

曹源一滴水

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Hakuin Zenji's Song of Zazen

All sentient beings are essentially Buddhas.

As with water and ice, there is no ice without water; apart from sentient beings there are no Buddhas.

Not knowing how close the truth is, we seek it far away-- what a pity!

We are like one, who in the midst of water cries out desperately in thirst. We are like the son of a rich man, who wandered away among the poor.

The reason, we transmigrate through the Six Realms, is because we are lost in the darkness of ignorance. Going further and further astray in the darkness, how can we ever be free from birth-and-death?

As for the Mahayana practice of Zazen, there are no words to praise it fully. The Six Paramitas, such as giving, maintaining the precepts and various other good deeds, like invoking the Buddha's name, repentance and spiritual training, all finally return to the practice of Zazen. Even those, who have sat Zazen only once, will see all karma erased. Nowhere will they find evil paths and the Pure Land will not be far away.

If we listen even once with open heart to this truth, then praise it and gladly embrace it, how much more so then, if on reflecting within ourselves, we directly realize self-nature, giving proof to the truth, that self-nature is no-nature. We will have gone far beyond idle speculation. The gate of the oneness of cause and effect is thereby opened and not-two, not-three, straight ahead runs the way.

Realizing the form of no-form as form, whether going or returning, we cannot be any place else.

Realizing the thought of no-thought as thought, whether singing or dancing, we are the voice of the Dharma.

How vast and wide the unobstructed sky of samadhi! How bright and clear the perfect moonlight of the Fourfold Wisdom! At this moment what more need we seek? As the eternal tranquility of Truth reveals itself to us, this very place is the Land of Lotuses and this very body is the body of the Buddha.

The Rohatsu oshesshin has arrived right before our eyes, and everyone is preparing for it. I wanted to write this newsletter sooner, but I could not find the time. We have reached the very end of Hakuin's Song of Zazen, and I want to finish this teaching before Rohatsu. We have been studying this Song of Zazen for a long time, and now we have finally reached the

last section. Within Hakuin Zenji's teaching on samadhi, it is revealed that the greatest merit of zazen is in its samadhi.

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"How vast and wide the unobstructed sky of samadhi! How bright and clear the perfect moonlight of the Fourfold Wisdom!"

There are many varieties of samadhi; depending on the daily task, it unfolds in the simplicity of the work. In sewing or cooking, there is the samadhi of that specific act. In our everyday activities, if our mind is absorbed fully in what we are doing, then no matter what we do, walking or working, we forget our body, engage in no outside thoughts, and become the activity itself. We become what we are doing completely. We become each moment and each place and are manifested there completely.

While the samadhi of being absorbed in each and every activity is very important, our samadhi of zazen, which is that samadhi of the Buddha and Patriarchs, is of the greatest importance. "How vast and wide the unobstructed sky of samadhi!" This is what is being written about here.

Our five senses, all of our windows, are thrown wide open. In all the things we perceive, we aren't attached to any of them whatsoever. If we have thoughts and feelings, we don't linger on them. We receive everything exactly as it's given, not dwelling or becoming caught on anything. We make use of each moment and each encounter, but we are just what we see, no matter what seeing arrives. We have to become this kind of samadhi.

When we can do this, it's as if we're sitting on the bridge of the busy Shijo street, with people coming and going constantly, and we see all of them exactly as they are. This is how it's put in the poem of Daito Kokushi.

We are, in our everyday life, just as we are in zazen. Functioning this way becomes our zazen, so that zazen is done not only when we are sitting in the zendo but also in our work and in all of our life activities. No matter what we are doing, our mind doesn't become the slightest bit disturbed. This is the greatest importance of samadhi.

This is why it is written in the classic instructions for zazen,

the Zazengi, that we should open our eyes when we do zazen.

“If you enter zazen, its power is incomparable. In the old days there was a monk of high attainment who always practiced zazen with his eyes open. There was also a Zen master who used to scold those who practiced zazen with eyes closed. He called them the devils of the Black Mountain cave. A deep significance lies here, Only a person of attainment would know it.”

In summary, we can't do zazen if it's not clear whether we are awake or asleep. With our eyes and mind engaged in that kind of blurred activity, we won't know samadhi. If our mind isn't clear and sharp, it's only intoxication, not samadhi. With samadhi, our state of mind is bright and wide open. We see everything in this world from one end to the other. If it's not a clear, bright open state of mind, it's not samadhi. That's why Daruma Daishi is always depicted with eyes wide open. A clear bright mind functions here.

If it's not like this, we easily confuse our samadhi with intoxication. We use this awareness everyday, encountering each moment, and not getting stuck on anything. Neither must we be stagnant or fixed in any moment. This is called unselfconscious awareness. It's also called the mind moment of empty mind. While encountering the world of each moment, our mind doesn't get snagged anywhere, nor become stagnant.

We don't get caught or stopped by any one mind moment, but instead are renewed in each moment. This way, we meet each and every moment precisely and exactly as it unfolds. When we're clear in our mind and in our awareness in this way, we awaken and perceive clearly each moment, yet we aren't at all attached to what we perceive. We have to be this brightness of unattached clarity.

This is why it is written in *The Unfettered Mind* by Takuan Zenji that we do not get caught on our opponent's handhold or on his sword tip. When we truly encounter this world in a serious and earnest way, then this bright open awareness becomes our eyes and sees; this whole Mind is giving life to the illumination of every corner of the whole world. This limitless and brightly revealed place is what is called samadhi. This is what is meant by “How vast and wide the unobstructed sky of samadhi!”

In the *Mumonkan* it is also written, “In all the twenty four hours of the day we continue ripening, we let go of all of our previous information and conditioning, if we realize that place where there is no difference between inside and outside it is as if we are a person who is mute trying to tell their dream, no one else can understand, only the person who has experienced it for himself can know.”

We are able to encounter the full tautness of becoming the whole of the heavens and earth in becoming one with the world and our work. With the mountains and rivers we become one with each moment and each place and transform with them. For this, our awareness has to be bright and clear. That's why we need samadhi, this well-worked world of zazen. This is the meaning of “How vast and wide the unobstructed sky of samadhi! How bright and clear the perfect moonlight of the Fourfold Wisdom!” Hakuin is writing about the bright

clarity of samadhi. Because it's so bright and clear, like the moon, our basic wisdom is brightly revealed.

The Buddha cultivated this samadhi for six years, refining his state of mind. The Buddha realized the meaning of this world and the purpose for being fully alive. Why is there a world and for what purpose were we born? This is the question the Buddha sought to answer, and in doing so, deepened his state of mind. Because he couldn't find the answer in the external world, he dug deeply within his mind. Only then, for the first time, was he able to realize that fresh mind which gives creation to the world. This actuality is that to which he awakened,

The Buddha saw the meaning of the existence of this world and also the meaning of why we are each born into this world. He saw his true Mind. He saw how we and the world aren't separate but are one being; already complete. By discovering his own true mind he realized that we have never lacked anything. When he realized his true nature, he saw that all people's true nature is the same. He knew that we all have the same root as the Buddha and the same eyes. If our awakening is true, we see that all people have these same eyes and we know how to liberate each and every person. It becomes clear how to do this, and so we liberate ourselves and others. This is the great round fulfillment and life which is flowing always. To realize that is the Buddha Dharma.

With everyone together, we open our mind, and this actuality is zazen. Zazen aligns our disordered state of mind and leads us to realize the true source of our mind completely.

This is a very important road sign and guideline.

We realize this world of not two, where there is no fence or seam between ourselves and others. Through this hugeness, which is our true mind, we then encounter each other with joy and happiness. This is the truth of the Buddha Dharma.

If we sit in a way that we cannot tell if a person is awake or asleep, that will not do at all. Our zazen has to be bright, revealed, sturdy, and firm. From this place we live and work a life that's clear and bright.

Today our biggest problem is that even though science is making use of this world, the truth we get from science doesn't reveal to us who we are. We have to first look deeply within ourselves. If we don't, we can't see others or believe in them. We have to believe in each other, in order to be able to dispel the mistrust. Here our samadhi of the Buddha and the Patriarchs is essential. This is the kind of zazen that Hakuin is writing about, the zazen that is new and returns people's mind to its original state.

In our mind, we deepen zazen, and with this quiet brightness we give birth to true perceptions. This is primary. But in our everyday life we also have to align ourselves and know where we can find refuge. We have to know this directly in a fully awakened way, devoid of conceptual notions. This samadhi leads to the true awakening. But because we are unrealized, in society we're still children. So how can we know this state of mind?

This is: "How vast and wide the unobstructed sky of samadhi!"

How can we possibly realize this? For this we need practical guidance and daily application of efforts. It is as Hakuin has said, "If we listen even once with open heart to this truth, then praise it and gladly embrace it, how much more so then, if on reflecting within ourselves, we directly realize self-nature, giving proof to the truth, that self-nature is no-nature. We will have gone far beyond idle speculation. The gate of the oneness of cause and effect is thereby opened and not-two, not-three, straight ahead runs the way."

As the Buddha first wrote in the Agon Sutra, as human beings we very frequently make mistakes. We have to start by purifying our actions. Each person has to learn what it means to live a correct life, and then we have to do so in our daily lives.

In Buddhism there are the precepts: to not take life, to not steal, to not lie, to not be unclear in relationships with each other, and to not be intoxicated and sully our clear mind.

These are the most basic precepts, and where we take our refuge. Each day we make it a priority to review our behavior and, at the very least, try not to break any of the five precepts. We have to make the efforts necessary not to go against them. In Buddhism, we don't kill anything. We do not steal from anyone else even a single piece of paper or the smallest bit of money. In our thoughts and our actions, relations between men and women have to be based always on respect for each other. We must practice an exemplary way of living. In order not to deceive our true nature with words, we do not lie. This is also very important, as is recognizing basic wisdom as essential. We mustn't get drunk on our hobbies or alcohol or ideas or on anything else either. Each day we hold our mind in a way that avoids two-mindedness; when we are dualistic, we correct it.

In each and every day we purify our six senses and hold important this mind of reviewing our behavior regularly in order to really see what we're doing. Then, even without thinking about it, we'll see how clear and bright our true mind actually is. The base for doing this is zazen. We don't sit to increase thoughts but to cut them, and with susokkan we are able to actualize this. With those five precepts we live with our whole body and purify our body, speech, and mind. We must do this in our daily life. Then we become one with our true way of life and original mind. When we live that way every day, the purifying of our mind and of our daily life are one and the same.

We do zazen. But we can't just put that down and do whatever we feel like when we leave the cushion. We have to always purify and clarify our daily life. We can't do that if our mind is twisted. We have to be living in clear mind and always returning to living from that state of mind.

In Buddhism, it says to do good things, to refrain from evil, and to awaken all beings to the truth. But for doing this we have to clarify this true mind. Doing wrong, we upset that. If we do good things, we settle the mind. Thus we decide not to do bad things and to move in the direction of doing good things. Then our mind aligns. All of the six-and-a-half billion

people on the planet must review their deeds and see clearly how to be, or there will not be world peace and humans' blind movements and blind thinking will ruin the world. We have to realize this clear mind. Then the world will return to its original state, and here we have:

"How vast and wide the unobstructed sky of samadhi! How bright and clear the perfect moonlight of the Fourfold Wisdom!"

This is the foundation of Buddhism. It's not to add something from the outside but to trust our mind from the origin and do good things rather than bad. From there we live our daily life. And from there we have "How vast and wide the unobstructed sky of samadhi! How bright and clear the perfect moonlight of the Fourfold Wisdom!" This is where the true meaning of these words lies.

Sogenji 2006 Sesshin Schedule, for information contact sogenji@po.harenet.ne.jp

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