

曹源一滴水

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Sogen's One Drop of Water

People who train in Zen always watch their footsteps in their everyday life. Whether it is in zazen, or sanzen, or doing the laundry or cooking or whatever activity they are engaged in, from taking care of guests to making a bath, it is all a chance to live without waste.

One day Master Gisan was going into the bath. The bath was made and it was too hot so he told the monk to get some water to cool it down. The monk put down the bucket into the well and brought buckets of water from the well many times and it became a good temperature. Master Gisan said that was good enough, the monk said, "Yes" and having finished his job, he dumped the last little bit of water out of the bucket and put the bucket up side down. The teacher was furious at him, saying "You fool!! What are you doing? That is not enough kindness at all! You just throw that water away so carelessly, thinking, "It was just some little bit of water."

That little extra bit of water could become the life energy of the flowers! This water that we receive from the heavens; it falls from the sky and gives life to everything that exists. Each and every drop is a drop of life energy, whether it is big or small. A big amount of water has the functioning of a big amount of water and a little amount of water has the functioning of a little amount of water. To use our wisdom appropriately to make use of that life energy is Zen. He explained meticulously

This monk was deeply awakened and in great wonder at this teaching and changed his name to One Drop of Water, vowing to never make this mistake again. He completed his training under Master Gisan and then became the head of Tenryuji Temple. In Japan at this time, Buddhism was being crushed. It was its worst ever era. Then in the fifth year of Meiji it was once again recognized and he put his life on the line for this recognition.

Master Gisan was born on the Tango Peninsula in Japan, where water is extremely scarce. His family was very poor and endured great hardship in his youth, but this teaching of the One Drop came from that. At the age of 19 he was awakened to a great Love that was in everyone and in all things. He directly realized this

which is called in Buddhism the Buddha nature, this parental mind which is in all people.

The teaching of the Buddha is to awaken to our true life in all people to see what we are all endowed with and to be deeply grateful for it always. This teaching of the One Drop is the same as that of the Sixth patriarch at Sogen or Sokei, and has a deep meaning, the same as the question of the intention of Bodhidharma in coming to China.

When the Buddha saw the morning star on the morning of the 8th of December the first thing he said when he opened his mouth was, "How wondrous how wondrous! All things are endowed from the origin with this great bright clear mind to which I have just awakened. Only because of extraneous thinking and attachments are they unable to see this."

The Buddha, who looked deeply into himself, saw that the whole world and he himself were one and the same. He realized that to love all beings compassionately was not something that had come from being enlightened but was a mind which he had always had. This to which the Buddha awakened is the same splendid Mind with which we all are endowed. This is what the Buddha awakened to and this Way is the Dharma. At the Vulture Peak he held out a flower and Kasho Sonja smiled, the pure mind of the Buddha and the pure mind of Kasho Sonja, it was one mind transmitting to another. "I have the true Dharma Eye, the Marvelous Mind of Nirvana, the True form of the Formless, and the Subtle Dharma Gate, independent of words and transmitted beyond doctrine. This I have entrusted to Mahakashyapa." This mind of no form, this way of the Mind which cannot be spoken of in words, that which is beyond words and phrases was transmitted there.

The Buddha's mind and the mind of Kasho was one and the same, with no difference at all and that is Zen. The Buddha Shakyamuni Butsu

Maka Kasho Sonja
Anan Sonja
Shona Washu Sonja
Uba Kikuta Sonja
Dai Taka Sonja
Mishaka Sonja
Bashu Mitsu Sonja
Butta Nandai Sonja

Fukuda Mitta Sonja
Kyo Sonja
Funa Yasha Sonja
Memyo Sonja
Kabimora Sonja
Ryuju Sonja
Kana Daiba Sonja
Ragorata Sonja
Sogya Nandai Sonja
Kayashata Sonja
Kumorata Sonja
Shayata Sonja
Bashu Banzu Sonja
Manura Sonja
Kaku Rokuna Sonja
Shishi Sonja
Basha Shita Sonja
Funyo Mitta Sonja
Hannya Tara Sonja
Bodai Dharuma Daishi

, then passed on to Nisa Eka Daishi, and he then became the second Patriarch. From Niso Eka, the second Patriarch it continued,

Niso Eka Daishi
Sanso Kanchi Zenji
Doshin Dai'i Zenji
Gunin Daiman Zenji

to

Eno Taikan Zenji who was from the south of China, this 24 year old uneducated young man from the uncultured south, he was deeply awakened to the Buddha's mind upon mind hearing "Residing nowhere awakened mind arises" and he became the Sixth Patriarch of this line. This is all written in the Platform Sutra. Among all of his students, Nangaku Ejo and Sekito Gyoshi were the greatest and spread Zen all over China, and Baso Doitsu Zenji also came from Nangaku Ejo Zenji. Baso came forth and Zen spread to the west of the Yangtze River and from the East, Sekito Gyoshi spread Zen. It was at just this time that there was a great upheaval against Buddhism. All of the temples' power was lost. Those Buddhists who needed to have Buddha's statues and temple buildings were at a loss, but those who did Zen had no need for Buddha's and buildings. They lived through this upheaval and kept Buddhism alive.

Nangaku Ejo Zenji
Baso Do'itsu Zenji
Hyakujo Ekai Zenji
Obaku Kiun Zenji
Rinzai Gigen Zenji

From Sekito Gyoshi the Soto sect was born and all of these were the basis of Chinese Zen in the Sung Dynasty. Even with many severe and challenging eras for Buddhist people, they were able to keep that Sixth Patriarch's teaching of the One Drop of Water of Sokei alive and flowing. At this time of the Tang and Sung Dynasty, no matter what sect you might look into they

were coming from the same place with only a few differences. They were all based up on the one drop of teaching from the source of the Sixth Patriarch at Sokei zan, or Sogen Mountain.

There is a story about Hogen Buneiki Zenji, founder of the monastery of Tendai Mountain. One day Master Hogen was teaching and a monk asked him, "What is Sogen's One Drop of Water?" What is the great Dharma that the Sixth Patriarch had taught? He was talking about the flow of the teaching from the mountain of the Sixth Patriarch, Sokeizan or Sogen Mountain, this one drop of teaching from that mountain. Hogen answered, "This! This is the One Drop of Teaching of the Sixth Patriarch. That which is asking that question is that One Drop of Water". The monk prostrated and was simultaneously and suddenly awakened and cried with joy. He lit incense and prostrated to the direction of his teacher.

"Outside of Mind there are no things.
I sing of the blue mountains that fill my eyes."

When he sat there at the top of Mt Tendai, it was a world so different from society. There was not anything there but truth, all the ten thousand things were all truth and everything returned to truth. He wrote this poem at that time, saying the same thing as the Sixth Patriarch had written in his poem,

There is no Bodhi tree,
Nor stand of a mirror bright,
Since all is void,
Where can the dust alight?

This body, no matter where you search, it is not anywhere, there is nothing to find, there is nothing but a mind which holds on to nothing at all: no clutter to be befuddled anywhere. Our true nature, from the origin there is not one speck of anything. It is truly as he wrote it. From the origin there is not one single thing.

From this ten-year anniversary Tahoma becomes Tahoma-san Sogen-ji, serving as the center of all American One Drop zendos and supporting all other American zendos related to the One Drop community. We humbly request everyone's assistance and cooperation in this great task.

2006, February 15, Commemoration Day of Buddha's Entering Parinirvana.

Respectfully offered by Shodo.

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

March 8-14
April 16-22
May 11-17
June 5-11
July 4-10

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address correction requested