vertical pole, around which a number of rings were installed. The Buddha said, 'This is the way all stupas should be built.'

"When it was finished, the Buddha prostrated before it out of deep respect for this past Buddha [Kāśyapa]. The monks seeing him do this requested to do likewise. The Buddha agreed and expounded the following verse:

'Flowers and incense offered with sincerity

Are far more valuable than

Vast quantities of gold offered with

thoughts of reward.'

"Soon many monks descended on this place, and the Buddha instructed Śāriputra to expound the Dharma to them. The Buddha, for his part, continued with the following verse:

'Proclaiming the Dharma

for the sake of another's practice

Is far superior to

Vast quantities of gold

Given with thoughts of reward.'

"Hearing these words, one of the assembled awoke to enlightenment, the Buddha responded with the following verse:

'Proclaiming the Dharma

for the sake of another's enlightenment

Is far superior to

Vast quantities of gold

Given with thoughts of reward.'

"With his faith strengthen by these words, the Brahman made offerings of food to the Buddha and his disciples. Hearing of the newly constructed stupa dedicated to Kāśyapa, King Hashinoku-ō,^{1-EN} together with seven hundred wagon loads of tiles, came to this place. He prostrated before the Buddha and said, 'Oh honorable Buddha, I'd like to build stupas like this throughout the land. May I do so?' The Buddha replied, 'Yes you may' and continued with the following story. 'At the time the Buddha Kāśyapa entered parinirvana, there was a king by the name of Krki who wanted to build a stūpa made of the seven treasures. A minister however, pointed out that such a structure would incite theft; the stūpa thus would be destroyed and the offender subject to inconceivable retribution. Alternatively, the minister recommended the stūpa be made of tiles and merely covered with gold and silver. In this way, even in the event of theft the stūpa itself would remain intact. The king agreed and a stūpa was built accordingly. It was one yojana high and twenty li wide, and took seven years, seven months, and seven days to complete. When it was finished, King Krki made venerative offerings to the Buddha to whom the stūpa was dedicated and his monks.' King Hashinoku-ō said, 'King Krki was a very wealthy monarch. I fear the stūpa I build will be far inferior to his. Seven months and seven days later this stūpa was complete. At this time King Hashinoku-ō, like his predecessor, King Krki, made venerative offerings to the Buddha and his monks.

"A stūpa should be built in the following way: first construct a square foundation and surround it with a handrail. Next, on top of the foundation, build a two story circular tower, to the sides of which attach four tusk shaped poles for the purpose of displaying canopies and banners. Finally, on the very top, install a vertical pole around which attach a number of rings. If a man suggests that the Buddha, who has transcended greed, anger, and ignorance, requires a stūpa to be built merely to glorify his name, that man is maligning the Buddha, and his retribution will be great.

"A temple complex should be layed out as follows: Having selected a suitable site, the first consideration is the stūpa. It must not be located in either the southern or western quarters; only the eastern or northern are permitted. The monks living accommodations and the area where the stūpa and Buddhist images are located should not be too close. If the stūpa is constructed near the cemetery, a fence must be built around it to prevent dogs from carrying remnants of corpses into it. Consideration must also be given to drainage: water must not run off an area where the monks' quarters are, be it south or west, into the area where the stupa is; the reverse, however, is permissible.

"A stūpa should stand on elevated ground so that it can be seen over a wide area. Within the confines of the fence that surrounds the stūpa, one is not permitted to do any of the following: wash, dye, or hang out clothes; wear shoes or sandals; cover the head or shoulders; or defile the ground by spitting or snivelling. If a man suggests that the Buddha, who has transcended greed, anger, and ignorance, requires a stūpa to be built merely to glorify his name, that man is maligning the Buddha and his retribution will be great. A temple complex should be built in this way.

"The following story tells of a shrine being built into a stūpa. Once King Hashinoku-ō came before the Buddha, prostrated, and said, 'The stūpa dedicated to Kāśyapa is complete. May I build a shrine in it in order to house the various images of the Buddha?' The Buddha said, 'Yes you may,' and continued with the following story. 'At the time Kāśyapa Buddha entered parinirvana, a king by the name of Krki built a stūpa dedicated to this Buddha. Within each of the four sides he installed a shrine. On top of the shrines a number of lion wood carvings were placed, and a variety of paintings were hung on the sides

1-EN King of Kośala and Kāśi. He was the same age as the Buddha, and ascended the throne the year that the Buddha attained enlightenment. He and his wife and son, were devout followers of the Buddha.

and front. Flowers were scattered on the outside, while banners and canopies were displayed on the inside. Around the entire structure a protective handrail was installed. If a man suggests that the Buddha, who has transcended greed, anger, and ignorance, requires a shrine to be built and decorated merely for his pleasure, that man is maligning the Buddha and his retribution will be great. This is the rule governing the purpose of a shrine located in a stūpa.’ ”

Thus we realize building stūpas for the purpose of venerating past Buddhas to be the custom of all enlightened Buddhas. Further examples [regarding building stupas] could be given; the preceding, however, are sufficient for the present.

The teachings of the Ubu^{1-EN} school are among the finest in Buddhism. The Mahāsamghikā-Vinaya, from which it is derived was introduced into China by Hokken,^{2-EN} following an arduous journey in which he climbed Vulture peak. The teachings of this school correspond to those of Patriarchal transmission.

The third way to venerate the Buddha is to make venerative offerings to a stūpa, caitya, and the body of the Buddha.

The fourth way is to make venerative offerings in the absence of a religious monument. Just make an offering; do not be concerned whether one is before a religious monument or not, for this is of little matter. In fact, although both ways are virtuous acts worthy of great merit, making an offering in the absence of a religious monument provides the greater merit, for this way is free of limitations. This, however, is just a small point. What is important is that we make venerative offerings.

The fifth way is to personally make venerative offerings to a Buddha or caitya.

The sixth way is to encourage others to freely make venerative offerings to the Buddha or a caitya. Although personally making an offering to the Buddha and encouraging others to do so are both worthy acts, it is the latter that affords the greater merit.

The seventh way is to make an offering of material goods to the Buddha, his relics, a caitya, and a stūpa. These offerings fall into three categories: (1) Clothing, food, and other life necessities, (2) incense and flowers, and (3) decorations to adorn a temple.

The eighth way is to make venerative offerings sincerely. There are three ways to make an offering in this way: (1) make venerative offerings whole-heartedly, (2) have undefiled faith in the virtue of the Buddha, and (3) aspire to Buddhahood.

The ninth way is to make venerative offerings without attachment to doing so. Offerings made in this way fall into two categories: to (1) make venerative offerings without attachment to the non-material, (2) make offerings without attachment to the material.

The tenth is to make one’s practice an offering. Offerings of this kind, known as veneration of the truth, or venerative practice, definitely result in enlightenment. Such offerings fall into three categories: (1) venerative offerings of material goods, (2) venerative offerings given joyfully, (3) venerative offerings of one’s practice.

The preceding are the ten ways of venerating the Buddha. We venerate the Dharma and Sangha in the same way. Veneration of the Dharma is done through venerating the principle of the Buddha’s teachings and the Buddha’s practice as detailed in the sutras. Veneration of the Sangha is done through venerating the three vehicles, their images, caityas, and stūpa, as well as ordinary monks.

There are six kinds of venerative mind: (1) The mind that leads to supreme happiness, (2) the mind that leads to supreme benevolence, which has arisen as a result of venerating the Three Treasures, (3) the mind superior among all sentient beings, (4) the mind as rare to encounter as an udumbara flower, (5) the mind unique among all beings in the three thousand great worlds, (6) the mind free of discrimination that accepts both sacred and profane. A small venerative offering made with one of the six venerative minds is worthy of much merit, let alone a large offering.

All the Buddhas made venerative offerings whole-heartedly: we should do likewise. The rules governing making venerative offerings are a Patriarchal transmission, thus they are to be found in the various sūtras. Devotional service to the Buddha is in itself a venerative offering. Being a Patriarchal transmission, the rules for building a stūpa and caitya, as well as those regarding making an offering before them are known only to Buddhists. Altering these regulations conflicts with the Dharma and offerings made there after gain little or no merit. Therefore, we should make offerings in the orthodox way, and, when the time is right, transmit this way correctly.

Zen Master Ling-t’ao^{1-EN} spent many years respectfully attending his late master’s [Enō’s] tomb. In his novice days, Enō pounded rice day and night without pause in the service of his fellow monks. What excellent examples of veneration done in the true spirit of the teachings. Only two examples are given here, but many more could be given. These, then, are the correct ways to make venerative offerings to the Buddhas. Study them and do so accordingly.

Compiled by Dōgen’s disciple during the summer training period in 1255. Later recopied at Eihei-ji on June 23, 1279.

1-EN One of the twenty Hinayāna schools. It derived from the Sthavira school, about three hundred years after the death of Shakyamuni.

2-EN A Chinese priest of the Eastern Chin Dynasty. He left China for India in 399, arriving there after six years of arduous travel. He studied Sanskrit and obtained many Sanskrit texts of the Tripitaka. He went back to China in 414 by sea. He is known to have translated many works, and his travel record (Kao-sing-fu-hsien-ch’van) is well known. He died when he was either eighty-two or eighty-six.

1-EN Lived 645-760. He is known for his great compassion.

81. KIE BU-PPŌ-SŌ-BO

歸依法僧寶

"Taking refuge in the three treasures"

Question 120 of the Ch'an-yiian ch'ing-kue [volume eight] asks, "Do you venerate the Three Treasures or not?" This question clearly shows that in places where the Patriarchs transmitted the True Law [China and India] people venerated the Three Treasures. Without venerating them we cannot take refuge in them; without taking refuge in them we cannot venerate them. The merit for having taken refuge in the Three Treasures is realized at times when there is a spiritual link between ourselves and the Buddha. Whether you are a celestial, terrestrial, a demon, a hungry ghost, or an animal is of no consequence; the merit for taking refuge in the Three Treasures is the same. And once we have taken refuge, our merit will continue to grow, and finally we will realize enlightenment.

Influenced by bad friends or demons, some may lose track of the Way and cease from doing good. Even so, the merit for once having taken refuge in the Three Treasures continues to grow, and finally they will again resume doing good.

When we take refuge in the Three Treasures, we realize the pure essence of faith and are protected from holding false views. Both during and after the Tathāgata's lifetime, people should take refuge in the Three Treasures. They should do this by placing their hands in gassho and, with heads lowered, recite the following: "From now until I realize Buddhahood, I take refuge in the Buddha; I take refuge in the Dharma; I take refuge in the Sangha. I take refuge in the Buddha, the most exalted one; I take refuge in the Dharma, the alleviator of all desire; I take refuge in the Sangha, the most honorable community. I have taken refuge in the Buddha; I have taken refuge in the Dharma; I have taken refuge in the Sangha.

Earnest seekers of the Way should not fail to take refuge in the Three Treasures in this way. Even though our body is subject to birth, death, and momentary change we should do this, for it ensures continued growth of our Buddha nature, and finally we will awaken to enlightenment.

The Japanese word kie, to take refuge, is a composite of two words. The first, ki means "to unreservedly throw oneself into." The second, e, means "to rely upon." In a way that a child leaps into his father's arms, we should leap into the Three Treasures. In a way that a nation relies on its king for its welfare, we should rely on the Three Treasures. We take refuge in the Buddha because he is our great teacher. We take refuge in the Dharma because it is good medicine. We take refuge in the Sangha because it is comprised of many good friends.

A question once asked was, "Why do we take refuge in the Three Treasures alone?" This was answered, "Because, being the core of the Buddhist Way, taking refuge in the Three Treasures frees sentient beings from the cycle of life and death and leads, ultimately, to their enlightenment." The merit associated with the Three Treasures is immeasurable and beyond our conception.

The Japanese, Indian, and Chinese names for Shakyamuni respectively are: Butsu, Buddha, and Chiieh. All these mean "one who has awoken the highest supreme enlightenment." The Buddhist Law (Dharma) is known as Hō in Japan, Dharma or Dhamma in India, and Fa in China. Generally the word "law" is understood as a judgement on good, bad, or neutral actions. The "Law" of the Three Treasures, however, infers a standard rule. In Japan the Buddhist Community (Sangha) is known as So, in India as Samgha, and in China as Hoho-chung. All of which mean harmonious community.

The Three Treasures may be divided into four categories. The first category is designated to the preservation of the Three Treasures after Shakyamuni entered parinirvana. Within this category the stupas and images of the Buddha are the Buddha-treasure, sūtras are the Dharma-treasure, and those who shave their heads are the Sangha-treasure. The second category is the influence of Shakyamuni's teachings in the present. In this category the five kinds of dharmakaya are the Buddha-treasure; full understanding of the Four Noble Truths, the Dharma-treasure; and those who are already arhats or will be in the future comprise the Sangha-treasure. The fourth and final category is absolute unity of the Three Treasures. Here enlightenment itself represents the Buddha-treasure; the pure and quiescent nature of enlightenment, the Dharma-treasure; and perfect unity without discrimination in the Sangha is the Sangha-treasure.

We are now aware of the virtue of taking refuge in the Three Treasures. Quickly, then, we should do so. Unfortunate, meritless people are unable to even hear the name Three Treasures, much less take refuge in them.

The Lotus Sūtra states, "Wrong doers will, as a result of karmic retribution, be unable to even hear the name 'Three Treasures' for innumerable kalpas." The Lotus Sūtra is the king of the sūtras: acknowledge it as your great teacher. Compared to this sūtra, all the other sūtras merely rank as its subjects, for it alone expresses the ultimate truth. The others merely represent provisional teachings, not the Buddha's true intentions.

Do not use the other sūtras as a standard by which to assess the value of the Lotus Sūtra. To do so is a mistake, for the latter when deprived of the merit of the former is useless. As the previous extract from the Lotus Sūtra clearly shows, the merit of the Three Treasures is truly unexcelled.

Shakyamuni Buddha said, "Ordinary people, out of fear, often take refuge in the deities of mountains, gardens, forests, individual trees, and those of ancient tombs. What a complete waste of time; who ever heard of anyone being released from pain and suffering in this way? When we take refuge in the Three Treasures, we gain clear observation of all phenomena through the wisdom of the Four Noble Truths. This means we realize that; (1) life itself is suffering; (2) illusion and desire are the cause of suffering; (3) nirvana offers freedom from suffering; and (4) practice of the Eightfold Noble Path leads to nirvana. Taking refuge in the Three Treasures unquestionably alleviates suffering. Thus it is most worthy among all things."

Shakyamuni taught this for the benefit of sentient beings who, out of fear, similarly consider taking refuge in mountain deities, demons, or in the tombs of non-believers. Such rituals, we should know, do not provide shelter from suffering. Other non-believers have suggested various other means for gaining release from suffering and fulfilment of wishes. Among these they recommend imitating the actions of a cow; eating deer food; mimicking the antics of demons, hungry ghosts, the deaf and dumb, dogs, chickens, or pheasants. They further suggest that we can achieve the same by smearing the body with ash; growing the hair long; casting spells followed by sacrifice of a sheep; worshipping the god of fire for four months, fasting for seven days, or by offering 100,000 flowers to celestial beings. What groundless, meaningless rubbish! No wise man could be a partisan to such nonsense, for he knows that there is no merit to be gained in such rituals, and that those who practice them suffer needlessly.

Clearly, then, we should not take refuge in non-Buddhist religions or practice non-Buddhist rituals. The rituals given above

serve only as examples, in truth there are many more. We should, however, avoid any which are essentially the same as deity, tree, or non-Buddhist tomb worship. To be born a human is extremely difficult, let alone to also encounter the Buddhist Dharma. When we have been fortunate on both these accounts, it would indeed be more than tragic if, as a result of mistaken views, we were to spend our lives in the service of infantile deities. Quickly we should all take refuge in the Three Treasures, for this alone leads to realization of Enlightenment.

The Hsi-yu Sūtra states, "Even if we led the entire inhabitants of the four continents and the six lowest heavens to arhathood, the merit would not equal that for having led one sentient being to take refuge in the Three Treasures." The four continents referred to here are those which surround Mount Sumeru; they are named according to their geographical location. Because Buddhism does not exist in the Northern Continent, the only one of the four that it doesn't, it is extremely rare for any of its inhabitants to be led to arhathood. Even if we did manage to do so, the merit would not equal that for leading just one to take refuge in the Three Treasures. It is also said that few in the lowest heaven have ever perceived the Way. Even if we were, however, able to lead its inhabitants to arhathood, the merit would not equal that for having led one to take refuge in the Three Treasures.

The xjj-ichi-agon-gyo^{1-EN} states, "A celestial inhabitant of the Trayastrimsa Heaven suddenly noticed the five signs of imminent death^{2-EN} appear on his body. He knew that he would probably be reborn a wild boar, but was at a complete loss what to do. He cried out disparagingly. Śakrendra, who heard his grief laden cry, advised him to quickly take refuge in the Three Treasures. He did so, and as a result was able to avoid being reborn as a wild boar. In reference to the Buddha Shakyamuni recited the following verse:

'Those who take refuge in the Buddha are safe from rebirth into the three evil worlds. Their minds are freed of delusion, and they gain the protection of all celestial and terrestrial beings. Finally they enter nirvana'

"As a result of taking refuge in the Three Treasures, the celestial was born into a wealthy family. He entered the monkhood, and finally realized arhathood." The merit for taking refuge in the Three Treasures is truly immeasurable, its power unlimited.

Once, during Shakyamuni's life time, 2,600 million hungry dragons appeared before the Buddha. Crying bitterly, these dragons said, "Oh Honorable Buddha, we implore you, please show compassion and save us. Once we were all monks, but as a result of successive bad deeds we have suffered in the three evil worlds for 100,000 kalpas. Then continuing to create further bad karma, we became dragons subject to inconceivable suffering." The Buddha answered, "Quickly you should all take refuge in the Three Treasures and resume doing good. This will enable you to see the final Buddha, in your next life time. Simultaneously with this Buddha's appearance in the world your bad karma will disappear." The dragons listened to these words and immediately took refuge in the Three Treasures.

Other than having the dragons take refuge in the Three Treasures, the Buddha had no other means by which to save them. All the dragons had once been monks and had taken refuge in the Three Treasures, but as a result of continued acts of evil they had become hungry dragons. Their only salvation lay in taking refuge in the Three Treasures, there was no other way. Unquestionably, taking refuge in the Three Treasures is of profound depth, and worthy of unsurpassable merit. This is a teaching of the Buddha. Do not doubt it, but instead quickly take refuge in the Three Treasures.

To gain their freedom from suffering, the Buddha had the dragons take refuge in the Three Treasures, not recite the names of the various Buddhas. The depth of the Buddha's understanding is truly beyond conception. Latter day people should take refuge in the Three Treasures, not meaninglessly chant the names of the various Buddhas. Be careful not to lose the opportunity to gain the merit of the Three Treasures.

A sūtra states, "Among the community of dragons lived a blind female dragon. This female was in a deplorable state. Her mouth was a swollen mass of festering sores and filled with a multitude of worms. It looked like excreta and smelt like a woman's private parts and rotting fish. She was indeed a dreadful sight. Bacteria had broken down parts of her mouth, causing blood and pus to ooze out. Mosquitoes, horseflies, and venomous flies had bitten her, sucking and drawing the blood and pus from her body. Truly she presented a most repulsive figure.

"When the Buddha saw her he asked, 'What did you do to cause such karmic retribution?' She replied, 'Oh Honorable Buddha, I am constantly in pain, even to speak is difficult. Out of the past three billion six hundred million years, I have spent 100,000 as a dragon. Constantly I'm in pain. Never once does it let up, not even for a moment. The cause of this suffering occurred ninety-one kalpas ago, at the time of Vapasyin Buddha. Even though at this time I was a nun, I fell victim to sexual desire even greater than that of a drunken man. Frequently I violated the precepts, and I began to covet others of their possessions. Even within the temple confines myself I would prepare a bed in which to satisfy my lusts. Because of these actions, I have continued to be born as a dragon subject to a pain equal to immersion in fire. Never once in all this time could I be born a human.'

"The Buddha asked her, 'If what you've said is true, where do you think you'll be born at the end of this kalpa?' She replied, 'My past bad actions are great. I will be unable to be born as a celestial or terrestrial being in the next kalpa, and in the one following that I will again be reborn a dragon. Oh compassionate Buddha, I beseech you, please save me.'

"The Buddha, scooping up some water in his hand, said, 'This water is known as the water of fulfilment. In the past, without hesitation, I once sacrificed my life to save a dove. If what you have told me is true, you will be purified.' The Buddha poured some water into his mouth and sprayed it over her, immediately cleansing her of all her afflictions. Upon being purified in this way, she asked to take refuge in the Three Treasures. The Buddha consented, and she did so."

This female dragon had once been a nun at the time of Vipasyin. Although later she violated the precepts, it was because she had once taken refuge in the Three Treasures that she was again able to do so when she met Shakyamuni. Although neither blind female dragons nor animals, we are unable to see the Buddha or take refuge in the Three Treasures. Truly we should be ashamed of ourselves. We should realize that to take refuge in the Three Treasures is a most worthy act, and when we do so we receive merit initiated by the Buddha himself that is inestimable, both in quantity and depth. It is because of this merit that King Śakrendra once prostrated before a wild fox and took refuge in the Three Treasures.

1-EN A fifty section sūtra, divided into fifty-two chapters. It was first translated into Chinese by the Indian monk Dharmanandi in 384.

2-EN 2(1) One's robes becoming dirty (2) one's hair-flowers fading, (3) one's body beginning to smell, (4) sweat forming under one's arms, and (5) displeasure at one's original status.

Once, when the Buddha was staying in a forest of nyagrodha trees in Kapilavastu, Makaanama came and, standing before him, asked, "Who is known as a lay believer?" The Buddha answered, "It is any man or woman who, both sound in mind and body, takes refuge in the Three Treasures. Makaanama continued, "Who then is known as a stage by stage layman?" The Buddha answered, "It is any man who, having taken refuge in the Three Treasures, continues to take the precepts one by one. Before he can take the precepts, a disciple of the Buddha must take refuge in the Three Treasures."

Dhamma-Pada states, "Just before he died, King Śakrendra realized that he would be reborn as a donkey. He was grief stricken. 'Only the Buddha,' he thought, 'can save me from this fate.' Immediately he went to where the Buddha was staying, and while prostrating before him died; subsequently he was born into the womb of a donkey. Some time later this donkey became restless. She broke her bridal, sending the bit in her mouth crashing into some pre-fired pots outside a nearby store. The owner was furious. He picked up a stick and began to beat her; her womb was ruptured and, as a result Śakrendra returned to his former position as king. On his return the Buddha said, 'Taking refuge in the Three Treasures, as you did, destroys past bad karma.' When he heard these words, Śakrendra awoke to the first stage of arhathood."

A man who takes refuge in the Three Treasures is saved from both worldly suffering and from falling into the three evil worlds. This is the lesson of the preceding story. King Śakrendra took refuge in the Three Treasures. As a result, he was not only saved from falling into the three evil worlds, relieved of past bad karma, reinstated to his former position, but also realized the first stage of arhathood. Truly, the merit for taking refuge in the Three Treasures is limitless. Events such as this given here were common during Tathāgata's lifetime. Now, however, people do not even know how to take refuge in the Three Treasures. Still, at least the relics and images of the Buddhas exist, and we should venerate these, for they are equal in merit to that of the past.

The Wen-ta'eng-yu Sūtra states, "The Buddha said the following, 'I recall a time, countless kalpas ago, when there was a wild fox living on Mount Śitā in the country of Vima [in ancient India]. Once, while being pursued by a hungry lion, this fox fell into a deep well. Two days passed and he was still imprisoned. Faced with the prospect that he would soon die, he composed the following verse:

"Life is impermanent, and I do not mind to die, Only, I regret that I must do so in this well, better I had been food for the lion. Buddhas, see my pure and unselfish nature."

"King Śakrendra was surprised to hear the fox recite the names of the various Buddhas. He was deeply moved, and began himself to chant the names over and over in his mind. At this time he thought, "Living in a place far from the Buddha, and without a master to guide me, I remain influenced by the five desires." Curious to know why the fox had recited the names, he, together with eighty-thousand celestial beings, descended to the well.

"Here they found a fox pitifully pawing the sides of the well in a vain attempt to escape. Śakrendra observed him for a while then thought, "I'm sure this fox is actually a Bodhisattva. Yet, if this were so, surely he would save himself." He called down to the fox, "Your verse was no ordinary composition. I beseech you, please expound the nature of the Dharma to us celestial beings." Looking up, the fox replied, "Śakrendra, you are a celestial king, yet have not teaching to offer. You request I expound the Law while you stand above me, a violation of even the most basic code of ethics. Do you not know that the salvation of the Dharma, so pure, extends to all beings. Why are you so proud?"

"Śakrendra surprised by these remarks was deeply ashamed of himself. His attendants, on the other hand, thinking his descent had been worthless, burst out laughing. Turning to his attendants, Śakrendra said, "Do not be surprised. In view of my stubbornness and lack of virtue, these words are just. I truly am in urgent need of listening to the Dharma." He lowered his celestial gown into the well and assisted the fox to climb out. The celestial beings, for their part, prepared a large feast for the fox. He ate heartily, and with restored spirits joyfully expounded the law of the Dharma."

King Śakrendra believed the fox to be his master and prostrated before him. To even hear the name Buddha, Dharma and Sangha is extremely difficult. King Śakrendra's action [prostrating before the fox] proves this. Our past good karma has enabled us to encounter the Three Treasures. We should therefore retain awareness of them, for this supports our Buddha-seeking mind. This is the essence of the Dharma. The merit for taking refuge in the Three Treasures is truly immeasurable. Even demons and celestial beings who do so are relieved of suffering, let alone humans.

Taking refuge in the Three Treasures is the first step of the Way. We true seekers should do so by prostrating to the ten directions, then, requesting contact with the Three Treasures, burn incense and scatter flowers before them. This is the way all past masters have done so and is the way taught by the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Taking refuge in the Three Treasures is unique to Buddhism and distinguishes it from non-Buddhist religions, such as those of demons and celestial beings. This ceremony is the same now as when taught by the Patriarchs.

Compiled at the summer training period in 1255. Dōgen had intended to revise this, but ill health prevented him from doing so. Finally it was written by Gien at Zenko-ji in Echizen on May 21, 1279.

82. JINSHIN INGA

深信因果

"Deep belief in causality"

Whenever Zen master Daichi Ekai of Mount Hyakujō gave a discourse on the Dharma to an assembly of monks there was always an old man in attendance; when the monks, left at the end, the old man also left. On one occasion, however, the old man remained, and Hyakujō asked him who he was. The old man replied, "In reality I'm not a human being. At the time of Kāśyapa Buddha I was head priest of this temple, and in that capacity was once asked by a trainee whether an enlightened person remained subject to causality. I replied "No," and as a result of this mistaken answer I have continued to be reborn as a wild fox for five hundred lives. O honorable priest, I entreat you, please teach me the meaning of causality so that I may be released from this suffering." The old man questioned, "Is an enlightened man subject to causality?" Hyakujō replied, "Yes, no one is beyond the effect of causality." At these words the old man awoke to great enlightenment and, prostrating before Hyakujō said, "I am now released from the life of a fox, the corpse of which lies at the foot of the far side of this mountain. Please take this corpse and cremate it with the rites for a dead priest." Hyakujō agreed, and the head monk was instructed to inform the monks that a service for a dead priest would be held following the next meal.

The monks were surprised by this announcement, for all, were healthy and the sickroom had been unoccupied. After they had eaten, Hyakujō led the monks to the far side of the mountain. There, using his staff, he uncovered the corpse of the fox. The cremation ceremony began accordingly.

That evening in the Dharma Hall, Hyakujō explained the day's unusual events. When he had finished, the monk Obaku questioned, "Had the old man's reply been correct, what would have been the result?" Hyakujō answered, "Come closer and I'll explain." Obaku went forward, approached his master, and slapped Hyakujō across the face. Hyakujō, clapping his hands and laughing heartily exclaimed, "I thought foreigners had red beards, but now I know men who have red beards are foreigners."

The preceding story is found in the Tensho-Koto Roku. To harbour doubts regarding the law of causality, as many latter day monks do, is a clear denial of this law's very existence. Truly, it is regretful that the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs has declined in this way. Those who believe that enlightened beings are beyond the effect of causality wilfully deny the law of causality, and will undoubtedly fall into the three evil worlds. Those, on the other hand, with confidence in the law of causality realize no man to be beyond its effect; consequently they gain relief from all present suffering. We should not doubt this. Many so called Zen trainees deny the principle of causality simply because they subscribe to this latter view.

The Nineteenth Patriarch, Honorable Kumarata, said, "There are three different periods when the effect of our past good or bad actions arise. People who see the compassionate die young while the aggressive live long, who see the malevolent happy while the virtuous unhappy think that happiness and unhappiness are unrelated to those conditions. This is a complete misconception, borne from their ignorance that karma, in a similar way that a shadow always follows its form, will not diminish even with the passing of 100,000 kalpas.

It is apparent that the Patriarchs never denied the chain of causality. In contrast, present day trainees, indifferent to practice, fail to recognize the compassion of the Patriarchs or clarify their teachings, yet, still they feel justified in calling themselves the leaders of men. Truly, though, they are man's worst enemy. Do not teach that causality does not exist; this is untrue and conflicts with the law transmitted by the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Only those ignorant of the true teachings support such views.

Chinese priests have said, "Even though we are human beings and have encountered the Buddhist Dharma, our present lives, let alone any future existences, still remain unknown to us. The previous head priest of Mount Hyakujō was able to recall his past five hundred lives as a fox. We conclude, therefore, that his continued rebirth as a fox was not the result of causality, but, as an enlightened being, he entered into the animal world to fulfil a vow to save all creatures." So much for the teachings of so called spiritual leaders! The Buddhas taught that humans, foxes, wolves or any other beasts that can recollect their past existences do so as a result of past bad karma, not enlightenment. Those who are lax in practice cannot realize this. Recalling past lives, whether it be one-thousand or ten-thousand, has no relation to Buddhism. Non-believers have claimed to remember periods up to eighty-thousand kalpas, but this, like recalling one's past five hundred lives, is of no consequence.

Indifference to practice, and therefore ignorance to the True Law, has resulted in many monks subscribing to the false idea that enlightened beings are beyond the effect of causality. What a regretful and inexcusable situation. Even though the Tathāgata's teachings have been preserved by the Patriarchs and are widely known, still many non-believers persist in their denial of the principle of causality. Quickly they should rectify their error by accepting the principle of causation taught by the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Zen master Hyakujō's assertion that no one could go beyond the effect of causality [during his dialogue with the old man] shows he had a deep understanding of causation. The principle of causation means those who practice well realize enlightenment—it's as straightforward as that. It should now be clear that those who have not mastered the Dharma should not expound it.

The Patriarch Nāgārjuna said, "To deny, as non-Buddhists do, the principle of causality is not only a denial of the existence of the present and future worlds but also the existence of the Three Treasures, the Four Noble Truths, and the various stages of arhathood.

Advocates of views such as these are definitely not followers of the Buddhist Way. Because they interpret the body and mind to be independent entities, they may argue that although man's physical body appears in the world, his inner nature remains in the world of enlightenment. Further, believing reunion with one's original nature occurs naturally upon death and there to be no transmigration, they conclude practice of the Way to be unnecessary. These are most certainly teachings of non-Buddhists.

A man may take ordination, he may wear a monk's robe but if he subscribes to this mistaken view he is not a disciple of the Buddha, for, as already stated, that is the doctrine of non-believers. Denial of the chain of causality is a denial of both the existence of this world and the existence of all future worlds. A man who supports these teachings has obviously failed to meet and study under a true and good master; had he done so he would dismiss these doctrines with deserved contempt. The preceding are the compassionate teachings of the Patriarch Nāgārjuna. We should gratefully accept and heed these words.

Zen Master Genkaku was one of Sōkei Enō's foremost disciples. His initial study of the Way had been the study of the Lotus Sūtra of the Tendai sect. It was while he was reading the Nirvana Sūtra, however, that a golden light filled his room and he awoke to enlightenment. This was certified as genuine by Sōkei Enō. Later he wrote "The Song of Enlightenment" An extract from which reads:

"To deny causality while in the world of delusion is to invite inconceivable suffering."

While ancient wise monks had a profound understanding of the principle of the chain of causality, latter day monks know little or nothing at all about it. With a Buddha-seeking mind we should practice Buddhism for the sake of Buddhism alone, and, like the ancient wise monks, clarify the chain of causality. To do otherwise is to deny the chain of causality and, as has been previously made clear, this is the way of the non-believer.

The Ancient Buddha Wanshi wrote the following verse:

Even a small amount of water can create a wave many times its size, And thus a priest spent five hundred lives as a wild fox.

Considering release from or subjection to causality is to remain in the realm of discrimination, and at this we can do no other than laugh.

To go beyond the discriminating mind is to enter a world where discrimination no longer obstructs,

Where there is dancing and merriment as if before a god,

And where the natural flow of music accompanies a harmony of voices joined in song.

Wanshi's verse indicates that he had not understood causality, for he regards release from and subjection to causality to be the same. Neither is it a full account of events, for there is no mention of the head priest's fate, merely a statement that he is released from the cycle of rebirth as a fox. This is indeed most strange, because the principle of causality dictates he must have been reborn somewhere—in the human or celestial worlds, or in one of the four evil worlds^{1-EN}. This is an unquestionable fact. To believe that upon death one inevitably is reunited with the great ocean of nirvana is a wrong, misguided view, upheld only by non-believers.

Zen Master Engo Kokugon on Mount Kosan composed the following verse in regard to Hyakujo's story:

The movement of a fish causes the water to cloud ;

A bird in flight results in loss of feathers.

Like a pure mirror causality reflects all, for it is as vast as the endless universal sky.

Five hundred lives as a fox a priest must spend,

Such is the result of causality.

As strong as thunder that can crack a mountain or a storm that rocks the ocean floor,

It remains as true and unchangeable as pure refined gold.

Even this verse, contains contradictions: it denies the principle of causality at one point, while affirms its eternity at another.

Zen Master Daie Shuko of Mount Kinzan in Shuoxing province also wrote a commentary on Hyakujo's dialogue with the old man.

"Release from and subjection to causality are as similar as stone and earth.

The priest's five hundred rebirths as a fox are like a silver mountain reduced to rubble.

When Hotei heard this story he clapped and laughed deeply."

Latter day monks consider these masters to be outstanding Patriarchs. Daie's observation, however, is quite an unacceptable account of the Dharma, for it is very near to denying the principle of causality altogether. Out of the thirty or so commentaries made on Hyakujo's dialogue, none oppressed doubt that release from causality meant its denial. It is regrettable that having failed to clarify the principle of causality they waste their lives in futile discussion. It is imperative that trainees, clarify the principle of causality first, otherwise they will remain susceptible to false views, their practice decline, and finally they will cease from doing good altogether.

The principle of causality is straightforward: Those who do wrong fall into hell; those who do good attain enlightenment. This is the reason the Buddhas and Patriarchs appeared in the world, Bodhidharma came from India, and that sentient beings can see the Buddha and listen to his teachings.

The Buddhas and Patriarchs alone possess and transmit true understanding of causality. Neither Confucius nor Lao-tzu possess such virtue. During this period of degenerate Buddhism, trainees, due to lack of merit, are unable to contact and study under good masters; they fail to encounter the pure teachings and remain ignorant of the law of cause and effect. Even if one creates no other bad karma than for having denied causality, this alone will result in inestimable suffering. Out of gratitude for the compassion of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, trainees, with a Buddha-seeking mind, should quickly clarify the principle of cause and effect.

This was compiled during the summer training period in 1255 by Ejō. He added the following remarks: "I have copied and compiled these writings, but as yet they are incomplete. A complete version must be written in the future."

1-EN The lowest four of the six realms of existence.

83. SANJIGO

三時業

“Karmic retribution in the three periods of time”

While on a pilgrimage in central India the Nineteenth Patriarch, Honorable Kumarata, was questioned by a virtuous man called Gayata. “How is it that my parents who have always taken refuge in the Three Treasures are constantly sick, and despite all their hard work remain poor, whereas our neighbour who is a sudra^{1-EN} is healthy and successful?” Honorable Kumarata replied, “Like many others, you are unaware that karmic retribution occurs at three different periods in time. When you see the compassionate die young, while the aggressive live long, and the malevolent happy while the virtuous are unhappy, you doubt the existence of causality and fail to see its relation to happiness and sorrow. This is a mistake. Causality is governed by a principle not dissimilar to that which dictates that a shadow follow its form, and will not diminish even with the passing of a hundred thousand kalpas.” Upon these words Gayata was relieved of all doubt.

It is said that the Tathāgata himself predicted Honorable Kumarata’s succession as the Nineteenth Patriarch. This Patriarch not only correctly transmitted the Dharma, but also had a profound understanding of the teachings of the Buddhas of the three worlds. Gayata, who continued to train under Kumarata, finally became the Twentieth Patriarch. His succession, it is claimed, was also predicted by Tathāgata.

A man who lacks faith should quickly study the Patriarchal teachings; he should also avoid associating with those ignorant of causality, karmic retribution, and the existence of the three worlds, for those who are ignorant of these, being Incapable of distinguishing good from bad, are likely to hold mistaken views.

Karmic retribution occurs at three different periods in time: (1) in one’s present life: (2) in one’s next life, and (3) after two successive lives. Clarify this quickly, for without doing so we are liable to hold false views and, will suffer long periods in the three evil worlds, and ceasing from doing good, incur incalculable loss of merit; thus we will be unable to realize enlightenment for a very long time.

As previously stated, karmic retribution occurs at three different periods in time. The first, receiving retribution in one’s present life time, means to receive retribution for our good and bad deeds within the same lifetime they are committed. The following story is taken from the Daibibasha-ron.

“Long ago there lived a woodcutter. One day when this woodcutter was in the mountains collecting wood he lost his way in the snow. As night drew in the snow fell heavier and the cold intensified. Close to death, the woodcutter began to tramp around desperately trying to keep warm. Soon, however, he found himself even deeper in the mountains and more lost than ever. Then, suddenly, he came upon a bear crouching in the snow, its fur a deep blue and its eyes ablaze like two brilliant torches. Coupled with the intense cold, this sight brought the woodcutter to a point of near collapse.

“The bear, who was in fact an incarnation of a Bodhisattva, solaced the woodcutter saying, ‘Don’t be afraid, for I, unlike some parents who bear malice toward their children, wish you no harm.’ Carefully the bear picked up the woodcutter and carried him to his cave. Once inside, the bear used his own body to shield the woodcutter from the elements and his fur to warm his body. After the woodcutter had revived a little, the bear brought him a variety of roots and berries and spent the next six days entirely attending to his every need. On the seventh day the weather cleared and a path was to be seen through the melting snow. By this time the woodcutter had fully recovered and wished to return home. The bear, appreciating his wish, produced a variety of berries and roots for his journey and led him to the forest’s edge. When they arrived the woodcutter fell to his knees and asked, ‘How can I ever repay your kindness.’ The bear replied, ‘I need nothing, only I request you have respect for my life as I for yours.’ The woodcutter unhesitatingly agreed, bade the bear farewell, and began his journey.

“After travelling a little way the woodcutter had occasion to meet two hunters. They asked him had he seen any wild animals in the forest. He replied that he hadn’t except for the one bear. The hunters pressed him to lead them to this bear. The woodcutter, replied, ‘I’ll show you on condition I receive two thirds of its flesh.’ The hunters agreed, and the three set off. Soon they had located, killed, and divided the bear’s flesh into the agreed proportions. When the woodcutter leaned forward to pick up his share, however, due to his bad karma, both arms dropped off – like a string of beads suddenly broken, or a lotus flower sharply severed at the root.

“The hunters were astonished and demanded an explanation. Deeply ashamed, the woodcutter remorsefully poured forth the entire story. The hunters were disgusted and said, ‘When you owe this bear so much, how could you even consider such a despicable act. It is truly a wonder your entire body doesn’t rot away.’ Deciding not to eat the meat, the two hunters offered it to a nearby temple. A monk who happened to be sitting in meditation at this time, however, became aware of the meat’s origin. He called the monks together and told them that the flesh of the bear was really that of a great Bodhisattva who had bestowed great benefits on the sentient world. As a mark of respect, the monks cremated the flesh in a fire of fragrant wood and constructed a stupa to house the bones.”

The preceding is an example of doing wrong and receiving the consequent karmic retribution within the same lifetime. The lesson is: Repay those to whom you are indebted, while do not seek reward for kindness shown to others. Acts of malice against one’s benefactors will, without question, be met with the appropriate punishment. Under no circumstances should we do as the woodcutter: at one moment genuinely wishing to repay the bear’s kindness, and the next, committing such an atrocity. Whether lay or ordained, we should not forget those who have been charitable to us. As the story has clearly shown, the power of karmic retribution, is as such to cause the woodcutters arms to fall off quicker than had they been cut by a sword.

The following story tells of a man who did good and received the consequent retribution within the same life time. This also is taken from the Daibibasha-ron. “Long ago in the court of King Kaniska^{1-EN} in the country of Gandhāra, there once served a eunuch. This eunuch was employed to watch over the ladies-in-waiting. One day while walking outside the castle, this eunuch came across about five hundred head of cattle being driven toward the gates. He enquired of the herdsman, ‘Why are you taking these animals to the city?’. The herdsman answered, ‘To be gelded.’ The eunuch who himself, due to previous bad karma, had the form but not the full functions of a man felt a deep sympathy for these animals. He thought, ‘I must save

1-EN The lowest class in India. Its members are fishermen, jailers, butchers and so on.

1-EN One of the most important kings in the Kusana dynasty of northern India. It is believed he lived during the latter part of the first and former part of the second century. He was a great patron of Buddhism, and assisted in its expansion.

them from this fate.' He drew out his savings, purchased the herd, and set them free. As a result his own male functions were immediately restored.

"Overjoyed at this occurrence, he ran back to the castle to inform the king. The king also was overjoyed and bestowed upon the former eunuch many precious gifts and reassigned him to the important position of minister of foreign affairs. Our actions, whether good or bad, as these stories have shown, must finally be accounted for."

Although cows are not usually the subject of such concern, this story has clearly shown that even acts of kindness shown to them does not pass without reward. It would be difficult to believe, then, that compassion shown to one's parents, teachers, and to holy people, and acts of veneration to the Buddhas and Patriarchs would not reap still even greater reward.

The second period of karmic retribution, that which occurs in the life following the one in which the karma was instigated, is relevant to those who commit any of the five wrongful acts. Those who commit wrong acts other than the named five may also fall into hell in their next life, though it is possible retribution will not be felt until some later time. The five wrongful acts are: (1) killing one's father;(2) killing one's mother;(3) killing an arhat; (4) causing disunity within the Sangha; and (5) injuring the body of the Buddha. If you commit only one of these you will fall into hell in the next life. Kejo, a monk who lived at the time of Kāśyapa Buddha, committed all five. Others, such as King Ajase-ō^{1-EN}, who murdered his father, committed only one, while still others, as in the case of Aitta^{2-EN} who killed both parents and an arhat, committed three. Aitta committed these crimes when still a layman; later he entered the monkhood.

The monk Devadatta was another who committed three wrongful acts: He caused disunity in the Sangha, injured the body of the Buddha, and killed an arhat. Devadatta is also known as Devadatta: Heavenly Heat. The following is an account of how he committed these crimes: The first, causing disunity in the Sangha, occurred when he led five hundred novice monks to Mount Gaya with the intention of separating them from the truth. When Śāriputra became aware of this he caused Devadatta to sleep in order to allow Mokuren access to the monks and the opportunity to restore unity. Devadatta, however, awoke prematurely, saw the latter leading the monks away, and swore revenge. Opportunity to act on this threat arose some time later. He lifted up a huge boulder and hurled it at the Buddha. Although prevented from a direct strike by the interception of a mountain deity, a fragment did hit the Buddha's foot causing it to bleed.

This story states that Devadatta caused disunity in the Sangha prior to injuring the body of the Buddha. Others believe the order of events to have been the reverse, while still others argue that he fatally punched the nun Renge-shiki, thus committing a third wrongful act. To cause a rift between Buddhist monks and the Dharma by teaching false doctrines is what is meant by causing disunity in the Sangha.

All continents with the exception of the northern have false practice. Since the time of Shakyamuni until the cessation of the Buddhist Dharma this has been, and will be the case. False doctrines existed only during the lifetime of Shakyamuni, and entirely disappeared in all but the southern continent after his death. Spreading false doctrines is a most serious crime.

As a result of committing three wrongful acts, Devadatta fell into the Abi Hell.^{1-EN} As stated, there were some who committed all five wrongful acts, some only one, and others, as in Devadatta's case, who committed three. Whichever, all fell into the Abi Hell, and all received their just retribution. Those who commit one wrongful act suffer one kind of retribution over the period of one kalpa. Proportionately, those who commit five wrongful acts receive five kinds of suffering over the period of five kalpas. According to both the Āgama Sūtra and the Nirvana Sūtra periods of time as long as one kalpa exist in hell, and that both fierce and weak fires burn there. The amount one suffers in the Abi Hell is proportional to the extent of one's crimes. Devadatta who committed three wrongful acts suffered three times more than someone who committed only one. Just before he died, Devadatta aroused the mind to devote himself to the Buddha; thus, to some extent at least, his evil mind was cleansed. How regretful he did not have the time to take the precepts.

Even though in a place far from Shakyamuni, Devadatta continued to arouse this mind in hell. As a result he was finally able to resume doing good. In the Abi Hell there were four other monks of similar disposition to Devadatta. One, the monk Kūkali, was a member of the Shakya race [one thousand of whom once renounced the world together]. One day when this monk and Devadatta were riding outside the castle their horses fell, both were thrown off, and both lost their protective head gear. Those in witness commented: "Their study of the Dharma has been in vain, neither will gain any merit." Kūkali had slandered Śāriputra and Mokuren by spreading unfounded, malicious stories about them. Both Shakyamuni and Brahma had admonished him about it, but to no avail; he fell into the Abi Hell in his next life. Even to this time he is without sufficient merit to resume doing good. A monk at the fourth stage of samadhi was another who fell into hell in his next life. Just as he was about to die he slandered the Buddha, the Abi Hell opened before him, and he fell directly into that pit. The preceding stories reveal karmic retribution occurring in the life following that in which the karma was created.

There are five reasons why the five wrongful acts, or five immediacies in time and space, as they are also known, are so named (1) those who commit any of the five wrongful acts fall directly into the Abi Hell without first passing through the period of chū-in^{1-EN}; (2) those who fall into the Abi Hell are subject to constant sufferings without even a moment's pause for relief. Obviously, then, the name is derived from the effect of retribution, not the cause;(3) the length of time over which one receives retribution is undefined and unlimited 5(4) inhabitants of the Abi Hell have unlimited, uninterrupted life spans. Once born to this place they must remain there for at least one kalpa; 5) each person born into the Abi Hell completely fills its 84,000 square yojana^{2-EN} capacity, yet still innumerable more, people can be accommodated without interfering with each other.

The third period of karmic retribution is retribution that occurs after two successive lives. It may emerge three, four or even 100,000 years after the karma was initiated. Bodhisattvas receive retribution [for training] in their third life. Many people are unaware of this, and even trainees may harbour doubts. Honorable Gayata was one such person. Had he not, while still a layman, met Honorable Kumarata he may never have been relieved of his doubt. Trainees who resolve to do good cause evil to disappear; those who resolve to do evil cause good to disappear.

1-EN Ajātasatru. The son of king Bimbisara. When he was crown prince he killed his father and imprisoned his mother. He became king and conquered Central India. He followed the Buddha and supported the first Buddhist council.

2-EN Ajita. His name means unconquerable.

1-EN The hell of incessant suffering, the worst of the hells. It is too vast an area for anyone to escape. Those who are born there constantly cry out because of the heat of the fires.

1-EN The intermediate world that exists after death and before rebirth.

2-EN Yojana: an Indian unit of distance. One yojana equals 160 km., 120 km., or 64 km.

Long ago there were two men who lived in the city of Śrāvastī.^{1-EN} One of them always did good, the other always bad. The former never did any bad, the latter never any good. When the man who always did good was about to die the chū-in associated with hell opened before him. Unaware that this was the result of previous bad karma now matured, he thought, "All my life I've done good, never once did I do any bad, surely I should enter heaven not hell." Many thoughts passed through his mind and finally he concluded, "This must be the result of past bad deeds." With this thought in mind, reflecting over his previous pure life, he became filled with a deep joy. Instantly the chū-in associated with hell disappeared and that associated with heaven emerged. He was born into the latter.

This man became filled with a deep joy. His faith in karmic retribution was proved, and he was born into heaven. A bad man in the same position would probably think the following: "I have always done good, yet I am to fall into hell. How can this be so?" Clearly this is a denial of the law of causality and a slander of the Buddha. He would unquestionably fall into hell. Having faith, however, this man entered into heaven. We should know this.

When the man who only did bad was about to die, the chū-in associated with heaven appeared before him. Unaware that this was the result of karma for past good acts now matured he thought, "I have done only bad all my life, surely I should be born into hell, yet before me I see heaven. This is a clear denial of both the law of causality and the Three Treasures." As a result the chū-in associated with heaven vanished and that associated with hell appeared. He entered the latter.

The man who never did any good was ignorant of the law of causality, so when at the time of death the chū-in associated with heaven opened before him he was unable to realize its relation to past good acts. He concluded that one's actions were not answerable and that he, in spite of his bad life, would enter heaven – a clear denial of the law of causality. The chū-in leading to heaven thus disappeared and that leading to hell appeared. He fell into the latter. This situation occurred as a result of holding false views.

Trainees should learn from this. It is imperative that we can discern true from false. To doubt and therefore deny the principle of causality, slander the Three Treasures, enlightenment, and the three worlds is a false view. This life affords but one body, not two or three. It would be more than regretful if we used it wrongly and created bad karma.

Whether we create bad karma unintentionally or not makes no difference – bad karma is bad karma: the retribution remains the same. Premeditated wrongs do, however, have the additional effect of transforming our good karma into bad. Bad intentions are themselves wrongful acts.

Kogetsu, priest advisor to the emperor once asked Chōsa, "An ancient master once said that the enlightened realize their past karma to be essentially void, while the unenlightened must repay their karmic debt. If this is true, why did Shishibodai^{1-EN} and Eka have to repay their karmic debt? Chōsa replied, "O honorable one, you have failed to understand the meaning of essentially void." Kogetsu requested an explanation to which Chōsa replied, "It means past bad karma." Kogetsu continued the inquiry by asking the meaning of past bad karma. "It means essentially void," was the reply. Kogetsu fell silent, and Chōsa continued with the following verse:

In reality temporal existence does not exist,
neither does temporal non-existence not exist,
for enlightenment and karmic retribution have but one true nature.

Chōsa was one of Nansen Fugan's long-serving and foremost disciples. Although his understanding of many aspects of the Dharma was unquestionably sound, his explanations to Kogetsu show he had failed to understand the meaning of bad karma. Likewise, he had failed to grasp the meaning of either Zen Master Yoka's or Honourable Kumarata's words, let alone those of Shakyamuni. How can we respect someone who incorrectly transmits the Dharma?

Bad karma is one of the three hindrances. The other two are worldly desires and karmic retribution. Based on his understanding that karma is undiminishing, Kogetsu asked what its effect would be in future lives. Chōsa erred when he defined "essentially void," as meaning "bad karma." This was indeed a great mistake; how can anything we produce, and in this I include bad karma, be essentially void? Creating karma and not creating karma identify only in relation to each other. It is only non-believers who interpret karma to be essentially void. If you concur with this view, while at the same time commit evil, you will be unable to realize enlightenment.

If there is no enlightenment then the Buddhas would not have appeared in the world, Bodhidharma would not have come from India to China, and Master Nansen would not have existed. Had, the latter not existed, then who could lead Chosa to the Buddhist Way?

Chōsa's assertion that bad karma is essentially void was entirely wrong. This mistake may be attributed to him addressing Kogetsu, a well versed and diligent trainee, from his own limited viewpoint. He further erred by adding a verse which stated enlightenment and karmic retribution to have the same nature.

I would like to ask him what does he mean by nature; to which of the three natures does he refer – good nature, bad nature, or neither good nor bad nature? When he talks of enlightenment and karmic retribution what is he trying to say? Which enlightenment does he mean; is it that of the śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas or that of the Buddhas? Whichever he means, none have even the slightest relation with karmic retribution. His words certainly do not echo those of the Buddha. I suggest he buy straw sandals and become a wandering monk.

Honourable Shishibodai and the Patriarch Eka were without doubt the victims of murder at the hands of evil men. But, as neither were in their final body nor prevented from entering the period of chū-in [by having committed any of the five wrongful acts] there is no reason to assume that they will not receive karmic retribution in their next life. When the karma of our actions matures no one can avoid the results. It is therefore obvious that Chosa had entirely misunderstood karmic retribution in the three worlds. Honourable Kumarata had true understanding of karmic retribution; his words reflect those of the Patriarchs themselves. He is truly a paragon for students who aspire to clarify this principle. When we undertake to study the law of causality we should ensure that we do so thoroughly.

In total there are eight kinds of karma. Each of which must be fully understood before we receive transmission of the Dharma

1-EN The capital of Kośala, [present day Sahetmāhet, Gandu, India]. Sometimes it was treated as an independent country.

1-EN The twenty-fourth Patriarch. Born in India in the sixth century. After being wrongly accused by a non-Buddhist, he was executed by the King of Kaśmira [present day Kashmir]

from the Buddhas and Patriarchs. Without first doing so no one has the right to be called a teacher of sentient beings.

Shakyamuni said, "Karma will not diminish even with the passing of a hundred thousand kalpas and no one is exempt from its effect. The law is straightforward: bad actions produce bad results; good actions produce good results, and a combination of good and bad action produces mixed results. Reject both the former and latter way in your practice – concentrate only on doing good." When Shakyamuni finished his discourse, the assembled monks became filled with a deep joy and they vowed to devoutly adhere to his words.

Shakyamuni's teaching leaves us in no doubt that karma is undiminishing and that all our actions will finally be met with just retribution. Immediately we should cease from doing wrong and repent, and when we see another doing good we should be joyful; both these acts will increase our good karma. This is the meaning of undiminishing karma.

(Date of writing unknown.)

84. SHIME

四馬

"The four horses"

One day a non-believer visiting Shakyamuni asked, "What is meant by 'question with or without words'?" Shakyamuni remained silent. Then, after some time the non-believer prostrated before the Buddha, and said, "Because of your great compassionate teaching I am relieved of all illusion, and see the Buddhist Way clearly before me." He again prostrated before Shakyamuni, stood, and left.

After his departure Honorable Ananda questioned the Buddha, "What did the non-believer find that caused him to perceive the Way and venerate you?" Shakyamuni replied, "A good horse is one that runs merely on seeing the shadow of a whip."

Since Bodhidharma came to China, many masters have used this analogy to lead students to the Way. Some spend a long time before they perceive the Way, while others awake to enlightenment very quickly. This story is known as "The non-believer's dialogue with the Buddha." It is clear that Shakyamuni proclaimed the Way using both silence and speech. Those who realize enlightenment as a result of either are similar to a good horse, one that runs merely at the sight of the whip. People who realize enlightenment without experiencing either teaching are also like a good horse.

The Patriarch Nāgārjuna said, "Those who awaken to the Way after experiencing a proclamation of the Law are comparable to a good horse, a horse that takes the correct road on merely seeing the shadow of his rider's whip. A good master can cause even those who are deeply entangled in mistaken views to find the Buddhist Way. When we train under a good master, or see an enlightened man, all things act as the shadow of the whip leading us to the Way. Some see the shadow immediately while others must wait for three or even countless kalpas. Finally, however, all will find the true Way.

The Samyuta-Āgama-Sūtra^{1-EN} states, "The Buddha said to the assembled monks, 'There are four kinds of horse. The first is a horse that, out of fear, will obey his rider's will at the mere sight of the whip's shadow. The second will act accordingly when the whip touches its hair, the third, when the whip has struck its flesh, and the fourth will yield only when the whip has reached its very bones.

"The first horse is like a man who realizes impermanence when he learns of a death in a neighbouring village. The second horse is like a man who realizes this when death occurs in his own village. The third is like a man who does not awaken this mind until death occurs among his own family, and the fourth horse is like a man who awakens this mind only when his own death is imminent.'"

The preceding is "The four horses of the Āgama-Sūtra." Trainees should make careful study of this, for they are the words of the true masters, the Patriarchs.

Without having first clarified this teaching we cannot be considered spiritual leaders of men. Those who have compiled much merit will inevitably encounter this allegory, while those who are far from Buddhism will be unable to see or hear it. Zen masters should quickly explain these words to their trainees, and their trainees should want to study them.

The Buddha expounded one word to describe those who realize impermanence. People interpret this word according to their individual level of understanding. When some heard the word they became fearful, others joyful, some disliked it, while others were relieved of doubt regarding impermanence.

The Mahāpārinirvanā-Sūtra states, "The Buddha once said, 'There are four ways to control a horse. The first is to strike the horse's hair; the second, its skin; the third, its flesh; and the fourth, its bones. A rider's intentions are revealed to the horse by the location of the strike. Similarly, the Buddha uses four ways to lead sentient beings [to the Way]. The first is to expound the law of birth; this is similar to a horse that finds the correct path as a result of having his hair struck by his rider. The second is to also expound the law of old age; this is like a horse that does the same after being struck on the skin. The third is to further expound the law of sickness; this equates with striking the horse's flesh. And the fourth is to include death in the explanation; this is like striking the horse's bones. A rider, however, is not always successful in leading a horse onto the right path. Shakyamuni, on the other hand, never fails to lead sentient beings to the Way. Thus he is known as "The great controller of men."

The preceding is "The four horses of the Mahāpārinirvanā-Sūtra." Trainees always study these and the Buddhas never fail to transmit them. When followers of the Way encounter these, as they inevitably will, they should ensure they understand them fully. This allegory has continuously been used by the Buddhas to lead sentient being to the Way. When someone attains Buddhahood he should proclaim these for the sake of all Bodhisattvas, śrāvakas, humans and celestial beings, like he did when he awoke the Buddha-seeking mind. It is for this reason that the Three Treasures are eternal, and that the teachings of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas differ so greatly.

We now know that there are four methods of controlling a horse – striking its hair, striking its skin, striking its flesh, and striking its bones. Although these methods have been well detailed, we are not told the instrument used. Masters of correct transmission, however, believe it to be a whip. Its use, though, is not exclusive. Different situations require different means. The dragon-horse and one thousand-ri horse are examples of horses that are not controlled by a whip. The former stands at about eight feet high, and the latter is reputed to run a thousand ri a day, sweating blood for the first five hundred ri before cooling down sufficiently to allow swift, unhindered movement. This horse is not found in China. Very few humans have controlled either horse, and I've neither heard nor read that a whip was used to do so. Ancient masters have stated, though, that a whip is necessary for controlling a horse, and that to try and do so without one would be futile.

As stated, there are four established ways to control a horse – striking its hair, its skin, its flesh, or its bones. To do this it is obvious a whip must be used. The fact that a whip has not been referred to by name is of little consequence: such omissions are common throughout the sutras. As previously stated, Shakyamuni, the great controller of men, never fails to lead sentient beings to the Way.

The receptive person realizes the Way merely on hearing a teaching on the law of birth, others do not do so until old age has also been explained, and others not until sickness and death have consecutively been added to the teaching. In a similar way that the three latter methods of controlling a horse occur only after the first has transpired, the latter three teachings of Shakyamuni – old age, sickness, and death – exist only as a result of the occurrence of the former, birth.

1-EN One of the four agamas. It was translated into Chinese by Gunabhadra.

It was Shakyamuni himself who initially proclaimed the law of birth, old age, sickness and death. He did so not to break man's unity with these, nor to establish them as a standard of the Way; rather he used them as a means to lead sentient beings to the Way, a task in which he never fails. Hence his epithet: "The great controller of men."

Compiled and transcribed by Ejō in the summer of 1255.

85. SHIZEN BIKU

四禪比丘

"A monk at the fourth stage of samadhi"

The following is taken from the Daichido-ron, volume seven. "The Patriarch Nāgārjuna^{1-EN} said, 'One of the Buddha's disciples became proud when he attained the fourth stage of samadhi, for he [mistakenly] believed he had attained the fourth stage of arhathood. He made the same error when he attained each of the previous three stages of samadhi, believing them to be the corresponding stage of arhathood. Finally, when he attained the fourth stage, he became so proud he ceased from practice entirely. Just as this disciple was about to die, the chu-e associated with the fourth stage of samadhi appeared before him. At first he was confused by this, then he thought, 'I cannot enter nirvana. The Buddha has deceived me.' As a result [of this mistaken view], the chu-e associated with the fourth stage of samadhi disappeared and that leading to the Abi Hell appeared. He was born into the latter.

"The assembled monks said to the Buddha, 'Where was the monk reborn?' The Buddha replied, 'The Abi Hell.' Surprised, the monks said, 'But this monk conscientiously did Zazen and observed the precepts. Why was he born into hell?' The Buddha answered, 'This monk believed he had attained arhathood when he had attained the fourth stage of samadhi. He was proud of his achievement, and so when at the time of death the chu-e associated with the fourth stage of samadhi appeared, he thought, 'I am an arhat, yet I am to be reborn a human; the Buddha has deceived me.' It was because he held this mistaken view that he fell into hell.' The Buddha continued with the following verse.

Study of the Dharma, observation of the precepts, and practice of Zazen,

Cannot, within themselves, perish worldly desires.

There is great merit in these,

Yet we find it difficult to have faith in them.

The monk slandered the Buddha; thus he fell into hell."

This monk is known as a monk at the fourth stage of samadhi, or self-taught monk. The lesson is: do not mistake the fourth stage of samadhi for that of arhathood. All Buddhists, human and celestial, know this story, for since the time of Shakyamuni, masters in both India and China have used it to ridicule those who mistakenly pursue falsehood for truths.

This monk made three mistakes: Firstly, he was unable to distinguish between the stages of samadhi and those of arhathood. This occurred because he, a self-taught monk, never trained under or sought the guidance of a master. Thus he never heard the true Law. He was fortunate to live at the time of Shakyamuni, yet he never visited him or listened to the teachings of any of the great arhats. He just continued to train alone. As a result he fell victim to pride.

Secondly, he believed he had attained the four stages of arhathood, when he had attained those of samadhi. This was truly a grave error, for the latter stages are far below the former and should not be confused. This monk made this mistake because he, being a self-trained monk, had never contacted the true Law.

A disciple of Ubakikuta,^{1-EN} who had entered monkhood out of deep faith in Buddhism, was another who mistook the fourth stage of samadhi for that of arhathood. This monk was instructed to visit another district and, with the intention of refuting his misunderstanding, Ubakikuta created several incidents for him to encounter on the way.

"After he had travelled some distance, this monk came across an area strewn with the bodies of merchants, apparently slain by thieves. He grew very frightened. As a result he concluded he could not have attained the fourth stage of arhathood but must still be at the third. Just then a daughter of one of the slain merchants approached him and said, 'Please take me from this place.' The monk answered, 'That's impossible. The Buddha forbids us from travelling with women.' 'Then you lead I'll follow,' suggested the young woman. The monk took pity on her and agreed.

Soon they encountered a wide, fast flowing river [another creation of Ubakikuta's], The woman said, 'Please let us cross together.' The monk agreed and began to cross downstream while the woman crossed upstream. Suddenly the woman slipped and, falling into the water, cried for help. The monk moved forward and lifted her from the water. As he did so, however, he felt her soft delicate skin and slender young body. He was overcome with sexual passion. As a result, he realized he had not attained the third stage of arhathood either; furthermore his sexual passion grew, and he led the young woman to secluded spot where he could have sexual intercourse with her.

Actually, this young woman was Ubakikuta in disguise. When the monk realized this, he was deeply shamed. He fell to his knees and prostrated before his master. Ubakikuta said, 'If you are an arhat, how do you account for your action?' Having said this, he led the monk back to the community of monks and instructed him to offer repentance. This monk continued to study under Ubakikuta; finally he attained arhathood.

Twice this monk was forced to question his beliefs [firstly that he had attained the fourth stage of arhat, and secondly that he had attained the third], yet he never once slandered the Buddha or the Dharma. In this respect he is far superior to the previously mentioned monk at the fourth stage of samadhi. It was because this monk was well versed in the Buddha's teachings that he was able to realize he had attained neither the fourth nor third stages of arhathood.

If a monk does not study the Buddha's teachings, how can he possibly realize the nature of arhats, let alone Buddhas. Furthermore, such a monk although neither a Buddha nor an arhat is liable to think he is. What a great mistake! Trainees, do not fail to clarify Buddhahood; this is essential.

An ancient master once said, "Generally speaking, those who study the Buddha's teachings know their level of attainment, and even those among them who hold false views will finally attain enlightenment." How true these words are. With knowledge of the Buddha's teachings, even a man of false views is protected from self-deception and from being deceived by others.

There is a story of a monk who, [mistakenly] believing he had attained Buddhahood, waited to see the morning star. [Just as

1-EN The thirteenth Patriarch. In China and Japan, he is respected as the founder of eight schools.

1-EN Upugupta. Born in Matanga, India. The fourth Patriarch of India and Dharma heir of Sānavāsa the third Patriarch. He is famous for encouraging the construction of over 84,000 stupas in India.

Shakyamuni had done.] When the star failed to appear, however, even though he waited a very long time, he thought some demon must be obstructing it. Finally when it did appear, King Brahman did not ask him to expound the Law [as he had done with Shakyamuni]. As a result he realized his error, though not entirely, for he believed he must at least be an arhat. Later, someone criticized him and he became angry; thus he realized he could not have attained even this level. Still, though, he failed to realize the full extent of his mistake, and he concluded he must at least be at the third stage of arhathood. Finally, though, when he saw a young woman and became filled with sexual desire, he realized he had not attained even the first stage of arhathood. It was because this monk was knowledgeable of the Buddha's teachings that he could realize his error.

A man, like this monk, who is well versed in the Buddhist Dharma can recognize his errors and rectify them quickly. A man ignorant of the teachings cannot do so. Such a man remains in a fog, subject to endless transmigration. Ubakikuta's disciple was another monk who was well versed in the Dharma. As a result, even though he sincerely believed he was an arhat, he was finally able to reject this mistaken view. Had only the self taught monk taken time to study the Dharma, he would not have slandered the Buddha when at the time of death the chu-in^{1-EN} associated with the fourth stage of samadhi appeared before him. This monk had long since attained the fourth stage of samadhi, yet he could not discern this level from that of arhathood. When he failed to check his error, his practice became useless, and finally he suffered the consequences [he fell into the Abi Hell].

This monk made one crucial mistake – he slandered the Buddha. When the chu-e associated with the fourth stage of samadhi appeared before him at the time of death, he should have realized his error and repented, thus reaffirming his faith in the Buddha. Being a self taught monk, however, he was ignorant of the Dharma and did not do so; consequently he fell into the Abi Hell. Even had this monk attained arhathood, he could, not be compared to the Tathāgata.

Śariputra, an honorable monk who had attained arhathood, was renown for his great wisdom. Even the wisdom of the entire world's inhabitants, excluding that of the Tathāgata, would not account for one sixteenth of it. In spite of this great wisdom, he never once slandered the Buddha. Even when the Buddha expounded unfamiliar teachings that he could not fully understand, he did not do so. Contrarily, he would reaffirm his faith by saying the celestial demon would be incapable of imparting such anomalies.

The Tathāgata had saved Punyavadharna, an initiate trainee at the age of 120, while Śariputra had failed to do so – such is the difference between Buddhahood and arhathood. Even given that the world's inhabitants were as wise as Śariputra, still their combined wisdom would be incomparable with that of the Tathāgata.

The teachings of Confucius and Lao-tzu lack the merit of the Buddha's wisdom. While students of Buddhism find no difficulty in understanding the teachings of Lao-tzu and Confucius, no student of the latter two has ever grasped the essence of Buddhism. Many latter day people believe Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism to be the same. Obviously these people are ignorant of the Buddha's teachings.

With unyielding confidence in his mistaken view, the [previously referred to] monk at the fourth stage of samadhi believed the Tathagata had deceived him and denounced Buddhism entirely. He is indeed more than foolish, no better than the six non-Buddhist philosophers.

An ancient master said, "When during the Tathāgata's life time people held false views, it's not surprising that the number greatly increased after his death. With no great master to teach them, they are bound to hold such views." Even some of Shakyamuni's contemporary monks held false views as a result of not thoroughly clarifying his teachings. In recent times, many more do so, especially in remote rural areas, where they are more or less isolated from the teachings. As stated, even monks who have attained the fourth stage of samadhi sometimes hold false views. How then can those who do not aspire to attain this level, favouring instead fame, fortune, and success as officials expect to do otherwise.

Because they are ignorant of the Buddha's teachings, many latter day Sung dynasty monks make wild assertions such as that there is no difference between Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism. What fools they are.

In the Chia-t'ai era [Katai, 1201-4] of the Sung dynasty, a monk named Chêng-shou^{1-EN} compiled the thirty section P'u-têng-lu^{2-EN} and submitted it to the emperor. It reader "I once heard the monk Chih-yüan say, 'My way is like a tripod, of which Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism comprise the legs. If one leg were missing the tripod would fall.' Because I respect this monk, I delved deeper into the meaning of this statement. Finally, I concluded that the essence of Taoism is non-discrimination; the essence of Confucianism is sincerity, and the essence of Buddhism is self realization. Although each of these Ways goes under a different title, essentially they are the same."

This false view is not limited to Chih-yüan and Chêng-shou alone; there are many others who believe likewise. Indeed they are making a great mistake, surpassing even that of believing the fourth stage of samadhi to be the fourth stage of arhathood. They not only slander the Buddha and the Three Treasures, but negate nirvana, the three worlds, and the principle of causality. Their beliefs damage Buddhism like flood water damages a village. Certainly they are no better than those who deny the Three Treasures, the Four Noble Truths, and the four stages of arhathood.

Within itself, self realization is not the fundamental point of Buddhism. None of the past seven Buddhas or twenty-eight Patriarchs taught this to be so. The Platform Sūtra^{1-EN} of Enō bore reference to it, but, being a forged writing, this is untrustworthy. Trainees should know this. Chêng shou and Chih-yüan saw Buddhism as one leg of a tripod. What rubbish! – evidence that were ignorant of even a small part of the Dharma.

An ancient master said, "The Hinayānists state that we should neither be attached to the self nor to the externals. Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu were attached to both. When this teaching of the Hinayānists is beyond them, how could they hope to grasp the Mahāyānist teaching that the self and others are essentially "void. The doctrines of Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu are very different from those of the Buddha.

"With a mere superficial understanding of the teachings and an attachment to the form of Zazen, foolish people believe Lao-tzu's teaching on non-discrimination to be the same as the Buddhist teaching on detachment. With such limited understanding, they cannot hope to conceive of the Buddhist Way."

Since ancient times, those with only surface knowledge of Buddhism believed the teachings of Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu to be

1-EN Period of time after death

1-EN Rui An Shojū. The Buddhist heir of Tao-chang. He was associated with the Ummon school of zen.

2-EN A biography about Chinese monks, nuns, noblemen, and important commoners.

1-EN A one section work, covering Enō's teachings.

essentially the same as those of the Buddha. In contrast, those well versed in Buddhism unflinchingly rejected those former two teachings.

The Ch'ing-ching-pên-hsing Sūtra states: "Yen-hui^{2-EN} is a reincarnation of the Bodhisattva Candraprabha, Confucius a reincarnation of the Bodhisattva Kuang-ching, and Lao-tzu a reincarnation of the Bodhisattva Kāśyapa." Since ancient times, this sūtra has been responsible for many believing Lao-tzu and Confucius to be Bodhisattvas and messengers of the Buddha; consequently they concluded their teachings to be the same as those of the Buddha. They were quite mistaken, for we are told by an ancient master that this sūtra is a forgery. Again we are provided with evidence that shows the teachings of Lao-tzu and Confucius to be different from those of the Buddha. Even had these former two realized the stage of Bodhisattva, they would still be unequal to the Buddha.

Buddhas appear in human form in order to save them. Ordinary people, and in this I include Lao-tzu and Confucius, are born as humans as a result of bad karma and can save no one. Ignorant of the law of causality in the three worlds, Lao-tzu and Confucius taught only about worldly matters – loyalty to the emperor and filial piety. Their teachings deal with nothing beyond the present life time. They are no different from any other non-believer who denies the principle of causality.

Confucius and Lao-tzu had not understood the teachings of even the Hinayana, let alone the Mahayana. Ancient worthies paid them little attention. Only Chêng-shou, Chih-yüan, and other fools suggested the three teachings are one. Under what authority did they assert this. Their understanding of Buddhism is nil. I suggest they desist from their meaningless discussion, seek a good master, and begin practice of the Way. They are even less informed than those monks who confuse the fourth stage of samadhi with that of arhathood. How regrettable that such views are characteristic of these times.

An ancient master once said, "Confucius, the emperor Chou-Kung-tan,^{1-EN} the three founding emperors^{2-EN} and their five successors^{3-EN} all believed prosperity of the nation and welfare of the individual to be the ultimate goal; thus their teachings are based on filial piety and loyalty to the nation. Unlike the Buddhist teachings which extend to the three periods of time, the doctrines of these philosophers relate only to the present life time. How could they be true?"

This master is knowledgeable both of Buddhism and worldly affairs. The teachings of Shakyamuni are paramount and the merit afforded to his monks extensive. The teachings of Kings Tenrinnō, Brahma, and Śakrendra are wide reaching and also, though to a lesser extent, carry much merit. In any regard, all the aforementioned are far superior to the three emperors and their five successors. The works of Lao-tzu and Confucius are of little value – ranked even below the eighteen scriptures of Brahmanism and the four Vedas,^{1-EN} not to mention the teachings of the Hinayana. They do not merit comparison with the Buddhist teachings. Many Chinese believe Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism to be one doctrine. How unfortunate that that small, remote country has become the stage for such mistaken views.

The Fourteenth Patriarch Nāgārjuna said, "While great arhats and pratyekabuddhas are aware of periods of time as long as eighty-thousand kalpas, and Buddhas and Bodhisattvas aware of unlimited periods, Confucius and Lao-tzu knew nothing outside the present existence. They were even unaware of periods of one kalpa, let alone a hundred, a thousand, or eighty-thousand kalpas. How can they be compared to Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who know unlimited kalpas like the back of their hands? Confucius and Lao-tzu are the Buddha's equal – what rubbish! We should cover our ears whenever we hear talk of the unity of the three teachings, for truly this is the lowest of all false views.

Chuang-tzu said, "Noble and humble positions in life, joy and suffering, positive and negative, and gain and loss all occur spontaneously." This opinion is similar to the non-Buddhist Indian understanding that everything occurs spontaneously. Obviously they do not realize that our social status, degree of contentment, and so on is determined by our past good or bad karma. Furthermore, they are ignorant that this karma falls into two categories.^{2-EN} When they are ignorant of both the past and future, their credibility to understand the present must be in doubt. Who, then, can sincerely suggest their teachings equal those of the Buddha?

Many believe that because the Buddha's enlightenment encompasses the whole world, even a speck of dust manifests enlightenment. Since subjectivity and objectivity are incorporated within this enlightenment, mountains, rivers, earth, sun, moon, stars, the four illusions^{1-EN} and three poisons^{2-EN} express it. The four illusions and three poisons, thus, are part of the Dharma, and the Tathāgata can be seen in mountains and rivers; a speck of dust embodies the entire truth and each spontaneous act is a manifestation of supreme enlightenment. This saying is a Patriarchal transmission.

In latter day Sung China, those who subscribe to this view are as numerous as rice plants, hemp, bamboo, and reeds. Their [religious] lineage is unknown; but it is clear that they are unfamiliar with Buddhism. The statement "Buddha's enlightenment encompasses the world" is true, but the way in which ordinary people view rivers, mountains, and earth is entirely different from the way Buddha's do. When we see a speck of dust, we see the entire world; if this is so, then ordinary people are equal to their kings. Why don't they reverse the statement: When we see the entire world we see a speck of dust. If these words were those of the Dharma, then neither the Buddhas nor Patriarchs would have appeared in the world and neither you nor I could become enlightened. Even when sentient beings understand life to be no-life, it is different from the Buddhas and Patriarchs understanding of it.

Honourable Paramārtha^{3-EN} said, "China is fortunate in two ways: it has no devils and no non-Buddhists." Clearly, these are the words of a non-Buddhist Brahman. To the extent that China has no non-Buddhists with miraculous powers or lacks devils, this statement is true. But that country is certainly not lacking non-Buddhists with the minds of devils. Since China is a small, remote country, quite different from central India, it's not surprising that although some of its inhabitants practice the

2-EN 521-490 B.C. One Confucius' foremost disciples.

1-EN 1118?-1051? B.C. The fourth son of emperor Wên of the Chou dynasty. Confucius cited him as an ideal ruler.

2-EN Legendary Chinese emperors who it is said established animal husbandry, farming, and cooking.

3-EN Legendary emperors who it is said were excellent in both political and administrative fields.

1-EN Written approximately 1000 B.C. A eulogy written for the various Hindu deities. It also covers the rites and festivals for worshipping these deities, as well as documenting the means to cure illness through the use of incarnation.

2-EN That concerned with the universe and that concerned with the individual.

1-EN Shitendō. 1) Jōtendō the illusion that the phenomenal world is permanent; 2) rakutendo the illusion that worldly existence is joy 3) jōtendō the illusion that the phenomenal world is pure; and 4) gatendō, the illusion of individual identity (ego).

2-EN Greed, anger, and ignorance.

3-EN 3 499-549. An Indian monk who went to China [546] at the invitation of Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty. He founded the Shê-lun sect in China, and translated many Buddhist scriptures.

Way, none have realized the same enlightenment as trainees in India

An ancient master said, "Because laymen are eligible for conscription into the emperor's service, many Buddhist monks who forego their training begin study of non-Buddhist teachings. They attempt to enhance the teachings of Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu by injecting them with the Buddhist wisdom; The result – a useless concoction that confuses initiates who cannot yet discern true from false. The situation further degenerates when the teachings of the Vedas are added.

The true teachings are apparent. Only uninformed beginners like Chih-yüan and Shêng-shou could fail to recognize them. Neither man had even the slightest understanding of Buddhism. Really, they are just fools. In latter day China, there is no one who realizes the Buddhist teachings to be the supreme teachings. Not one or even half a person acknowledges them as the only pure and true teaching, yet those who claim to be descendants of the Buddha are as numerous as rice plants, hemp, bamboo, and reeds. My late master, Nyojō, alone realized the Buddhist teachings to be the ultimate teaching, and he proclaimed it day and night. None of the so called teachers of the sutras and sastras had even the slightest idea of this. Over the past one hundred years they have done nothing more than study the training methods of zen monks. Do they really believe they can realize the Truth in this way? What fools they are.

Confucius said, "Truth is innately understood." This is not substantiated by the Buddhist teachings, though they do refer to the relics of the Buddha. Neither Lao-tzu nor Confucius commented on these. It is impossible to combine these three teachings even should we wish to do so. Study them in depth, and you will realize this for yourself.

The Analects of Confucius state, "There are different levels of understanding the Truth: Those with innate knowledge of it are the highest. Those who realize it after study follow then those who realize it after difficult study. The lowest are those who do not realize it after difficult study." Innate understanding of the Truth is impossible – a contradiction of the law of causality. When the monk at the fourth stage of samadhi slandered the Buddha, he fell into hell. Those who endorse Confucius' view will also do so, though they may not have to wait until their next life. Likewise, this also will be our fate if we [trainees] fail to abandon this mistaken view.

Neither Lao-tzu nor Confucius knew anything of the three stages of time, the principle of causality, nor even one of the continents, let alone all four of them. It is not surprising, then, that they were ignorant of the six lowest heavens; the three worlds; the thousand, the million, and the billion worlds. While the Tathāgata ruled over thousands of billions of worlds, Lao-tzu and Confucius were mere subjects in their own land. How could they be the Tathāgata's equal?

The Tathāgata was respectfully protected day and night by Kings Brahma, Śakrendra, and Tenrinnō. These kings constantly requested that he proclaim the Dharma for them. Lao-tzu and Confucius were without such virtue. They, being both ignorant of the Way and subject to transmigration, are no different from any other non-Buddhist. Certainly they had not clarified the Way. How could people such as these be even thought the Buddha's equal?

When they themselves are unenlightened, Lao-tzu and Confucius are in no position to enlighten others. Clearly they are inferior to the Buddha in all aspects ; even to consider that the three teachings are the same is ridiculous. Unlike the Buddha who could clarify the smallest particle and measure the shortest period of time, Lao-tzu and Confucius were unaware of extremities in both time and space. They were no different from ordinary people and certainly inferior to those who have attained the first stage of arhathood, let alone the second, third or fourth stages. Could anyone seriously suggest they are equal to the Buddha.

Only a uniformed trainee could possibly equate these teachers with the Buddha. In so much as they were ignorant of the three worlds, the extremities of time, and had failed to go beyond the concept of duality, Lao-tzu and Confucius were inferior to the gods of the moon, sun, and heavens, the Four-Quarter-Kings, and various other celestial gods. Those who identify these teachers with the Buddha merely reveal their inability to discern sacred from profane.

The Lieh-ch'uan^{1-EN} states: "Kuan-ling Yin-hsi [Shekiryo-in-ki] was a high ranking government official in Chou dynasty China and a knowledgeable astrologer. One day, while travelling to the east to investigate an unusual weather change, Yin-hsi met Lao-tzu. The two joined in conversation. Yin-hsi requested Lao-tzu write a book containing more than five thousand words [later known as the Tao-te ching], while he, for his part, wrote a nine section sequel [Kuan-ling-tsu] to the first complete writing of Taoist thought, the Hua-hu-ching.^{2-EN} Later, when Lao-tzu decided to visit the Kuan-hsi district^{3-EN} Yin-hsi requested to accompany him. Lao-tzu replied, "Prove the sincerity of your request; bring me the heads of seven people, among which must be those of your parents." Yin-hsi agreed. But, when he returned with the heads, all had turned into those of wild boars.

An ancient master said, "Secular books of Confucianism advocate ancestor worship by venerating statues cut in their image. The teachings of the Tathāgata are founded on deep compassion. Lao-tzu, on the other hand, instructed Yin-hsi to kill his parents. The source of the latter's teachings is truly a mystery".

Right up to the present, many have believed Lao-tzu to be Shakyamuni's equal—What fools! Truly, I feel deeply sorry for them. Neither Confucius nor Lao-tzu are equal to King Tenrinnō, who practices the ten good deeds to lead ordinary people to the Way. Not even do they rank above the three founding emperors or their five successors, who themselves are inferior to King Tenrinnō, the ruler of one billion worlds, the father of one thousand children, and possessor of the seven treasures and four kinds of wheel.

All the Buddhas and Patriarchs founded their teachings on veneration and respect of one's parents, master, and the Three Treasures. In addition they taught the need for compassion for the sick and needy. Killing one's parents has never been the basis of any of their teachings. In what way, then, are the teachings of Lao-tzu the same as those of the Buddha? Those who kill their parents fall into hell in their next life; this is the law of karma. No matter what Lao-tzu may say about non-discrimination, those who kill their parents fall into hell—it's as straight forward as that.

The Keitoku-dentō-roku^{1-EN} states: "The second Patriarch, Eka, once said, 'Lao-tzu and Confucius did no more than establish rules for public morality and decorum. This is regretful. Neither Lao-tzu nor Chuang-tzu spoke of the true Way. I understand that Bodhidharma now resides at Shōrin-ji temple. This temple is not so far. I must go there immediately and train under him [in order to attain the ultimate goal].' "

1-EN A collection of biographies concerning Lao-tzu and his disciples.

2-EN A work said to be written by Lao-tzu. It attempts to show Lao-tzu teachings as being superior to the Buddha's.

3-EN Present day Kansu and Hsia-hsi provinces in Western China.

1-EN A thirty section work concerning the biographies of 1,701 Indian and Chinese masters. Written by the Chinese monk Tao-hsüan in 1004.

The Dharma exists in China today as a result of the Second Patriarch. Although it was the First Patriarch, Bodhidharma, who transmitted the Dharma from India to China, had Eka not become his disciple, received and later transmitted the Dharma, the lineage could not have continued. Thus the Second Patriarch commands an exalted position among all Patriarchs.

The Keitoku-dentō-roku further states. "Eka lived for many years in the Loyang district. He was a wise and compassionate, extensively read, and a master with great understanding of the Truth. There is no comparison between this learned Patriarch and latter day men. After he realised enlightenment and had received transmission of the Dharma, he reasserted his view of the teachings of Lao-tzu and Confucius. The Second Patriarch constantly denied the teachings of these latter two and those of the Buddha to be the same; yet, still, many descendants believe they are. True descendants however, recognize their position and reject this mistaken view with contempt.

The non-Buddhist Lun-li, a contemporary of the Tathāgata, believed himself to be the wisest man in the world. Once, at the request of five hundred noble men, he chose five hundred difficult questions to pose to the Buddha. Later, when he met the Buddha he asked, "Is the Way one or many?" The Buddha replied, "One." Lun li continued, "The various teachers each claim their way to be the true Way. They denounce the teachings of others and argue the merits of their own. Thus the Way would appear many." At that moment Mrgaśīrsa,^{1-EN} a disciple of the Buddha, came and stood in their presence. The Buddha asked Lun-li, "Of all the teachers, who do you respect most?" "Mrgaśīrsa," replied Lun-li. "If his teachings are the best," replied the Buddha, "why did he abandon them and became my disciple?" Recognising Mrgaśīrsa, Lun li was filled with deep shame. He prostrated before the Buddha and requested to enter the monkhood. The Buddha responded with the following verse:

"Caught in their own opinions,

Each denounce the way of others.

In ignorance, they contest the merits and demerits.

The winners prized with arrogance, the losers with dejection.

A wise man plays no part in this.

Lun-li! You should know

The Way of my disciples transcends both form and no-form.

What then do you seek?

Rejection of my teaching is rejection of the Truth.

It is difficult to clarify the Truth,

for to do so we must abandon ourselves."

These are the golden words of Shakyamuni. Foolish people in the east, believing there to be teachings equal to those of the Buddha, turn their back on Buddhism. This is a great mistake – a slander of both the Buddha and Dharma. Mrgaśīrsa, Lun li, and Mahākausthila^{1-EN} were intelligent men, far wiser than any man in China, including Lao-tzu and Confucius. All the former forsook their own understanding of the Way and entered the Buddhist monkhood. Even to listen to those who believe the teachings of Confucius, Lao-tzu, and those of the Buddha are similar is a karmic offence, let alone to endorse the view. Both arhats and śrāvakas eventually becomes Buddhas; no one has ever remained an arhat eternally. The non-Buddhists Confucius and Lao-tzu are the Buddha's equal – How can this be so? A man who believes this is making a very grave mistake indeed.

The Tathāgata is supreme among all things. All Buddhas and Patriarchs, Great Bodhisattvas, Kings Brahma and Śakrendra, the twenty-eight Patriarchs in India and the six in China, as well as his many disciples realized this and venerated him. Clearly, then, those who assert that the teachings of Lao-tzu and Confucius are equal to those of the Buddha do so out of ignorance.

Compiled by Ejō during the summer training period in 1255.

1-EN Born in Kośala in India. He became a disciple of the Buddha after losing debate with him.

1-EN Śariputra's uncle. He was one of Shakyamuni's ten foremost disciples, and was particularly skilled in debate.

86. IPPYAKU-HAGHI HÖMYŌ-MON

一百八法明門

"The hundred and eight brilliant teachings of the Dharma"

Prior to his descent from the Tusita Heaven, the Bodhisattva Hu-ming entered samadhi; he scanned over the house in which he was to be born and then summoned all the celestial beings to gather into the sixty yojanas square palace so that he could expound the Law to them. Soon many had assembled and he began, "I am about to be born in the human world. Before I depart, however, I wish to apprise you of the brilliant teachings of the Dharma. This will be my final teaching. Remember these words for they are the key to boundless joy."

By this time the palace was full to overflowing, with many of the newly arrived having to stand outside. Although he was anxious to begin his teaching, it was first necessary to accommodate all who had assembled. He created a second palace on top of the former. The beauty and splendour this new palace was beyond belief. With elaborate decorations of gold, silver, and rare stones, if it were compared with palaces in this world, the latter would appear no more than tombs. Hu-ming's immense fortune and virtue was the result of having done good in the past.

Hu-ming entered the throne room [of the new palace] and took his place on the lion's throne. This throne was decorated with the most gorgeous jewels, and draped with various celestial robes. At his feet lay a multitude of exotic flowers, which, together with the burning incense, filled the air with a delicate perfume. Around the throne and fanning out in the four directions lay an innumerable number of exquisite treasures, while over the exterior of the palace itself hung a fine gold net to which were attached a multitude of tiny gold bells, each emitting a gentle resounding tone. The building glowed with a warm soft light reflected by the multitude of banners and canopies that hung from the ceiling.

Celestial beings in harmonious song praised Hu-ming, while others, holding the seven jewels, told of his wondrous merit and virtue. The palace not only enjoyed the security provided by the Four Quarter Kings, but was also respectfully guarded by an innumerable number of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, as well as the Kings Śakrendra and Brahma. These splendid rewards were the result of innumerable kalpas of good and diligent practice; even now Hu-ming's good karma continues to grow. The quality of life enjoyed by this Bodhisattva is truly beyond our wildest imagination.

Finally, from the lion seat he began his proclamation. "Celestial beings! Soon, as the Bodhisattva at the highest level of attainment in the Tusita Heaven, I will be born into the human world. Before I depart, however, I wish to notify you all of the hundred and eight brilliant teachings of the Dharma. Clarification and retention of these will enable you, if you so wish, to be reborn into the human world.

"What then are the hundred and eight brilliant teachings of the Dharma?"

"The first is to have right faith, for this strengthens a determined mind.

"The second is to have a pure mind, for this prevents defilement.

"The third is to be joyful, for this is the result of a peaceful mind.

"The fourth is to wish to learn the truth, for this purifies the mind.

"The fifth is right action, for this is the result of correct physical action, speech, and thought.

"The sixth is right speech, for this protects against rebirth into the four evil worlds of hell, hungry ghosts, animals, and asuras.

"The seventh is pure thought, for this destroys greed, anger, and ignorance.

"The eighth is constant awareness of the Buddha, for this in itself is purity.

"The ninth is constant awareness of the Dharma, for this in itself is purity.

"The tenth is constant awareness of the Sangha, for this inevitably leads to the truth.

"The eleventh is constant awareness of dana [charity], for this is done without thought of reward.

"The twelfth is constant awareness of the precepts, for this results in actualization of our aspirations.

"The thirteenth is constant awareness of heaven, for this inspires the mind.

"The fourteenth is compassion, for this arouses good in others.

"The fifteenth is benevolence, for this eases the burdens of others, and protects them from injury.

"The sixteenth is joy, for this eradicates sadness and enables one to join in others' happiness.

"The seventeenth is detachment, for this enables transcendence of the five desires.

"The eighteenth is realization of impermanence, for this evinces the desires of the three worlds.

"The nineteenth is understanding of suffering, for this extinguishes evil desires.

"The twentieth is realization of non-self, for this results in freedom from self

"The twenty-first is samadhi, for this results in a clear mind.

"The twenty-second is shame, for this quiets the mind.

"The twenty-third is compunction, for this obviates wrong action.

"The twenty-fourth is sincerity, for this prevents deception.

"The twenty-fifth is honesty, for this prevents self-deception.

"The twenty-sixth is to act in accordance with the Dharma, for this is the way of the Dharma.

"The twenty-seventh is to take refuge in the Three Treasures, for this purifies the three evil worlds of hell, hungry ghosts, and

animals.

"The twenty-eighth is gratitude, for this cultivates good.

"The twenty-ninth is repayment of our benefactors, for this does not deceive others.

"The thirtieth is non-deception of one self, for this prevents self-praise.

"The thirty-first is to bestow benefits on others, for this prevents slander.

"The thirty-second is devotion to the Dharma, for this leads to truth.

"The thirty-third is momentary awareness for this prevents frivolous speech.

"The thirty-fourth is self control, for this advances wisdom.

"The thirty-fifth is to expurgate the mind of all evil, for this protects ourselves and others.

"The thirty-sixth is destruction of mind obstacles, for this alleviates doubt.

"The thirty-seventh is faith in the Buddha's teachings, for this enables discernment of the truth and realization of enlightenment.

"The thirty-eighth is contemplation of impurity, for this purges the mind of worldly desire.

"The thirty-ninth is geniality, for this prevents animosity.

"The fortieth is clear understanding of the truth, for this prevents taking of life.

"The forty-first is pursuit of the Dharma, for this enables unobstructed practice.

"The forty-second is love of the Dharma, for this illuminates the path to enlightenment.

"The forty-third is desire to hear the Dharma, for this manifests the truth of all things.

"The forty-fourth is correct practice, for this results in right action.

"The forty-fifth is to acknowledge that the physical body exists merely as a result of the temporary fusion of the four elements and five skhandas, for this clears the mind of doubt.

"The forty-sixth is to extirpate the cause of delusion, for this leads to enlightenment.

"The forty-seventh is to transcend both feelings of animosity and affection, for this enables non-discriminative observation.

"The forty-eighth is awareness of the temporary existence of the six sense organs, for this enables recognition of suffering.

"The forty-ninth is awareness that essentially all things are equal, for this enables us to realize the temporary fusion of all things.

"The fiftieth is recognition of the true nature of all things, for this produces right practice.

"The fifty-first is realization that neither birth nor death exist, for this is enlightenment.

"The fifty-second is observation of the body's impurity, for this causes all things to be tranquil.

"The fifty-third is realization that all sensation is suffering, for this results in freedom from delusive feeling.

"The fifty-fourth is acknowledgement of the mind's impermanence, for this results in realization of the illusive mind.

"The fifty-fifth is realization of the constant state of flux of all things, for this results in untainted wisdom.

"The fifty-sixth is practice of the four kinds of right effort,^{1-EN} for this extinguishes evil and promotes good.

"The fifty-seventh are the four bases for samadhi^{2-EN}, for these lighten both body and mind.

"The fifty-eighth is faith in the Three Treasures, for this prevents belief in non-Buddhist teachings.

"The fifty-ninth is devotion to Buddhism, for this extends wisdom.

"The sixtieth is maintained awareness of the Buddha's teachings, for this promotes good.

"The sixty-first is samadhi, for this purifies the mind.

"The sixty-second is wisdom, for this allows true perception of all things.

"The sixty-third is the power of faith, for this enables transcendence of evil.

"The sixty-fourth is diligent practice, for this prevents retrogression of practice.

"The sixty-fifth is the power of awareness, for this promotes independence of mind.

"The sixty-sixth is the power of samadhi, for this extinguishes non-essential thought.

"The sixty-seventh is the power of wisdom, for this enables transcendence of the two opposed views.^{3-EN}

"The sixty-eighth is harmony of samadhi and wisdom, for this manifests the true nature of all things.

"The sixty-ninth is wisdom of the truth, for this illuminates all things.

"The seventieth is diligence in practice, for this reveals the truth.

1-EN (1) Prevention of demerit arising; (2) abandonment of it when it does arise; (3) to produce merit; and (4) to increase merit produced.

2-EN Will, effort, thought, and investigation.

3-EN To believe that either things exist or are void.

"The seventy-first is joy, for this creates spiritual stability.

"The seventy-second is tranquillity of body and mind, for this produces right attitude.

"The seventy-third is right samadhi, for this results in non-discrimination.

"The seventy-fourth is detachment, for this transcends attachment to phenomena.

"The seventy-fifth is right understanding of the Dharma, for this results in enlightenment.

"The seventy-sixth is right discretion, for this transcends both non-discriminative and discriminative thought.

"The seventy-seventh is right speech, for this enables non-discriminative observation of names, words, and sounds.

"The seventy-eighth is right livelihood, for this eliminates evil acts.

"The seventy-ninth is right action, for this leads to enlightenment.

"The eightieth is careful deliberation, for this leads to non-discriminatory thought.

"The eighty-first is right samadhi, for this elevates confusion of the mind.

"The eighty-second is the Buddha-seeking mind, for this preserves the Three Treasures.

"The eighty-third is dependence on teachings which promote others salvation [Mahayana], for this prevents dependence on the Hinayānist teachings.

"The eighty-fourth is correct belief, for this enables realization of the supreme Dharma.

"The eighty-fifth is to advocate good, for this results in realization of good.

"The eighty-sixth is the Dharmapāramitā [proclaiming the Law], for this gradually manifests Buddha and extends Buddhism to all lands, saving others from greed.

"The eighty-seventh is Sila pāramitā [observation of the precepts], for this eliminates misfortune caused by evil and prevents others from breaking the precepts.

"The eighty-eighth is Ksanti pāramitā [perseverance], for this enables freedom from anger, selfishness, flattery, and ridicule, and results in saving all sentient beings from evil.

"The eighty-ninth is Virya pāramitā [diligence], for this results in realization of good, and prevents others from becoming indifferent to practice.

"The ninetieth is Dhyana pāramitā [samadhi], for this results in realization of all forms of samadhi and lends assistance to those confused.

"The ninety-first is Prajnā pāramitā [wisdom], for this results in freedom from illusion based on ignorance of the truth and from evil views caused by attachment.

"The ninety-second is skilled teaching, for this enables others to understand the Dharma according to their own capability.

"The ninety-third is the Four Ways to Emancipation,^{1-EN} for this ensures that both oneself and others attain enlightenment.

"The ninety-fourth is to benefit others, for this prevents fascination with personal advancement in favour of helping others.

"The ninety-fifth is accepting the Law, for this destroys the delusion of others.

"The ninety-sixth is to compile merit, for this benefits others.

"The ninety-seventh is practice of samadhi, for this enables realization of the ten powers.^{2-EN}

"The ninety-eighth is ultimate peace [nirvana], for this embodies the Tathāgata's enlightenment.

"The ninety-ninth is the Buddha's wisdom, for this is omniscience.

"The hundredth is to unreservedly expound the Dharma, for this clarifies the truth.

"The hundred and first is right attitude, for this enables retention of the Buddha's teachings in their entirety.

"The hundred and second is the power of Dharma, for this enables retention of the Buddhas' teachings in their entirety.

"The hundred and third is the ability to freely teach the Law, for this causes all sentient beings to be joyful.

"The hundred and fourth is stability of practice, for this accords with the Dharma.

"The hundred and fifth is attainment of Anutputtika-dharma-ksanti,^{3-EN} for this is attainment of Buddhahood.

"The hundred and sixth is attainment of the stage of non-regressional practice, for this embodies the teachings of the Buddha.

1-EN The four ways to lead sentient beings to emancipation are:

(1) Alms giving – spiritual and material.

(2) Loving speech.

(3) Benefiting sentient beings with good conduct of body, speech, and mind.

(4) Assuming the same form as the sentient beings to be benefited.

2-EN (1) Devotion to the Buddha's teaching and non-attachment; (2) increasing one's devotion; (3) expedient ability to instruct people and alter their conduct; (4) understanding others' thoughts; (5) satisfying others' wishes; (6) ceaseless exertion; (7) including vehicles without abandoning the Mahayana; (8) mysterious ability of manifesting Buddhas in every world in each pore of the body; (9) making people turn toward the Buddha's teachings and leading them to perfection; and (10) satisfying all kinds of people with a single phrase.

3-EN The stage attained by a Bodhisattva in which he perceives dharmatā.

"The hundred and seventh is wisdom which enables progression through the various stages, for this brings about the abhiseka^{1-EN} associated with this, and the acquisition of knowledge.

"The hundred and eighth is attainment of the abhiseka stage, for this ensures future supreme enlightenment."

In conclusion, the Bodhisattva Hu-ming said, "Celestial beings, you should maintain constant awareness of these hundred and eight brilliant teachings." These, then, are the hundred and eight teachings of the Dharma. Before they descend to the human world, Bodhisattvas never fail to expound them to the celestial inhabitants of the Tusita Heaven. Bodhisattva Hu-ming was Shakyamuni Buddha's name in this heaven.

These teachings are recorded in the T'ien-sheng Kuang-teng-lu, compiled by Li Fu-ma. It was because so few trainees were aware of these teachings that he compiled this work. Trainees who aspire to Buddhahood and thereby to become a teacher of both celestial and terrestrial beings must fully understand these. Having not been a Bodhisattva in the Tusita Heaven, trainees should not be proud of their meagre attainment. Bodhisattvas in the Tusita Heaven enter directly into the realm of Buddhahood, without first having to pass through the period of chū-in.

(Date of writing unknown.)

1-EN "Initiation," special ceremonies to mark one's introduction to advanced teaching.

87. HAGHI DAI-NIN-GAKU

八大人覺。

"The eight means to enlightenment"

All the various past Buddhas were enlightened beings. Their great enlightenment is attributed to their having mastered the eight means to nirvana as human beings. These eight means were clarified by the Buddha Shakyamuni himself in his final teaching before he entered parinirvana.

The first of these "means" is freedom from greed. This results in freedom from the five desires.^{1-EN} The Buddha said, "Monks! People with unlimited desires, seeking only the rewards of fame and fortune, will suffer greatly. On the other hand, those with few wants are relieved of suffering and accumulate much merit and virtue. We should know this.

"Unaffected by greed, those in the latter category are neither slaves to the wishes of others nor of their own five sense organs. They gain clarity and quiescence of mind and will unquestionably attain nirvana."

The second "means" is satisfaction. That is to say to be fully quenched by whatever one is given. The Buddha said, "Monks! Maintain awareness of satisfaction for this results in relief from suffering, a pacified mind, and good fortune. Truly satisfied people are content even when they must sleep on the ground. The unsatisfied, on the other hand, show discontent even in a luxurious home. Generally, the latter kind of person is thought rich and the former poor. In reality, however, the reverse is true. Satisfied people pity the unsatisfied, for the latter are slaves to the five desires. This is the meaning of satisfaction."

The third "means" is to enjoy serenity. This means to live in solitude, away from the world of suffering. The Buddha said, "Monks ! Those who live in solitude gain the virtues of eternal peace. A quiet person is respected by both Indra, and all celestial beings. He breaks free from attachment to himself, and in this way he severs the root of suffering. Those who live with others will be hindered by them, just as a tree withers when many birds perch on it. A man attached to worldly desires is similar to an old elephant entrenched in mud – both are unable to free themselves, and both will finally be destroyed. This is the meaning of a solitary life."

The fourth "means" is diligence. That is to say constant striving to do good. The Buddha said, "Monks! Be diligent in your practice, for this will hasten realization of the truth. For this reason you should be diligent. A trickle of water, if consistent, wears away rock; practice of the Way, if consistent, wears away the obstacles to enlightenment. Intermittent rubbing together of wood will not produce fire; likewise interrupted practice will not produce enlightenment. This is the meaning of diligence."

The fifth "means" is preserved awareness of the Dharma. This means to have correct recollection of the Dharma. The Buddha said, "Monks! Those who seek a good master, a guide to the truth, should preserve right awareness of the Dharma, for this gains freedom from delusion. Heed these words. If you fail to do so you will forfeit its various associated merits. On the other hand, if you preserve awareness of the Dharma you will gain protection from the five desires, and you will be just like a soldier dressed in impenetrable armour. This is the meaning of preserved awareness of the Dharma."

The sixth "means" is practice of samādhi. That is to say close adherence to the Dharma. The Buddha said, "Monks ! Learn to control your mind, for this will enable you to practice samādhi and thereby realize the true state of life and death; furthermore, be diligent in your practice of the various forms of samādhi, for this centres the mind and prevents distraction. A dam prevents leakage of water; likewise practice of samādhi prevents leakage of wisdom. This is the meaning of samadhi."

The seventh "means" is practice of wisdom. Wisdom is the result of having practiced according to the Dharma that one has heard and considered. The Buddha said, "Monks! A man of wisdom is free from attachment to greed. Engage in self observation, for this prevents loss of wisdom and leads to enlightenment. If you fail to do this you are neither a Buddhist trainee nor a lay man. A truly wise man is like a sturdy ship crossing the seas of old age, sickness, and death; like a brilliant light illuminating the darkness of ignorance; like good medicine to the sick; and like a sharp axe cutting through the wood of delusion. Wisdom which arises as a result of having heard, considered, and practiced the Dharma produces innumerable benefits to advance oneself [in the Way], The truth, once illuminated by the light of wisdom, is evident even to the naked eye. This is the meaning of wisdom."

The eighth "means" is to refrain from frivolous speech. This means to transcend discriminative thought and to earnestly seek understanding of the true nature of all things. The Buddha said, "Monks! Frivolous speech clouds the mind and will prevent even you, as monks, from realizing enlightenment; therefore quickly cease from engaging in mind confusing frivolous speech. Only those who do this gain the pleasantries of nirvana. This is the meaning of refraining from frivolous speech.

The preceding are the eight great means to enlightenment. Each of these "means" having a further eight factors totals sixty-four in all. In a broader sense, however, the number of factors is limitless. These sixty-four means were Shakyamuni's final teaching and form the core of the Mahayana doctrine. Shakyamuni proclaimed them at midnight on February 15; they were his final words. Thereafter he remained silent until he entered the parinirvana.

The Buddha concluded with the following words, "Monks! Endeavour to seek the Way, for nothing in this world is permanent. Stay silent for a while, for time is passing, and I am about to enter parinirvana. These are my final words."

We trainees must study the Tathāgata's final teaching. If we do not do so we are truly not a disciple of the Buddha. Still, though, many in the latter day are ignorant of this teaching. A situation that is the result of them having succumbed to temptation or through having accumulated insufficient merit.

In the past during times of both true and degenerate Buddhism, all trainees studied these means and practiced accordingly. Now, in contrast, the number who are even aware they exist would be no more than one or two in a thousand. How regrettable that Buddhism has declined in this way. Yet still the essence of the Law, intact and not eroded by time, exists and can be found throughout the world. Quickly, therefore, we should begin to practice according to these eight means.

To contact the Buddhist Dharma is no mean feat, and to be born a human is equally difficult. To have done both, as well as being born in the Jambudvīpa^{1-EN} continent, the best of the three continents, as we have done, is extremely fortunate. In the Jambudvīpa continent we can see the Buddha, study the Dharma, and enter the monkhood. Those who died before Tathāgata

1-EN Material gain, sexual desire, food, fame and fortune, and sleep.

1-EN The northern of the four continents that surround Mount Sumeru. Only three continents are referred to here because the inhabitants of Uttarakuru do not know of Buddhism.

entered parinirvana were unable to contact these eight means to enlightenment. We, however, through having done good in previous lives, have been able to see, hear, and study them. If in successive lives we continue to study them, our merit will increase, and finally we will realize supreme enlightenment; furthermore, if we proclaim them to others, we ourselves are no different from the Buddha Shakyamuni.

This was written at Eihei-ji on January 6 in 1253

My master [Dōgen] had undertaken to write the entire Shobogenzo into kana, the preceding chapter being the twelfth to be completed. Due to deteriorating health, however, which finally led to his death, this chapter proved to be the last. I feel a deep regret that the remaining chapters could not be completed. Those who esteem my late master should copy these twelve chapters and preserve them. The teachings presented in this chapter were also the final teachings of the Buddha Shakyamuni.

88. BENDOWA

辨道話

“A story of Buddhist practice”

Every Buddha and each Tathāgata has the wonderful ability to attain supreme and perfect enlightenment; they transmit that enlightenment from one to another without alteration. This ability transcends and is not bound by any human devices – it is jiyū samādhi,^{1-EN} the proper method and standard of the transmission from Buddha to Buddha.

To achieve this samādhi you must enter the true gate of Zazen – the best method of manifesting enlightenment. It is present in everyone, but unless there is practice it cannot be manifested, and unless there is realization it cannot be perceived. One or many, horizontal or vertical cannot limit or describe it. Speak it and it has already filled your mouth; let it go and it fills your hands. Buddhas exist within jiyū samādhi without attachment; sentient beings also exist therein, but do not realize how their consciousness and perceptions function. Through this samādhi we can find true reality and achieve perfect harmony – just abandon discrimination.

Soon after I first began to seek the Way, I visited many teachers in all parts of the country trying to find answers to my questions. I met the priest Myōzen of Kennin-ji^{2-EN} and studied with him for nine years. He was the chief disciple of the Patriarch Eisai^{3-EN}, and Myōzen was the only one who correctly transmitted his master's true Dharma. None of the other disciples could be compared with him.

Finally I met Zen Master Nyojō of Mt. Daibyakuho and practiced under him. He resolved all my doubts and settled my mind concerning the true meaning of practice. I returned home in 1228. After I came back to Japan I made a vow to propagate the Dharma for the benefit of all beings even though it would be very difficult for me to make it known. However, because of the confused state of society, I decided to wait for a time before spreading the Buddhist Dharma. I drifted from place to place like the clouds and water plants to look into the hearts of those teachers who claimed they transmitted the Dharma. Yet after seeing many devout people, who never thought of fame or fortune and who diligently sought out the Buddhist Way, being led astray by devious teachers, I wondered how the true seed of prajna could grow in them. They were in a state of confusion and their understanding was destroyed, so how could they attain the great Way? I therefore decided to stop my drifting life and make the right Dharma known by teaching and compiling for posterity the precepts and examples I studied and heard in the Zen monasteries in Sung Dynasty China. I hope this will preserve the True Dharma. This is essential, is it not?

At the assembly on Vulture Peak Shakyamuni Buddha bestowed the True Dharma to Mahākāśyapa which in turn was transmitted from Patriarch to Patriarch passing to Bodhidharma. Bodhidharma then went to China and transmitted it to Eka. This was the first true transmission of Zen teaching to the East. The Dharma was then bestowed to the succeeding Patriarchs continuing up to Daikan Enō, the sixth Patriarch. At that time, the true Dharma, free of sectarian or rationalizing influences, was widespread throughout China. His two chief disciples, Nangaku Ejō and Seigen Gyoshi,^{4-EN} inherited the Buddha-mind seal and became teachers of men and gods. Their respective schools expanded and gradually developed into the Five Schools – Hōgen, Igyō, Sōtō, Ummon, and Rinzai. Presently, only the Rinzai school is widespread throughout the country. Although each school has its own characteristics, they are all based on the Buddha-mind seal.

Buddhism was very influential and expanded rapidly after its introduction to China during the late Han Dynasty [c. A. D. 67]; however, various other teachings were circulated and it was never determined which was the best until Bodhidharma severed all contradictory and confusing doctrines and established the pre-eminence of the right Dharma, which spread rapidly. I hope the same will happen in our country.

All the Patriarchs and Buddhas who have preserved the Buddhist Dharma insist that proper sitting in jiyū samādhi is the way to attain enlightenment. In both India and China all those who attained enlightenment followed this practice. The transmission from master to disciple is based upon the reception and preservation of this samādhi.

According to authentic tradition, that transmission is the ultimate Buddhist Dharma. Right from the very start of your study with a true master and the reception of his teaching it is not necessary to burn incense, make prostrations, recite the nembutsu, practice penances, or study the sūtras – just let body and mind drop off!

Even if you sit for only a moment in jiyū samādhi the Buddha-mind seal is imprinted in your body, mind, and words; simultaneously, the entire phenomenal world is also imprinted with the Buddha-mind seal – all space is enlightenment. The Tathāgatas' enlightened joy increases and their wonderful attributes renew themselves. Furthermore, all beings in the ten directions of the universe, in the three paths, and in the six worlds^{5-EN} are pure and bright in body and mind; they realize perfect liberation and reveal their original form as the enlightenment of Buddha. That is, the variety of phenomenal objects themselves are Buddha's enlightenment – his body, his sitting under the Bodhi tree, his turning of the wheel of the Law; they all expound the most profound form of prajñā.

Moreover, since enlightened ones have the ability of merit-transference,^{6-EN} people who sit in Zazen share in the truth acquired by Buddha and therefore cast off body and mind and all worldly attachments. Their insight (prajñā) permeates even the most minute speck of dust, and it cultivates, perfects, and develops Buddhahood and each Dharma. Land, trees and grasses, fences, walls and tiles—the entire realm of dharmadhatu^{7-EN} – can be perceived, from the standpoint of enlightenment, to perform the work of Buddha. All people unconsciously receive benefits from the wind and water; similarly, because of merit-transference all men receive the imperceptible benefits of Buddha's wondrous and incomprehensible teaching and are able to manifest their innate enlightenment. This original innate enlightenment extends throughout the universe and transforms itself into inexhaustible Buddha-merit which is inextricably bound with the infinite, incessant, incomprehensible and undefinable Buddhist Dharma. However, do not think that such a realization consciously exists in Zazen; true awakening emerges through absolute quiescence, beyond consciousness.

1-EN The self-enjoyment of one's awakening; self-fulfilment, the consummation of spiritual experiences.

2-EN (Myōzen Butsujo) 1184-1225.

3-EN 1141- 1215, founder of the Japanese Rinzai School and Kenninji in Kyoto.

4-EN Nan-yüeh Hsai-jang (677-744) and Ch'ing yüan Hsing-ssu (d. 740).

5-EN The three paths are hell, animals and hungry ghosts; the six worlds consist of the three paths and demons, men, and deva-gods.

6-EN Purinama, the ability of transferring one's merit or virtues to others who are seeking the Way.

7-EN The entire realm of the phenomenal world.

If you think practice and enlightenment are different, as ordinary people do, then there must be some sort of mutual perception between the Zen practitioner and his enlightenment. This is false because there can be no discrimination within enlightenment. Although disturbances and illusions flow in and out during Zazen, they appear within *jijuyū samādhi* and are therefore transformed into enlightenment and do not disrupt or interfere with anything. They also are the work of Buddha – extremely profound and infinitely strong. Their power permeates the trees, grasses and earth; all of them shine brightly with great Divine Light and preach the profound, incomprehensible, and incessant Dharma. Trees, grasses, a wall, a fence; all proclaim the Dharma for the sake of everyone – ordinary people, saints, and sentient beings. The reverse is also true. Furthermore, the boundary between the self-enlightenment of oneself and others is permeated with enlightenment; they work together reciprocally. Consequently, Zazen, even done for a short time by one person, enlivens and unifies all forms of existence. It covers infinite time and pervades past, present and future while simultaneously working ceaselessly for the enlightenment of all sentient beings. Buddhas, sentient beings, and phenomena have only one form of practice and one undifferentiated enlightenment. And it is not just limited to the practice of sitting in Zazen. Hearing the echo of emptiness is like the wonderful sound of a mallet, both before and after it strikes a bell.^{8-EN} In addition, every human being has its own original nature and function that is beyond comprehension by rational means. Even if all the innumerable Buddhas of the entire universe combined their wisdom and attempted to measure the merit of one person's Zazen, they could not fathom it. Now you can see how infinite the merit of Zazen is.

(Questions and Answers)

Q. A foolish person might ask, "There are many different sects and schools in Buddhism. Why then do you only advocate the practice of Zazen?"

A. Because it is the right gate to enter the Buddhist Way.

Q. But why?

A. Beyond any doubt, Shakyamuni taught that Zazen was the best means for realizing enlightenment. He found the Way through Zazen and transmitted it to his disciples. All of the Tathāgatas of the past, present, and future realized the Way through Zazen. It has been transmitted from Patriarch to Patriarch as the right gate. This is why I maintain Zazen. is the best way to enter Buddhism.

Q. Ordinary people find it difficult to comprehend the unsurpassed teaching of the Tathāgatas. Wouldn't it be better for them to practice the nembutsu or chant the sūtras in order to help them achieve enlightenment? Isn't sitting cross-legged, doing nothing, a waste of time for them?

A. Your question maligns the Mahayana. Such an illusion is comparable to being in the ocean and saying that there is no water. Fortunately, all the Buddhas have confirmed Zazen. as the fulfilment of the Way and sit in *jijuyū samādhi*. Is not their merit beneficial both to themselves and others? It is a great pity that you do not realize that your Buddha-eye is not opened and you are intoxicated with the things of the world.

True, the state of the Tathāgatas is totally incomprehensible; only a person of great talent and faith can approach it. It is extremely difficult, perhaps impossible, for the unworthy or distrustful to come near it. Even on Vulture Peak, when Shakyamuni [delivered the Lotus Sūtra] he allowed some to leave. Therefore, if you aspire to the right faith, practice and study Zazen; if you do not seek the Way, you should sit back and reflect why you have not received the benefits of the Dharma handed down by past generations.

Do you really believe there is any merit to be gained by reciting the sūtras or the nembutsu? To think that wagging the tongue or raising the voice has the same merit as Zazen is a misguided notion. You must be really far removed from the true Buddhist Dharma if you can even begin to compare those practices with Zazen. Further, what you read in the sūtras or commentaries should make the teaching of Buddha on sudden and gradual enlightenment clear to you and lead you to enlightenment. You must realize that useless speculations or devices will never increase your merit. If you think you can attain the Buddhist Way by foolishly reciting the name of Buddha thousands of times, you are just like someone who points his cart north when he wants to go south or tries to fit a square peg into a round hole. If you merely recite the words without implementing them in your practice you are like someone with a prescription who fails to mix the medicine. Endlessly repeating the name of Buddha is like the frogs in the rice fields croaking day and night—it means absolutely nothing. Those who are intoxicated by fame or fortune cannot relinquish those practices and are found in both the past and present. They are pitiful.

You must realize that the wonderful Dharma of the past seven Buddhas can only be received and preserved when it is transmitted from an enlightened master to an earnest and right-thinking disciple. Those who only study sūtras or literature can never grasp this. That is why it is necessary to abandon all doubts and suspicions, follow a true master and attain *jijuyū samādhi*.

Q. The teachings of both the Hokke and Kegon schools, said to represent the paramount teaching of the Mahayana, have been brought to Japan. In addition, the Shingon school, whose teachings were given personally from Mahavairocana Buddha (Daiichi Nyorai) to Vajrasatta (Kongo Sutta), is also present in Japan. That school emphasizes the teaching "Our mind is Buddha" and "This very mind can attain Buddhahood." It teaches that enlightenment can be attained in one sitting without going through many kalpas of practice. It is considered by some to be the most sublime form of Buddhism.^{9-EN} In light of this, why do you still maintain that Zazen is superior to all these other practices?

A. The point is not a matter of arguing which teaching is superior or inferior, or which is more profound, but rather finding which is the most authentic. Some are drawn to Buddhism by the natural beauty of grasses and flowers, mountains and rivers; others find the treasures of Buddhism by holding earth, rocks, sand or pebbles in their hands.

Even though everything is marked with a name or character, those names do not express the true nature of the universe. The great wheel of the Law turns even in a speck of dust. Consequently, "Our mind is Buddha" is like the moon in the water and "This very mind can attain Buddhahood" is like a reflection in a mirror. Do not play with words. In order to realize direct

8-EN Here the striking of a bell symbolizes the actual practice of Zazen. However, we must be able to perceive *sūnyatā* at all times – "both before and after" the bell is struck.

9-EN The Hokke School here means the Tendai school introduced to Japan by Dengyō Daishi (Saichō, 767-822). The Kegon school was brought to Japan by Korean and Chinese monks during the Nara period (646-794), and the Shingon was founded by the famous Kobo Daishi (Kukai 774- 835)

enlightenment we must follow the splendid way used by the Buddhas to bestow enlightenment from teachers to students, making them true disciples.

Therefore, to receive or transmit the teaching of Buddha, it is necessary to have a master who has the seal of enlightenment. A scholar who values letters is useless as a master; it is like the blind leading the blind. All disciples who follow the right transmission of an enlightened master thus convey the Buddhist Dharma from generation to generation. That is why even transmigrating spirits and Arhats^{10-EN} come to a true master to find their real self. This kind of thing is not found in other teachings. Concentrate on the study of Buddhism and be sure to realize that all possess the unsurpassed enlightenment of Buddha. Although we always possess enlightenment it is often not understood properly, erroneous views appear, and the great Way is lost. We imagine flowers in the sky and various thoughts and viewpoints arise: the twelve-linked chain of dependent origination, the twenty-five forms of existence, the three vehicles, the existence or non-existence of Buddha and so on.^{11-EN} These certainly do not lead to the correct practice of Buddhism.

Abandon all concepts, concentrate single mindedly on Zazen, and go beyond the notions of enlightenment or illusion, emotion and reason. Then you will be able to walk freely and make use of great enlightenment. Those who place value on words and letters have nothing to compare with this.

Q. Both samādhi, one of the three types of learning,^{12-EN} and dhyana, one of the six pāramitās,^{13-EN} are said to be practiced by all the Bodhisattvas from the very beginning of their religious life, regardless if they are bright or dull-witted. Zazen can probably be included in those practices, so on what do you base your contention that the True Dharma of the Tathāgata is centred in Zazen?

A. This question occurs because the appellation "Zen sect" has been applied to the supreme, incomprehensible and Great Dharma of the Tathagata, the Eye and Treasury of the True Law. However, we must realize that the designation "Zen sect" first arose in China and was not known in India. There were some monks and laymen at Shorinji monastery on Suzan who were ignorant of the True Dharma of Buddha and considered the Great Teacher Bodhidharma, who spent nine years in Zazen there, to be nothing more than an Indian monk who placed special emphasis on the practice of Zazen. His descendants also devoted themselves exclusively to Zazen and their transmission became known as the "Zazen sect" among laymen. Nowadays the "za" has been dropped and it is simply called the "Zen Sect." Yet the true nature of Zazen is found among the sayings of the Patriarchs and it is clear that it differs from the samādhi or dhyana mentioned above. Make no mistake, the True Dharma has been handed down directly from the time of Mahākāśyapa. Long ago, during an assembly on Vulture Peak, he received the Eye and Treasury of the True Law and the Serene Mind of Nirvana. This was witnessed by countless celestial beings some of whom are now present. There is no doubt that they continuously watch over the True Dharma and never rest.

Therefore, we can definitely state that Zazen is the incomparable Way to the True Dharma.

Q. Why should sitting, in the form of Zazen, be used rather than the other positions of standing, walking, or lying to enter the Way of enlightenment?

A. It is impossible to catalogue all of the innumerable ways Buddhas have practiced and attained enlightenment, but they all have practiced Zazen – it is the way used by all the Buddhas and it is not necessary to seek anything else. Zazen has been praised by all the Patriarchs as the supreme gate of peace and joy. It is the easiest way among the four positions and has not only been utilized by one or two Buddhas, but by all of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Q. Zazen may be an effective way of practice for those who have not yet realized enlightenment. But what about those who are already enlightened?

A. It is said that we should not relate our dreams in front of fools or give oars to woodcutters but I will try to answer your question. It is the view of non-believers that practice and enlightenment are not one. But practice is itself enlightenment and even the initial resolve to seek the Way already contains complete and perfect enlightenment. There is no enlightenment apart from practice. It is very important to realize this. Since practice is enlightenment, enlightenment is without end and practice is without beginning. Shakyamuni and Mahākāśyapa, Bodhidharma and the sixth Patriarch Daikan Enō, and all of the Buddhas and Patriarchs knew that practice is enlightenment.

From the very beginning, practice and enlightenment are inseparable. Even our first steps in the practice of the Way transmit the marvellous practice of realization and contain original innate enlightenment. The Buddhas and Patriarchs have always taught that practice is enlightenment and that we must not abandon our practice. If we cut off the consciousness of original enlightenment, marvellous practice fills our body and mind and becomes true practice.

During my travels in Great Sung Dynasty China I saw many Zen monasteries, ranging in size from five to six hundred monks to several thousand, where Zazen was practiced day and night. When I asked the abbots of these monasteries, all men who transmitted the Buddha-seal what the essence of Buddhism was, they told me practice and enlightenment are not two different things.

Therefore, I now urge all seekers of the True Dharma, not only disciples or those of high spiritual attainment, but all people – rank beginners or those full of experience, enlightened or not–to adhere to the teachings of the Buddhas and Patriarchs and practice the Way of Zazen.

Have you not heard these sayings: "There is practice and enlightenment, but do not distort them by clinging"^{14-EN} and "Seeing the Way is to practice the Way."^{15-EN} We can now see that the most important thing is to practice within enlightenment.

Q. What about great teachers of the past [such as Dengyo Daishi and Kobo Daishi] who went to China and then transmitted the Dharma, but only taught doctrine and ignored Zazen?

10-EN A Hinayāna saint who has attained perfect knowledge.

11-EN 1The twelve-linked chain of dependent origination consists of ignorance, actions, consciousness, name and form, the six sense organs, contact, perception, desire, attachment, existence, birth and death; the twenty-five forms of existence are the four evil worlds, the four continents of the world of form and the four heavens of the formless world. The three vehicles are sravaka-yana, the pratyeka buddha-yana, and the Bodhisattiva-yana. The five vehicles include those three and the vehicles of men and devas (gods or celestial beings).

12-EN Precepts, concentration and insight (sila, samadhi, and prajna).

13-EN Charity, precepts, patience, diligence, meditation and wisdom (dānā, sila, ksanti, virya, dhyana and prajna).

14-EN Nangaku Ejō.

15-EN Honjō of Shikūsan, (Pen-ching of Ssu-k'ung shan, 667-761).

A. The time was not yet ripe for the propagation of Zazen.

Q. Did those teachers actually comprehend the merit of Zazen?

A. If they had they would have made it known.

Q. Some have said, "One should not fret over the constant flux of life and death. There is a simple way to be freed from the cycle of life and death: by knowing the immutable, unchanging mind. This means that although the body dies the real essence of the mind never perishes. When you realize that the essence of the mind is not subject to the cycle of life and death and only exists temporarily in the body, you perceive that it continues to live on in various places without ceasing. It is constant and never changes throughout past, present, or future. Then you are said to be released from the cycle of life and death. That cycle is put to an end and when your body dies, you enter the ocean of real existence. When you flow into this ocean of being you possess the same cardinal virtues as the Buddhas and Tathāgatas. Even if you comprehend this in your present life you nevertheless are different from a holy man because of the delusions accumulated in your former lives. If you fail to understand the unchanging and immutable nature of the mind you can never be rid of the rebirth of karma. Without further delay we should grasp the mind's immutability. What good is spending your entire life sitting quietly, without doing anything?" Is such a view in accordance with your interpretation of the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs?

A. What you have just said is certainly not the Buddhist Dharma but rather the view of the non-believer Senika.^{16-EN} That view holds that we have in our body an intellect or mind, that distinguishes things as good or bad, right or wrong, pleasurable or painful, bitter or sweet. When our body dies, the mind separates from the body and is reborn somewhere else. Although our body dies, the mind lives in another place. Like this, it exists eternally. Such is the teaching of the non-believer Senika.

If you think such a theory constitutes the Buddhist teaching, you are even more foolish than someone who picks up a roof tile and thinks it is a gold coin. Nothing can compare with such idiocy. Nanyo Echū^{17-EN} of the Tang Dynasty cautioned about such erroneous views. Is it not extremely stupid to equate the view that the mind remains while the body perishes, with the True Dharma of the Buddhas? Actually, such a view creates the very cycle of life and death that they are trying to get free from. This is most pitiable. Recognize it as a false view and do not pay it any attention.

Out of compassion, I will now correct your misunderstandings. From the beginning, Buddhism has taught that body and mind are one and substance and form are not two different things. Be certain that this was taught in both India China. Furthermore, in Buddhism, both imperishability or perishability are not to be separated as body and mind, or substance or form. Where does the body perish and the mind abide? In Buddhism there is no nirvana apart from the cycle of life and death. Moreover, if you mistakenly think the mind is eternal and consider it to be true Buddhist Wisdom that is beyond life and death, you should recognize that the very mind you are using is bound to the cycle of life and death – this is very futile.

In Buddhism, mind and body are one; then how can it be that the mind abides and the body perishes? If the body and mind were originally one, but now different then the Buddhist teaching would be false. Furthermore, do not think that the cycle of life and death should be eradicated – that is a serious mistake. It must be clear that Mind is the original gate to the true teachings of Buddhism and it includes the entire essence of phenomena, which cannot by any means be divided into different aspects such as body or mind, life or death, enlightenment or nirvana. All phenomena, all the myriad forms of existence are only this one Mind; nothing is excluded. This is the way Buddhists interpret the mind. Therefore, do not differentiate between body and mind, life or death and nirvana. All of us are basically disciples of Buddha, so refrain from listening to the babble of non-believers.

Q. Is it absolutely necessary for those who practice Zazen to be strict adherents of the Buddhist precepts?

A. Keeping the precepts and purity of life are the standards of the Zen school and attributes of the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Q. Is it permissible for those who practice Zazen to utilize mantras and step-by-step contemplation^{18-EN}?

A. When I was in China I asked my master about this, He said that he never heard of any of the Patriarchs in India or China making use of those practices. Truly, it is necessary to concentrate on just one method; otherwise the real wisdom will never be found.

Q. Can Zazen be practiced by lay men and women or is it limited to monks?

A. The Patriarchs teach that in the Buddhist Dharma there must be no distinction between men or women, or of their high or low stations.

Q. When someone becomes a monk he renounces all secular ties and his practice is unimpeded. But how can lay people, who are hard pressed to make a living, strive to receive the Buddhist Way?

A. The Buddhas and Patriarchs with their great compassion have opened the gates and mercifully guide all sentient beings to enlightenment. Everyone can enter that gate. Historically there are many examples, e.g., the Emperors Daishu and Junshū of China^{19-EN}, heavily burdened by the affairs of state, still practiced the Buddhist Way, and the Prime Ministers Ri and Bo,^{20-EN} who were advisors to the Emperor, both practiced the Way through Zazen and attained the great Way of Buddha. The important thing is determination and that does not depend on one's state as a layman or monk. Furthermore, do not think that everyday acts are a hindrance ; there is no Buddhist Dharma outside everyday life.

A recent minister of the Sung dynasty, Hyō-Shō-Kō^{21-EN} had a profound understanding of Buddhism. He composed this poem about himself:

Escaping briefly from my public duties, I sit in Zazen.

Rarely do I lie down to sleep;

I seem to be a minister of state

16-EN See Sokushinzebutsu.

17-EN Nan-yang Hui-chung (683-769).

18-EN Mantras are magic formulas or secret words used in esoteric Buddhism; shikari, step-by-step meditation, is used in Tendai practice.

19-EN Tai-Tsung and Skun-tsung, reigned 763-79 and 80s, respectively.

20-EN Li and Tang, two high officials of the Tang Dynasty (c. 800).

21-EN Feng, d. 1153.

But am better known as “the old monk.”

Although he was extremely busy, he attained enlightenment through his devotion to the Buddhist Way. Similarly, we should reflect upon our own life and look at the examples of those in ancient times.

At the present time in great Sung China there are emperors, ministers, officials and lay people who practice the Buddhist Way. Both soldiers and civilians are involved in the study and practice of the Way. Surely many of those will arouse the Mind. We can clearly see that social obligations or worldly affairs are not hindrances to the Buddhist Dharma. If the True Buddhist Dharma becomes widespread throughout the country, Buddhas and devas would constantly guard it and the land would enjoy tranquillity. When there is a period of peace the influence of the Buddhist Dharma increases and the country is governed harmoniously.

Moreover, in Shakyamuni’s time there were many scoundrels and villains who were converted to the Buddhist Way and since then even hunters and woodcutters attained enlightenment under the direction of the Patriarchs. Needless to say, anyone may follow this path if they have an authentic master.

Q. Is it possible to attain enlightenment through the practice of Zazen even in these degenerate days?

A. Buddhist schools based on words and letters make a distinction between the right, imitative, and final stages of the Dharma but in authentic Mahayana teaching there is no such distinction: It emphasizes that anyone who practices will ultimately attain the Way. Not only that, if we follow the right transmission of the Dharma we can utilize our most treasured possession, our Buddha-nature, and attain the Way. We can know quite clearly whether or not we have obtained enlightenment, just as we can tell if we are drinking hot or cold water.

Q. Some say that if we totally comprehend the meaning of “Our mind is Buddha,” there is no need to chant the sūtras or physically practice since by simply perceiving our own innate Buddha Dharma we attain the Buddhist Way in its totality. We should not seek it in others. Therefore, is it really necessary to practice Zazen?

A. Such a view is questionable. If what you said is correct then almost anyone could grasp the Dharma. The Way of the Buddha is to practice and study and to abandon the dichotomy of self and others. If it were just knowing that “Our mind is Buddha,” Shakyamuni would have not undertaken such austerities or suffered hardships in order to help others attain enlightenment. Consider the following example:

There was a temple director called Sokkō Gensoku, who was a disciple of Hōgen Bun’eki^{22-EN}. One day Hōgen asked him, “How long have you been here?”

“Three years,” replied Gensoku. “Why haven’t you asked me about the Buddhist Dharma?” Gensoku told him, “I don’t want to deceive you. When I was staying with the Zen Master Seihō^{23-EN} I experienced enlightenment of the Buddhist Dharma.” “Please tell me how you come to reach that state,” the master wanted to know. “I once asked Seihō what the true self of a Buddhist disciple is and he answered ‘the lamplighter asks for fire.’” “That’s a rather good expression,” Hōgen said, “But I’m afraid you didn’t understand it.” Gensoku said, “Well, I took it to mean that to look for fire with fire is like the self looking for the self.” Hōgen said, “I was right. You don’t understand it. If what you said constitutes the Buddhist Dharma, it never would have been transmitted to the present day.”

Gensoku was perplexed and left the monastery. On the way, however, he thought about Hōgen’s great reputation and his five hundred disciples; there must be something in his criticism of Gensoku’s understanding. He decided to return to Hōgen and prostrate himself before the master. He then asked, “What is the true self of a Buddhist disciple?” “The lamplighter asks for fire,” the master said. Hearing that, Gensoku was enlightened.

So we can see that one cannot attain the Buddhist Dharma by merely understanding that our mind is Buddha. If that were true, Hōgen would never have used such words to lead Gensoku to the Way or admonish him. When you first meet a good master, just follow the rules and devote yourself to the practice of Zazen; do not cling to superficial understanding. Then the marvellous Way of the Buddhist Dharma emerges and it will not be in vain.

Q. When we look at the chronicles of India and China we find that there was one who was enlightened upon hearing the sound of a piece of tile striking a bamboo and another who attained the Way when he saw peach blossoms.^{24-EN} Shakyamuni realized the Way when he saw the morning star and Ānanda attained the Dharma when told to take down a flag pole. Truly, from the time of the sixth Patriarch until the formation of the Five Schools many have been enlightened by a single word or phrase. Is it really certain that all of these people practiced the Way of Zazen?

A. Be certain that all those practiced the Way of Zazen, abandoned discrimination of all kinds, and went beyond duality.

Q. The people in India and China are basically honest and upright and, being highly cultured, can easily accept the Buddhist Dharma. On the other hand, benevolence and wisdom are lacking in Japan, so the right seed of Buddha’s Dharma has had a difficult time growing. Our country is very uncivilized. This is a sorry situation. Our priests are not even equal to laymen of those countries. The populace is narrow-minded, senseless, and addicted to worldly fame and fortune. If such people practice Zazen can they really attain the enlightenment of the Buddhist Dharma?

A. What you have said is quite correct. Benevolence and wisdom are lacking among our people and they are quite dull-witted. Even if they were given the nectar of the Dharma it would likely turn into poison. They are too attached to fame and fortune. Nevertheless, it is still possible for them to attain the Way. During the time of Buddha one person was said to have passed through the stages of Arhathood by being struck by a ball, and [a courtesan entered the Buddhist Way after playfully] wearing a kesa. Both of these people were little more than stupid animals. Yet even they were delivered from illusion by right faith. Again, an old woman attained enlightenment by seeing a foolish old monk sitting quietly while she served him a meal. It did not depend on worldly knowledge or letters, words or sūtras; it was just the possession of a right-minded attitude.

Moreover, it took only about two thousand years for the teaching of Buddha to spread over the entire world. Each country has its own regional and cultural diversities, compassion and insight are not necessarily widespread, and the people are not always intelligent or wise. In spite of that, the True Dharma of the Tathāgata possesses an incomprehensible power filled with great merit and virtue. When the time comes, it will spread throughout the land, regardless of whether the people are sharp-

22-EN Hsuan-t’ao (dates unknown) and Fa-yen Wen-i (885-958). This story is from the twenty-fifth chapter of the Dentōroku.

23-EN Ching-feng. Not much is known about him.

24-EN Kyogen Shikan (Hsiang-yen Chih-hsien, c. 820) and Reiyun Shigon (Ling-yun Chih-chin).

witted or not; if they have a right-minded attitude they will attain the Way. Just because our land lacks benevolence and wisdom, and the people have inferior understanding does not mean that the True Dharma cannot be comprehended here in Japan. Everyone possesses the seed of prajñā although our people have rarely manifested it.

We have examined at random many questions and answers. Probably we have seen flowers where none exist. But after all, the true practice of the Way of Zazen has not yet been transmitted to Japan. That is very unfortunate for all who wish to find the True Way. Consequently, I have gathered together what I learned and heard in China and have written down the teachings of my clear-minded masters in order to help those serious students. I have not had the opportunity to explain in detail all the practices, rules and regulations of Chinese monasteries but will do so at another time.

Japan is far removed from the centre of Buddhism but since the time of the Emperors Kimmēi and Yōmei^{25-EN} the Buddhist Law has advanced eastward. However, Buddhism here is caught up in doctrinal disputes and rituals and the situation is quite disordered. You must take up life in a hermitage among the cliffs and rocks, with a tattered robe and a mended bowl, and devote yourself to Zazen; you will realize the unsurpassed wisdom of Buddha and penetrate the great matter of life and death. This is the teaching of Ryūge Iton^{26-EN} and the legacy of Mahākāśyapa. The proper method of Zazen is explained in my Fukanzazengi which I wrote in the previous Karoku period.^{27-EN}

Although it is better for the propagation of the Buddhist Dharma in a country to have the blessings of a king, if we consider the legacy of Vulture Peak we can see that all the kings, lords, ministers, and generals of all the various countries have been charged with the preservation and propagation of the Buddhist Dharma. If this influence exists then it is a Buddhist country, is it not? Thus it is not necessary to wait for a certain time or place to propagate the Way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs. And never think that the propagation is starting from today.

Accordingly, I have written this treatise for all those seeking The True Way.

Written mid-autumn, 1231, by the Dharma-transmitter Shamon Eihei Dōgen, who went to China.

25-EN 539–571 and 585–7 respectively.

26-EN Lung-ya Chū-tun, (835-923).

27-EN 1225-1231. Fukanzazengi was written in 1227.

"The four ways a Bodhisattva acts to benefit human beings"

The four ways a Bodhisattva acts to benefit human beings are:

1. Fuse [Alms-giving]
2. Aigō [Loving words]
3. Rigyo [beneficial actions]
4. Dōji [Identification with the beings that are to be helped]

Fuse also means futon, which is not to covet or be greedy, not to flatter, adulate, nor curry favour. Even a king, who controls the whole world must have futon if he wishes to propagandise the right way. Only by the virtue of futon can he build a peaceful world. The virtue of futon is like the virtue we grant to jewels and to people we do not know: without greed or malice. It is the same as offering a flower that blooms in the far mountains to Buddha, or offering precious jewels or a previous life to a sentient being. We possess in our original nature the virtue of giving alms, spiritually or materially, in each moment. Although in principle nothing belongs to self we can give alms. It is of no concern whether they are large or small: the important point is whether they can be beneficial to others. The merit of alms-giving itself bears fruit. If we entrust and commit ourselves to the Way, we will be complete. In such ways treasure be-gets treasure, and becomes alms-giving [fuse]. We give fuse ourselves and accordingly others too give fuse. The motivating power of fuse pierces heavenly beings, human beings, saints and sages, and leads to complete enlightenment. This is due to innen [causal motivation] for alms-giving actions.

The Buddha said that when a person who gives alms comes to an assembly of monks, they will look respectfully at him. The meaning of this is that we do not look at the mind of the person who gives alms. One can touch the mind without words so we should give alms. One could give a single word or verse of teaching to people, a small coin, or even a blade of grass. Such alms-giving can cause good deeds in this world and the next. The Dharma is a treasure, and treasure is the Dharma. This is due to the compassion of Bodhisattvas.

The following is an example of this :

There was once a king who tried to cure a sick minister by giving him medicine and burning his beard. The people of his country trusted him. And also there was a child who, playing in a sandpit, offered sand as food to the Buddha. Later due to the merit of this action, he ascended to the throne. In both cases, they simply did what they could without expecting results.

Supplying a boat on the river or building a bridge are deeds of fuse. If we learn the real meaning of fuse, we will know that to have a position in society and to act on behalf of society is also fuse. Politics and industry are themselves fuse. It is their nature just as when the time comes, the wind will cause the flower to drop, and the bird will chirp in accord with the seasons.

Great King Aśoka,^{1-EN} who was deeply devoted to Buddhism and who did not, until just before his death at a great age, lose his power, offered half a mango to the assembly of monks [in temples they used mangoes to make soup]. It was only a small mango, but it gave the assembly great merit.

People who wish to do fuse should clarify this principle and make an effort not to lose any chance to give fuse. We indeed in our original nature possess the merit to give fuse and although each person may be different, each nonetheless has the opportunity to practice fuse.

The Buddha said that we should take fuse as our own; moreover we should give it to our parents, wives, and children. Even if we use it as our own, it will still be fuse, and what our parents, wives, and children will gain will also be fuse. Even if we only possess a mere trace of fuse, we will have joy in our minds, for it becomes that which we correctly transmit [to others] and this is done as a merit and facet of the Buddha. Moreover it is worthwhile even to practice one of the actions of a Bodhisattva.

We cannot change the mind of a sentient being, but if we give material fuse we have a chance to show our mind of the Buddhist Way and so can help it to change and experience the Way of enlightenment. To do this, we should certainly take a first step by beginning to practise fuse. In this way fuse comes first among the six deeds [pāramitās] of the Bodhisattva. We cannot measure the size, great or small, of mind. Nor indeed can we measure the size of materials. There is, however, a time when mind changes materials and materials change mind. This is when both of them have fuse.

Aigō [loving words] mean that whenever we see sentient beings, our compassion is aroused naturally and we use loving words. We cannot imagine using coarse speech. It is natural to ask about other's welfare when we greet them. In Buddhism we use the word chincho [to take care of yourself] and for older people there is the greeting fushin [how are you?]. When we meet together and talk, we should care for each other, as we would do for a baby. With such a mind, we can speak truly- that is to say, we can give aigō. If someone has virtue, we should praise it, and if they do not, we should feel pity. If we love aigō and give it out, the action of aigō will increase. The aigō which is concealed in our daily life will emerge. Throughout life, in the present time, we should seek aigō. We should never forget aigō either in this world or the next: it is the basis of the next life. To become friends with the enemy and to reconcile enemy kings should be the root of aigō. When we listen to aigō, we should face others, and that will make them happy and make them smile with joy. If we listen to aigō fully we will impress our heart and spirit. We should realize that aigō comes from aishin [the mind of love] and that aishin is based on compassion. We should learn that aigō has great power to change situations and that it has greater virtue and meaning than mere praise.

Rigyo means that we take care of every kind of person, no matter whether of high or low position, for this gives our life

1-EN Shishōbō: four ways of leading sentient beings to emancipation. Bodhisattvas use these means to enable people to do good, avoid evil, and follow the Way. They are:

- (1) Alms-giving [fuse] – both spiritual and material
- (2) Loving words [aigō]
- (3) Benefiting human beings by good conduct of body, speech and mind [rigyo]
- (4) Assuming the same form as that of the various sentient beings to be benefited [dōji].

1-EN The third king of the Mauryan Dynasty. It is said that he held the Third Buddhist Council at Pātaliputra. He erected stūpas and stone pillars all over the country and despatched missionaries abroad.

merit. We should think about people's present and future and about taking care of them so that they will develop merit.

A long time ago, during the Shin era in China, there was a man named Koyu who, on seeing a fisherman catch a turtle bought it and released it in the river. In the Gokan period, there was a man called Yoho who, as a boy saved a sparrow at the foot of Mount Kain. When these people saw the turtle and the sparrow, they simply felt sorry; they did not expect any special merit. They could not stop themselves from helping; their minds [of rigyo] simply caused them to do so.

Foolish people think that if the other person's merit comes first, their own will lose out, but this is not true. Rigyo is the one principle wherein we find no opposition between subjectivity and objectivity. It is a deed which gives merit to both.

There is a story from ancient times about King Shu. If a guest came when he was taking a bath or eating a meal, he would straighten his hair and receive the guest. He tried his best to give his merit to others without discriminating between people of different countries. He treated everyone in the same way. He took care of all people alike, no matter whether they bore him a grudge or were friendly.

If we do not have any discrimination, we can produce merit both for ourselves and others. If we have such a mind, we can find it in natural phenomena such as grass, trees, wind, and water. This mind should be resolved and always produce merit. Naturally such a mind [of rigyo] considers foolish people and wishes to save them.

Doji means not to differentiate self from others, in the manner of Shakyamuni, who was born and spent his whole life as a human being. He spent his entire life in the way of doji, even in other worlds such as hells or the animal realms. When we know doji we are at one with ourselves and others. There is an expression to be friends with the koto^{1-EN}, poetry and saké. This means that as a human being we make friends with such things as music, poetry, and saké, and that they make friends with us. We as humans make friends with heavens and gods and with other people; heavens make friends with heavens, gods with gods. In such ways, we learn about doji. In doji form is manner, style and attitude, and people harmonize both with themselves and others. At times, we harmonize first with ourselves, and, at times, first with others. The relationship between ourselves and others is as endless as is our relationship with time.

Kanshi said :

"The seas accept water without limit, thus creating great oceans, and mountains accept earth without limit, thus forming great mountain ranges."

In such a way, an outstanding king accepts all kinds of people and thus he will have many people and countries in his rule. Such an outstanding king will become in this way an emperor. An emperor does not dislike people, but this does not mean he will not give punishment, or indeed prizes. Even when he punishes, he never dislikes the person he is punishing. Long ago, when people were simple and honest, there was no need for any punishment; things were different from the present. Even in the present day, some people seek the Way without expectation of reward or punishment, though foolish people cannot imagine such an idea.

An outstanding king has a clear understanding of people's minds and he does not reject nor discriminate against anyone. In this way, people gather round him, thus forming a country or state. They show the kind of mind which seeks an outstanding king. Average people, however, do not know the idea or principle of the nature of an outstanding king; they are simply happy if the king does not dislike or reject them. Sometimes, not even being aware that the king will not reject them, they support him. In other words a brilliant king and foolish people are able, to live in harmony. In this manner, people [i.e., sentient beings] ask the king [Bodhisattva] for his support.

In all respects and wishes, the Bodhisattva practices in order to save sentient beings. What is most necessary is that we face everything with an open and flexible mind. All these four virtues, fuse, aigō, rigyo and doji, possess and include each other [i.e., they are not independent]. In this way these virtues total sixteen in all.

Written by Dōgen, transmitter of the Dharma from Sung China, on May 5, 1243

1-EN koto – Japanese musical instrument

90. HOKKE TEN HOKKE

法華轉法華

"Only a true flower shows its true face."

The Buddha land extends in the ten directions and covers the entire world. Every country has the true flower—beautiful, undefiled truth. All the Buddhas in the ten directions and in the three worlds and all Bodhisattvas who have attained supreme enlightenment show their true face, and the true face is shown in them. A Bodhisattva with unregressional practice is a man who, having studied the Lotus Sūtra, practices accordingly. The wisdom of the Buddhas is truly profound. Even though this wisdom abounds with peace and tranquillity, the ordinary person cannot understand it.

The principle where one is both enlightened by the Lotus Sūtra, and enlighten it simultaneously is personified in Manjusri Buddha.^{1-EN} Most people know Manjusri the Bodhisattva,; few, however, know Manjusri the Buddha. During his latter period of attainment, when he was aware that one is enlightened by and enlightens the Lotus Sūtra simultaneously, he lived in a dragon's shrine in the depths of the ocean [Buddha land]. Once, the Buddha Shakyamuni emerged as Manjusri Buddha. At this time he said, "The Buddhas and I alone understand that only a true flower shows its true face." A sūtra expands this: "Only the Buddhas in the ten directions and I fully realize this principle; consequently we are able to lead all sentient beings to enlightenment."

The principle where one enlightens the Lotus Sūtra and is enlightened by it simultaneously is personified by Samantabhadra Bodhisattva.^{2-EN} Bodhisattvas derive countless merit from this principle, and it is used as a device to lead sentient beings of varying ability, quality, and manner of practice to the Way. Even Mahāyānists sometimes fail to grasp this principle let alone ordinary people or Hinayānists. Whether or not we understand, however, is not important, for, ultimately, it is through this principle we will realize enlightenment. Growth of a tree is contingent on rain; growth of our Buddha-seeking mind is contingent on the Lotus Sūtra.

Samantabhadra Bodhisattva was giving a discourse on the Lotus Sūtra. At the same time Shakyamuni began his great proclamation on Vulture Peak. A divine light shone from Shakyamuni's third eye that illuminated eighteen thousand worlds to the east and being seen by Samantabhadra, he travelled to this place. It was during this assembly that Manjusri predicted the Buddha Maitreya^{1-EN} would succeed Shakyamuni. This is an example of being enlightened by and enlightening the Lotus Sūtra simultaneously.

Samantabhadra's discourse, the Buddhas attendance at Shakyamuni's proclamation, Mañjuśrī's prediction, and Shakyamuni's proclamation all occurred at different times. But, still, all reflect the principle that we enlighten and are enlightened by the Lotus Sūtra simultaneously. This is the reason why the Buddha appeared in the world to expound the Ekayana Teaching.^{2-EN} We should know this. The Ekayana Teachings are truly profound, far beyond the understanding of Hinayānists and ordinary people.

The Lotus Sūtra states. "The Ekayana Teaching "all form is true form" is clarified and transmitted by the Buddhas alone. The past seven Buddhas clarified it; Shakyamuni finalized it. Enlightenment is attainable by all. Yet, only those in India and China realize this.

The Ekayana Teaching which is considered one of the foremost teachings, first appeared in the world with Shakyamuni. From Shakyamuni it was transmitted through the ensuing line of Patriarchs to Enō, the thirty-third Patriarch, Two of Enō's disciples, Ejō and Gyoshi, received transmission, though only the latter stream, Gyoshi's, exists today.

These teachings are found in "The Wonderful Sūtra of the True Lotus Flower"—so called because it is the most wonderful sūtra. Information regarding the Bodhisattvas is also recorded in this sūtra.

All phenomenon, whether occurring on Vulture Peaks, in the great oceans, or on the great earth, is within itself truth. Just being is real existence, and real existence is just being. This is the reason for Shakyamuni's appearance in the world. A true flower shows the truth simultaneously with the truth showing the true flower. This fact is the umbrella under which eternal life, omniscience, impermanence, and samadhi occur. This truth is also known as the Eye and Treasury of the True Law, supreme mind of nirvana, saving sentient beings through actualization of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, and is a prediction of the future emergence of a Buddha.

Once, in Tang dynasty China, when the Patriarch Enō was giving a discourse, a monk named Hōtatsu attended. This monk said to Enō, "I have read the Lotus Sūtra more than three thousand times." The Patriarch replied, "What good is just reading? Unless you understand the meaning, even ten thousand readings are useless." Hōtatsu said, "I am indeed foolish. In all these readings, this sūtra has been nothing more than words. I beseech you, please teach me how I can understand the sūtra." Enō answered, "Read it one more time, then I'll explain." After the monk had read the first chapter, Enō said, "Stop, the first chapter gives the reason why Shakyamuni appeared in the world; there is nothing more to know." Shakyamuni appeared in the world to expound the wisdom of the Buddhas so that all sentient beings may realize enlightenment. Each of us possess this wisdom. Thus, already we are all Buddhas. This sūtra has deep significance. Have faith in it.

The sūtra states, "The wisdom of the Buddhas is the mind itself." Adding to this, Enō composed the following verse:

"The deluded should be enlightened by the true lotus flower,

The enlightened should enlighten the true lotus flower."

"There are two alternatives – either we realize our nature or we destroy ourselves. Even continuous recitation of this sūtra over a long period of time cannot change this. When reading the sūtra do not be attached to the reading. Equally, do not be

1-EN Monju-Bosatsu. The left hand attendant of Shakyamuni Buddha, mounted on a lion. He is the Bodhisattva of samadhi or of supreme wisdom. He is considered the personification of the Buddha's wisdom.

2-EN Fugen-Bosatsu. The right hand attendant of Shakyamuni Buddha, mounted on a white elephant. He personifies the teaching, samadhi, and practice of the Buddha. According to the Kegon-kyo, he established the basic vows of a Bodhisattva.

1-EN He is believed to be living in the Tūṣita Heaven, waiting for the time when he will come down to this world and succeed Shakyamuni Buddha. This is believed to be five billion six hundred and seventy million years after the parinirvana of Shakyamuni.

2-EN Ichijō. Ekayana means one vehicle. The one great vehicle which comprises both Hinayana and Mahayana. The teachings which enable all living beings to attain Buddhahood.

attached to not being attached to the reading – just read. When we study the Ekayana Teaching in this way, it is like a white cow leading a wagon.” Hōtatsu again spoke to Enō: “The sūtra states, ‘from the śrāvakas to the Bodhisattvas, all maintained constant awareness that the Buddhas wisdom is immeasurable.’ Leading sentient beings to enlightenment is the Buddhas wisdom, this you have taught me. I realize a talented man will thus realize enlightenment, but what about an ordinary man, how is he to do so?”

“The sūtra refers to three kinds of wagon: the sheep wagon, representing the śrāvakas; the deer wagon, representing the pratyekabuddhas; and the cow wagon, representing the Bodhisattvas. Oh honorable Patriarch! What is the difference between this cow wagon and the previously mentioned white cow wagon.”

The Patriarch replied, “The wisdom of this sūtra is apparent, but you are unable to grasp it. Restricted by limited understanding, those in the three vehicles^{1-EN} cannot imagine the extent of the Buddha’s wisdom. Even if they tried to calculate it they could not do so. The three vehicles is used when teaching ordinary people, not the Buddhas themselves. Without faith in this principle, we yearn to take a seat in a wagon outside the gate. Yet, already, we are riding in the wagon pulled by the white cow.

“The sūtra states: ‘There is only one vehicle, not two or three.’ Why can you not grasp this? The term three vehicles is merely one of convenience used in ancient times to teach the immature. Only the Ekayana Teaching is true, for this teaching alone is proclaimed at the appropriate time. Thus we should quickly abandon teachings that deal with the three vehicles and study the Ekayana Teaching, the true teaching. When we do this the word ‘truth’ becomes meaningless, for all things are truth [wonderful treasure]. This truth is not influenced by one’s father’s thoughts, those of a child, nor is it under the jurisdiction of our will. Do not fail to use this truth. The preceding forms the core of the Lotus Sūtra.

“If our thoughts have been in accord with the teachings since the past to the future, distinction between day and night is lost. It’s like holding the Lotus Sūtra in our hands, or reciting it without break.” Hōtatsu, greatly moved by these words, recited the following verse:

“I read the Lotus Sūtra over three thousand times;

Yet one single word from Enō surpassed all this merit.

Clarify why the Buddhas emerged;

If we fail do so we condemn ourselves to countless generations in the realm of foolishness.

Wagons pulled by sheep, deer, and cows are merely the beginning, middle, and end of learning the Ekayana Teaching.

To seek these wagons outside not inside the gate is a mistake.

If we do so, we will suffer like living in a house of fire.

Essentially, there is only the wagon pulled by the white cow, the king of the teachings.”

The Sixth Patriarch was greatly moved by this verse and said [to Hōtatsu], “You shall be known as the chanting Monk.” We can clearly feel Enō’s spirit throughout the preceding verse.

We enlighten the true lotus flower and the true lotus flower enlightens us: the deluded are enlightened by the true lotus flower and the true lotus flower enlightened by the enlightened.

After Hōtatsu met the Sixth Patriarch, the Lotus Sūtra became well known. Before this time it was unprecedented. Clarification of the Buddha’s wisdom is the Eye and Treasury of the True Law – in other words, clarification of the Buddhas and Patriarchs themselves. Merely reading a sūtra does not result in clarifying it. This is the lesson of the preceding story. Remember it.

If you wish to grasp the meaning of the Lotus Sūtra, study the words of the Sixth Patriarch: no other teaching has such insight. The teachings that expound the principle of “the true lotus flower enlightening us” reveal the true nature of all things; form, personality, ability, essential nature, and cause and effect all reflect this true nature. This interpretation was unheard of before Enō.

It has been said that the deluded are enlightened by the true lotus flower. This is true, yet it is an illusion, for the deluded mind and the true lotus flower enlightening are the same. For many the word “enlighten” evokes thoughts of happiness and they have great expectations concerning it. They should know, however, that enlightenment transcends such matters. It is neither something that we can just obtain, nor can we pinpoint its source. The Buddhist Way is just the Buddhist Way, singular, not two or three ways as believed by Hinayānists; similarly the true lotus flower is just the true lotus flower. The Ekayana Teaching is the only true teaching. If we espouse the principle that we enlighten and are enlightened by the true lotus flower simultaneously, we will realize this. That is to say, we will realize that we enlighten and are enlightened by all things simultaneously. Therefore, we should not be discontent with the delusive state of our mind.

The sūtra states: “Everything a man who has awakened the Buddha-seeking mind does accords with the way of the Bodhisattvas. Initially [as a result of our delusive mind], we practice the Way of the Bodhisattvas.” That is, we take refuge in the Buddha, and as a result we enter enlightenment; the deluded are enlightened by the true lotus flower.

Consider this: There is a rich man’s house; this house is burning. The burning house [suffering of life and death] is the delusive mind. Illusion exists at the gate [the time of transcending illusion]. There is illusion outside [nirvana], in front [accomplished practice], and inside [during practice] the gate. Thus we realize illusion exists not only in the house [the mind], but also inside and outside the gate. The Ekayana Teaching, which is based on the deluded mind, is both the opening to enlightenment and the entry into it. We are encouraged to enter the white cow wagon [the Ekayana Teaching]. We should do this, though not directly, but via a side alley. Consider this question: should the burning house be vacated when the gate is the only exit, being aware that there is also a burning house in the wagon in the side alley. Here, of course, gate, side alley, and burning house are used as allegories. They are far beyond the understanding of ordinary people. Each, within

1-EN San-jo. The three divisions of the teachings of the Buddha. In Mahayana Buddhism these are (1) Sravakayāna or Hinayāna, in which one understands the Four Noble Truths and becomes an arhat; (2) Pratyekabuddhayāna or Madhyamāyāna, in which one rightly understands the twelve links of causation and become a Pratyekabuddha; and (3) Bodhisattvayāna or Mahāyāna, in which one becomes a Bodhisattva as a result of religious practice over innumerable years.

themselves, is the supreme lotus flower.

Many believe that when we ride in the white cow wagon we go to some special world. This is incorrect, for we remain in the three worlds. Enlightenment is not an exit by which we escape the cycle of life and death. The house is burning, and many seek to escape using various wagons. These people must stop and think: Where can I go? Does escape really alleviate the danger of the burning house? If only these people would stand in the alley and observe the burning house, they would gain deep understanding of life; consequently the alley would become Vulture Peak – a place of learning and for practice. Ordinary people enjoy the pleasures of this world. They are, however, temporary. The Buddha says: “My pure land is indestructible. I live here eternally.” Consider these words carefully.

The sūtra states: “We must sincerely seek the Buddha.” Consider these questions: How do I perceive the Buddha—within me or outside me? How do I consider enlightenment—individual or total? When we see the Buddha on Vulture Peak, it is because we have a strong intention to forget our present life and body.

The sūtra states, “I [the Buddha Shakyamuni] eternally proclaim the Law on Vulture Peak.’ ” He used skillful means to lead all to nirvana, and it was through skillful means that he himself entered nirvana. The Buddha is near; yet, because we are unenlightened we cannot see him. Seen through the Buddha’s eyes, the burning house is the Buddha land, a place inhabited by celestial beings. It is the land of Shakyamuni and Vairocana-Buddha,^{1-EN} a land that is always tranquil and bright. Hence its name— “The Land of Eternally Tranquil Light.”

Originally we all possessed four kinds of land. In the Tendai sect these are a land: (1) where both celestial and terrestrial beings live; (2) where the inhabitants are mostly free of delusion; (3) where the Bodhisattvas enlighten part of the Middle Way; and (4) of eternally tranquil light. In other words, we live in the same land as the Buddhas and even a speck of dust manifests the Dharma world. When we enlighten the Dharma world, a speck of dust is enlightened. When the Buddhas enlighten the Dharma world, we are enlightened. As a result, all things are seen at their essence. That is to say, we enlighten and are enlightened by the lotus flower simultaneously. Even doubts about the Dharma are true form. Those who possess the Buddha’s wisdom [i.e., are enlightened] realize this, for they experience a peaceful existence.

Many people believe that their level of perception is dependent on they exist—in the universe or among the dust of the world. This, however, is incorrect. Rather, peaceful existence [brought on by increased perception] depends on whether they have grasped the truth or not, for if a man has done so he is neither affected by the universe nor the dust of the world. In this state he sees all things at their essence just as expounded in the Lotus Sūtra.

Consider the preceding and ask the question : Do I direct my practice to the wide [universal] or the narrow [the world]? Do not be surprised by this question or doubt its value; rather, take the principle “the true lotus flower enlightens us” and practice in the light of it. Wide and narrow cannot be defined, and we should not try to do so. We should instead seek to clarify the true Lotus Sūtra [flower].

We are told to “open enlightenment and enter.” The sūtra says: “Sentient beings open and enter enlightenment, for this is the Buddha’s wish.” Opening and entering enlightenment, that is, being enlightened by the true lotus flower, means we have been shown the Buddha’s wisdom. In other words, we enlighten and are enlightened by the Buddha’s wisdom. An enlightened man realizes the events of opening, showing, and entering enlightenment to be interrelated. Shakyamuni and all other Buddhas realized enlightenment as a result of the principle that the true lotus flower enlightens us.

When the Buddha predicts another’s future enlightenment, it means they will open the Buddha’s wisdom within themselves. Being enlightened by the true lotus flower, then, occurs from within, not as a result of another’s prediction. The sūtra states: “The deluded will be enlightened by the true lotus flower.”

There is a verse: “When we are enlightened, the true lotus flower is enlightened.” Previously we said “the true lotus flower enlightens us.” Seek to clarify this, even if it takes an eternity, and gradually you will awaken to enlightenment. This is the meaning of “the true lotus flower enlightens us.” The true lotus flower enlightens us without pause is the meaning of “we enlighten the true lotus flower just as it is.”

These occur as an overlapping chain of events. Like a horse and a donkey in a race. The horse will complete the course, while the donkey, continuing to run, will not do so until later. The great teachings of Shakyamuni detail this further.

The sūtra states: “When Shakyamuni Buddha was proclaiming the Lotus Sūtra, countless Bodhisattvas sprang from the land in a continuous flow.” All these Bodhisattvas were past adherents of this sūtra. “Bodhisattvas sprang from the land in a continuous flow.” Consider this statement, for it is the meaning of them enlightening and being enlightened by the true lotus flower. Before they sprouted from the ground, they had already sprouted from emptiness. This also means that they enlighten the true lotus flower; furthermore, not only did they spring from the land and from emptiness, but also from the true lotus flower itself.

The sūtra states: “The father is young, and the child old. Yet, still the father is the father and the child the child.” Those who understand the true lotus flower, that is, realize everything is true form, are neither surprised by this nor do they question its veracity. Even though disbelief is itself true form [the true lotus flower], still we should enlighten the true lotus flower and thus clarify the eternal existence of the Buddha. The Bodhisattvas sprang from the land as a result of the Buddha’s wisdom [regarding opening and entering enlightenment].

When we enlighten the true lotus flower, our mind is enlightened as the true lotus flower [flower of truth]. The true lotus flower is the enlightenment of our mind. It is said Bodhisattvas live in the ground—that is in emptiness. This emptiness is enlightenment of the true lotus flower, in other words, the eternal life of the Buddha.

The Buddha’s eternal life, the true lotus flower, the entire world, and the unity of mind all exist in the ground or in the sky. Actualization of these in the ground or sky is the meaning of we enlighten the true lotus flower. When we enlighten the true lotus flower, we have three kinds of grass [pratyekabuddhas, śrāvakas, and Bodhisattvas] and two varieties of tree [Mahāyāna and Hinayāna].

Do not harbour doubts or hold expectations about enlightenment. When we enlighten the true lotus flower, we are in the pure Southern Continent. Vulture Peak, the dojo where we enlighten the true lotus flower, is the place where Shakyamuni taught the manner in which this enlightenment emerges. At the time he proclaimed this sūtra, Bodhisattvas, gathering from the ten

1-EN Birushana-Butsu. The lord of Rengedai-sekai. According to the Kan-fugen-gyo, he lives in the Land of Eternally Tranquil Light.

directions, completely filled the sky. These Bodhisattvas are an extension of the Buddha [who has enlightened the true lotus flower] himself. The entire Buddha land in the ten directions and even a speck of dust enlighten the true lotus flower.

“All form is emptiness, all emptiness form” simply means we can enlighten the true lotus flower. Thus we realize to discuss life and death is useless, and that we should not think that life is merely life and death merely death.

Consider this: Friendship is mutual – I am a friend to him and he a friend to me. A sūtra explains this: “Present your friend with a gem and have him hide it in his top knot or cuff.” This is a profound principle [The relationship between Buddha, sentient being, and friend]—strive to clarify it.

When the Buddha proclaimed the Lotus Sūtra, a five hundred yojana single story tower decorated with innumerable gems appeared before him. At the same time Prabhūtaratna-Tathāgata^{1-EN} also appeared, and a tower 250 yojanas wide rose from the ground. The Buddha stayed in this tower. Each of these occurrences are enlightenment of the true lotus flower, and thus we realize there to be no obstacle of body and mind. Even had the tower entered the ground from the sky, the result would have been the same – enlightenment of the true lotus flower. When the tower rose from the ground, Vulture Peak entered the tower. When the tower entered the ground, the tower entered Vulture Peak; that is to say the tower became emptiness, and emptiness the tower. The ancient Buddha in the tower [Prabhutaratna] sat on the same seat as Shakyamuni [on Vulture Peak], The Buddha on Vulture Peak expounded the Lotus Sūtra. The Buddha in the tower verified it as true, adding: “Vulture Peak is Vulture Peak [just as it is], and Shakyamuni is Shakyamuni [just as he is].”

The Buddha in the tower emerged on Vulture Peak, even though he remained in the tower and had attained nirvana in the eternal past. Likewise, Shakyamuni’s entry into the tower had no relation to his spiritual attainment or physical location. Do not judge these statements based on the views of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, but understand that we can enlighten the true lotus flower and clarify them in the light of this.

The Buddha Prabhutaratna entered parinirvana in the ancient past. He is an excellent example of one who followed and attained the Buddhist Way. Vulture Peak was the place where this Buddha appeared together with a tower before Shakyamuni, though he could have appeared anywhere. Having read this, one may ask: Does anywhere mean the entire world or half the world? We should know that such an event is beyond the limitations of time and space. The Lotus Sūtra states: “The Dharma may take the form of a Buddha or a sentient being. Both are true, and contact with either results in enlightening the true lotus flower.” The same can be said for the Dharma in the form of Devadatta.

Five thousand people were requested to leave the assembly of the proclamation of the true lotus flower because of their self-centred views. Even having to leave, though, was in itself true form, and Shakyamuni told them not to despair. Upon hearing this, all enlightened the true lotus flower. Those who remained sat with hands in gassho for a period of time said to be sixty small kalpas waiting to hear Shakyamuni’s proclamation. Such was their respect for the Buddha. Sixty small kalpas may seem an exceptionally long time, but if one is truly waiting the time passes very quickly. If we consider such a time span long, we confine it to a definable amount. The Buddha’s wisdom, however, is indefinable. We must face the question: do we have enough real mind to truly wait? The amount of real mind present equals that of the Buddha’s wisdom. We enlighten the true lotus flower as a result of the power of real mind, not because we have trained as a Bodhisattva over a long period of time.

Before he proclaimed the Lotus Sūtra, Shakyamuni said, “I am about to expound the law of Mahayana.” The true meaning of the lotus flower exists as a result of the merit of Shakyamuni. This meaning is beyond intellectual understanding, and thus is extremely difficult for the ordinary person to grasp. Realization of the nature of the true lotus flower occurs in a moment. Even if we experience an eternity of months and years this is so. In other words, the original face and eternal life of the Buddha is expressed in each moment.

The Lotus Sūtra was transmitted into China, and although for a hundred years it was the theme of many commentaries and many priests who studied it gained deep understanding of the Dharma, it was only the Patriarch [ancient Buddha] Enō among them who realized “the true lotus flower enlightens us simultaneously with us enlightening the true lotus flower.” If we receive this teaching we are truly in the company of the ancient Buddhas Enō and Shakyamuni, and are living in the land of the ancient Buddha. All things, at all time from the eternal past to the eternal future, are the true lotus flower. Truly, we should be grateful for this. The true lotus flower is eternal truth. Even if our body and mind are not in harmony, we cannot escape the law of the true lotus flower. Seeing things just as they are is the most wondrous treasure. It is like seeing a brilliant light or being in a zendō. It is the vast, eternal life of the Buddha.

Illusion is turned by the true lotus flower; enlightenment turns the true lotus flower. Taken to the ultimate, this means the true lotus flower enlightens the true lotus flower. If we respectfully venerate the true lotus flower in the manner prescribed, we will realize there to be nothing more than the true lotus flower just as it is.

This was given to Zen disciple Etatsu at the summer training period in 1241.

Dōgen wrote: “I was deeply impressed by the determination of Etatsu. He shaved his head and wears monk’s robes; these things alone are worthy of merit. Honest practice is the way of a true monk. Eratsu trained hard, turned the true lotus flower, and took official ordination. The power of the true lotus flower shows things just as they are. The true lotus flower is neither something enlightened by Shakyamuni nor other Buddhas, but is enlightened by the true lotus flower. Turning the lotus flower is the Buddhist Way – its wisdom and its enlightenment.

If we can grasp the principle of the lotus flower, both the meaning of the Bodhidharma’s denial that there be any merit in building temples [in his dialogue with the Emperor Ryo], and the Sixth Patriarch’s ceaseless pounding of rice without thoughts of reward are clear.

Turning the true lotus flower transcends our consciousness and grasps the higher level of the true lotus flower [flower of truth]. Inhalation and exhalation are the same now as in the past.

This was written by I, Dōgen, a shamon,^{1-EN} who after training in China returned to Japan and transmitted the Dharma.

1-EN Taho-nyorai. A Buddha appearing in the Lotus Sūtra. When Shakyamuni expounded the first ten chapters of the sūtra, this Tathagata appeared before Shakyamuni and praised him.

1-EN Śramana, Samana. A wanderer, ascetic, worker recluse, mendicant, or Buddhist monk. One who endeavours to practise virtue and cease from evil. The Buddha is often referred to by this name by non-Buddhists.

91. SHŌJI

生死

“Life and death”

It is said: “There is no life and death when Buddha is within life and death.” Again, “If there is no Buddha within life and death, then there is no illusion about life and death.”^{1-EN} Zen Masters Kassan Zen’e and Jōzan Shinei^{2-EN} spoke these words about life and death; they were enlightened men so we should study carefully the meaning of their words. If you want detachment from life and death you must clarify their sayings.

Trying to find Buddha outside the world of life and death is like pointing your cart north when you want to go south or facing south to look for the Ursa major [in the northern sky]. If you do this you will lose the way of liberation.

Accept life and death as nirvana, do not hate either one, and do not seek nirvana. Only then can you truly be detached from life and death.

It is a mistake to think life changes to death. Life is absolute existence with its own time and already possesses a past and future. Therefore in the Buddhist Law life is said to be “unborn” [i.e., unchanging, complete existence]. Cessation of life is also absolute existence with its own time and has a past and future. Destruction is said to be “non-destruction.” When we say life there is nothing else beside life; when there is death there is nothing but death. That is why when life comes accept it as it is; when death comes accept it as it is. Do not hate or desire either one.

Life and death itself is the life of Buddha. If you despise and reject it you lose the life of Buddha. Consequently, when you are attached to life and death you also lose the life of Buddha and are left with only his outer form. Only when you do not hate life and death or desire and nirvana you will enter the mind of Buddha. Do not try to define it with your mind or describe it with words. When you cast off body and mind and enter the realm of Buddha he will lead you; if you follow his way you achieve detachment from life and death and, without effort or using your mind, become a Buddha. If you understand this, there is no longer attachment.

There is an easy way to become Buddha. Do not create evil, do not cling to life and death, have deep compassion for all sentient beings, respect those above you and have kindness for those under you, abandon hate and desire, worry and grief – this is what is called Buddha. Do not seek anything else.

1-EN Life and death are reality itself. There is no other life and death beside this; because life and death are reality, there can be no illusion or attachment in them.

2-EN Chia-shan Shan-hui (805-881) and Ting-shan Shen-ying (771-853).

92. YUIBUTSU YOBUTSU

唯佛與佛

“Only a Buddha can transmit to a Buddha”

The Buddhist Dharma cannot be understood through rational and intellectual study. None who has looked at Buddhism in this way has ever attained enlightenment. Neither śrāvakas nor Hinayānists can clarify the Dharma, for it is the Buddhas alone who can do so. The Lotus Sūtra states, “Only a Buddha can transmit to a Buddha, and only a Buddha understands the truth entirely.”

It is impossible to understand enlightenment before it has been experienced; even to consider this matter is a waste of time. One who awakens to enlightenment is unaware of its cause and realizes all previous attempts to adapt his practice to correspond to a preconceived idea of enlightenment to have been useless. The fact that one's preconceived ideas and the reality of enlightenment differ so greatly is not a reflection that our imagination was misguided, for this idea itself is enlightenment.

Those who believe awakening to enlightenment to be an overwhelming and enormous occasion will, in the event of its occurrence, find themselves to have been well off the mark. Those with no preconceived ideas, on the other hand, allow enlightenment to arise naturally. We should know that neither enlightenment nor illusion exist. Those who are aware of this have attained enlightenment of absolute truth and are called Buddhas.

A man who is ignorant of the form of enlightenment is indeed more than foolish. The term “form” referred to here means the stage of no mind, the state of mind that is undefiled and free of discrimination.

One should have no goal of enlightenment but train for training's sake alone. When we see a man we should just see a man, not a set of discriminative values. When we look at the moon and flowers, it is just the moon and flowers we should see, not some distorted picture created to conform to preconceived idea

Experience spring as spring and autumn as autumn. Accept both the beauty and loneliness of both. Even though change in the seasons and within nature itself is inevitable some do not accept this, and try, by all means available, to avoid it. The pure in mind, however, do not isolate these thoughts, but realize them also to be part of themselves. One may falsely believe that it is oneself that hears the birds sing in spring, and sees the leaves fall in autumn. This is not so.

The state of no mind, or undefiled mind, can neither be self induced nor is it innate. This means that the four elements and five skhandas are neither part of ourselves nor others. Although it is commonly believed among ordinary people that the mind moved by the moon and flowers is the true mind, in actuality this is untrue and contrary to the Dharma. Determination to see all things as they really are, free of preconceived ideas, results in emergence of true practice.

An ancient sage once said, “Although the entire world is our dharmakaya^{1-EN} we should neither be obstructed by it nor attached to it. Attachment to the dharmakaya prevents realization of the truth. Persevere to overcome these obstacles; failure to do so will unquestionably result in one falling into the world of suffering and remaining there for an eternity. A question one may ask is: “How can we cause the dharmakaya to emerge without being obstructed by it?” This can be answered, “As an ancient sage has said, ‘The entire world is our dharmakaya.’ ” This reply is particularly relevant to those who have caused the dharmakaya to emerge while remaining unattached to it. Those who have failed to do so cannot say likewise and should remain silent.

A Buddha, without the use of words, once related the following, “There is life in death, and death in life; there is death in death, and life in life.” This is an unquestionable fact and occurs regardless of man's wishes. This is the Dharma. The Buddha Shakyamuni, when proclaiming the Law, spoke of life and death as one, the ultimate Buddhist truth. He spoke of it emerging as a brilliant light and as the voice of wisdom.

The Buddha's appearance in the world was marked by the emergence of this brilliant light and voice of wisdom. Experiencing this light and voice is to realize enlightenment. The term “the Buddha appeared in the world to save sentient beings” should not simply be understood as, “he appeared and saved them” ; saving sentient beings is the appearance of the Buddha. It is as a result of saving sentient beings that the dharmakaya emerges in the form of the actual body of the Buddha.

“Being saved” means to cross over to the other shore [enlightenment]. It is the ultimate of Buddhist practice, and the inevitable result of seeing the Buddha. We should immediately proclaim this truth to others and strive to reach the other shore ourselves. Emergence of the Buddha is the same as being saved. This is so as a result of the Buddha Shakyamuni's appearance in the world. The enlightened realize that although the Buddha Shakyamuni proclaimed much between his enlightenment and his entry into the parinirvana, actually he spoke not a word.

An ancient Buddha said, “The entire world is the real body of man, the gateway to detachment, the eye of Vairocana Buddha, and our own dharmakaya.” This means that truth is the real body, or, in other words, the entire world is not part of our own body, but is the real body. In regard to this the following question was once asked: “Why am I unaware that the entire world is the real body. The reply was, “It is because ignorance has prevented true understanding of these words.” Having failed to comprehend the meaning of “the entire world is the real body,” one should not repeat it.

Although, in general, people are unaware that the entire world is the real body of man, this is of no real importance, for man's opinions cannot alter what is fact. We should know this.

From the statement “the entire world is the gateway to detachment,” we understand that on arriving at this stage we will be free of confusion and attachment. “The entire world” refers to the close relationship between time, thought, and speech; while it in itself is beyond the confines of time and space. A discriminative mind bars entry through the gateway of detachment. If we reflect further on the statement “the entire world is the gateway to detachment,” we will realize that seeking the gateway outside oneself is useless.

The term “eye” used in the statement “the entire world is one eye of Vairocana Buddha” does not mean the physical eye. The physical eye usually numbers two; the eye referred to in the term “the eye of a human being” is neither limited to two or three. The eye in “the eye of the Buddha,” “the eye of the Dharma,” and “the eye of heaven,” also does not mean the physical eye. It is a great shame that our understanding of the word “eye” is limited only to a physical organ. The Buddhist eye, we

1-EN The body of the highest aspect of the three-fold body of the Buddha; the absolute nature of the Buddha-mind. It is ineffable, unmanifested, and non-substantial.

should realize, is the entire world; it may be a composite of one thousand or even ten thousand eyes and the entire world representing one of them. This observation, however, is only one among many. This latter statement is not a contradiction of the former which states the Buddha has one eye, for this one eye is not restricted to only one kind; it may be of three, a thousand, or even eighty-four thousand kinds. We should not be surprised to learn this.

With regard to the statement "the entire world is our dharmakaya it is natural for man to wish to know his true self; few, however, do so, for it is only the Buddhas who can fully realize their true nature. Non-believers mistakenly believe themselves to be other than their true existence. The Buddha has taught that we, ourselves, are the entire world. Whether we realize this now is not important; it will be understood when experienced.

Long ago a monk posed a question to a high priest, "Virtuous priest, should, suddenly, a hundred thousand objects simultaneously rise before me, what should I do?" The priest replied, "Do not be concerned with the objects." Thus we understand that unforeseen events, which inevitably arise, should neither be eliminated nor held on to. This expresses the true spirit of Buddhism. Do not think of the objects as your enemy; such thoughts are the result of being entangled in the situation, a situation which in reality does not exist.

An ancient Buddha said, "Mountains, rivers, and the great earth are born together with human life, likewise are the Buddhas in the three worlds." Some argue that mountains, rivers, and the great earth existed before birth, as they do after. If this were true then everything would be in duplicate. Even if we accept this point of view, we must not consider the words of the Buddha frivolous, instead we should resolve to consider the matter further. This is true because it has been taught by an ancient Buddha. The first question we must ask ourselves is, "Is there anyone who can clarify or define birth and death?" The answer, of course, is no—yet still we have been born. Similarly there is no one who can define the limitations of the mountains, rivers, and great earth. Although we live among the latter, we can only observe parts of the whole. Rather than lament the separate existence of mountains, rivers, and great earth from our own life, we should endeavour to clarify the Buddha's words "Mountains, rivers, and great earth exist simultaneously with us."

When one is aware that the Buddhas have complete practice and are fully enlightened beings, it is difficult to realize the concept that we co-exist with them. To elucidate this point, we must further consider their actions. The Buddhas act simultaneously with the entire world and with all sentient beings. If unable to fulfil the needs of practice, then it is not the deed of the Buddhas. All things become enlightened simultaneously with the Buddhas. Many people express doubt about this; we, on the other hand, should accept that we both co-exist with the Buddhas and that all things are simultaneously enlightened with the Buddhas. To doubt this is to slander the Buddhas in the three worlds. This is the Buddhist Dharma. The principle that states all sentient beings can awaken the Buddha-seeking mind, as the Buddhas have done, also accords with the Dharma.

If, based on the light of the Buddha's wisdom, we reflect on our life before and after awakening the Buddha-seeking mind, we will realize that what we seek to be neither in ourselves or others. What form of attachment is it, then, that has resulted in the rift between the three worlds? Having to assert our own ego consequently becomes unnecessary. Why do we doubt that the Buddhas have come from the real mind of all the Buddhas in the three worlds?

Ancient people once said, "The Buddhist Way transcends discriminative thought and leads to undefiled judgement." If many things drop down in front of a man or surround him, they are nothing but dharma-svāmin;^{1-EN} no further consideration is necessary. Likewise, mountains, rivers, and great earth are nothing but manifestations of dharma-svāmin. Latter day people should clarify these words of the ancients.

Things which drop down before a man are manifestations of dharma-svāmin; similarly holding up mountains is a manifestation of the same [This latter situation exists without either the mountains or the earth being aware of their co-existence]—thus a parallel may be drawn between the unenlightened and enlightened mind: both exist while both are unaffected by each other. They are like spring and autumn. The non-receptive gain nothing from these words, and one may as well preach to the wind. The receptive, on the other hand, awake to enlightenment and become one with all things. Those who have not attained enlightenment should abandon thoughts that this is because the voice that teaches the Dharma is either too quiet or too loud.

Through our own efforts alone we cannot awaken enlightenment; it occurs as the result of dharma-svāmin. "Dharma-svāmin" refers to the unity of the eye, mind, and enlightenment with the entire body. With enlightenment all differentiation between body and mind is removed, and all are realized as one. The Buddha, who was enlightened by the divine light of wisdom, proclaims the Law to sentient beings in the form of dharma-svāmin.

In former times, it was acknowledged that only fish could know the mind of fish, and only birds could know the path of migration. Few in the latter day, however, possess this knowledge. Humans cannot know the mind of either fish or birds. One must fully clarify this, a mere superficial understanding is insufficient. If we have profound understanding, we will realize that fish are aware of each other's minds and thus, in this regard, are different from humans. There is unity of mind when fish swim against a strong current or negotiate a swift meandering river. Only fish can co-ordinate in this way.

Not leaving a trace or mark, birds in flight are impossible to track. To animals on the ground, a migrating flock of a hundred thousand small birds would appear as a continuous line of large birds flying north or south. Leaving clear distinct marks, both a wagon passing down a muddy lane, and a horse in a field are easy to track. A bird, however, does not need such marks in order to follow birds that have gone before. In principle this is the same as following the Buddhist Way; the Buddhas are aware of all the Buddhas that have passed before—small and large Buddhas and lesser known Buddhas. Only Buddhas can know Buddhas. Anyone who questions this would be answered, "It is because the Buddhas alone possess the Buddha eye; without this eye the way can neither be seen nor identified." Thus it is only the Buddhas who know and understand the teachings. Those who cannot grasp this should try and follow the path left by the Buddhas.

Having seen the path, we should use it as a standard to check the way we ourselves walk. A comparison made in this way offers deeper understanding of the marks left by the Buddhas. They can be recognised as being short or long, deep or shallow. Only through clarifying the marks left by the Buddhas can we gain insight into the prints of our own path. Identified and understood, the marks left by the Buddhas should be followed with our entire body and mind; this is the Buddhist Dharma.

This was transcribed in the guest master's quarters of Eihei-ji, Mount Kichijo, Echizen, on March 31, 1288

1-EN "The king of the Dharma" i.e., the totality and complete majesty of the Dharma.

Dōgen Zenji (1200-1253), the founder of Eihei-ji monastery and the first Patriarch of the Japanese Sōtō Zen Sect, is one of the most outstanding figures in Japanese Buddhism. His profound insight and religious experience is unsurpassed and many consider the *Shōbōgenzō*, a collection of his essays and talks, to be the paramount religious and philosophical work produced in Japan.

Because of its extremely difficult and subtle nature its introduction to the western world has lagged behind other Japanese classics. Parts of the *Shōbōgenzō* have appeared here and there in translation but now for the first time a complete English translation will be made available.

The most outstanding feature of this translation is its natural, readable and colloquial English style. It makes Dōgen's unique interpretation of Buddhism, based on experience and practice rather than theory, intelligible to the modern reader.

Needless to say, Zen is no longer limited to Japan and the Orient. All of us know of the many students of Zen in America and Europe. Most of them want to open the gate that will lead to the real Way of Zen. And now that an English translation of the *Shōbōgenzō* will be presented to the western world we can hopefully say that this gate is almost open.

—Reirin Yamada, Chief Abbot, Eihei-ji—

I am very glad to learn that the *Shōbōgenzō*, the principal work of Dōgen Zenji, the founder of Eihei-ji, will finally be made available in an English translation and therefore become common property of the entire world. I must commend the devoted efforts of the translators and hope that their work will be widely disseminated.

—Shōshun Iwamoto, Chief Abbot, Sōjiji—

The calligraphy on the jacket was done by Dr. Dōshu Okubo.

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