

# 曹源一滴水

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For everyone in One Drop Zendo, are you well? In Japan this summer's severe and very hot days continued. Only now, finally this summer's heat showed us its border, and the cool wind of autumn has begun blowing in the mornings and evenings. As far as the weather goes, this time of year is the most comfortable to live in.

From last May there has been no newsletter and I am sorry about that. I have been busy this year. In June I went to the East Coast of America, to Boston. In Boston, Dharman, a monk there, is teaching at the Cambridge Buddhist Association. I was able to do zazen with them, and there were also monks and nuns from other countries meeting there who are taking care of impoverished immigrants in New York City and Boston. They are also teachers of Buddhism, coming from Cambodia and Hong Kong Taiwan, to teach. I met nuns from these countries in order to hear what people have to say who actually work in this field, even prior to any teaching of the Buddha's, these people who are suffering at the very bottom level of society, without a country and no one to sponsor them or offer them even a little bit of comfort. There is nothing to say to them but to bring deep passionate caring to them. We could encounter this great passion directly in these people who worked with those stateless immigrants.

In August I went to India. Bodhi, who trains at Sogenji, has been given the responsibility for four states from his teacher there, Sassai Shurei, to teach and bring practice. He has trained at Sogenji for thirteen years, so he has plenty of experience in training and now he continues his practice in India with these very impoverished people. They come from the caste of the Dalits (formerly called untouchables) and are always living with a huge burden of prejudice. Because they

want to be treated equally as a human being they converted to Buddhism. Bodhi has gone there to help teach them zazen. As you may know, Buddhism in India was destroyed by Hindu orders in the 12th century. Buddhism was then carried to the South. It went to various southern countries at this time. From there it blossomed as a flower varying with the different countries and different nationalities. Respecting this teaching people attempted to improve the quality of their human character. For this they walked the path of practice.

In this very land of India, sixty years ago, those who are 85% of the population, the Dalits, were not even given the rights of a human being. These people were taught by Dr. Ambedghar who was the first Indian minister of Justice and the first person to create a movement which liberated Dalits from their untouchable status and won them official recognition. This same Dr. Ambedghar was the one who first said that as long as the Hindus were the ones who were establishing the dalits as untouchables there would be no hope for a change. He had studied over thirty years and found that it was Buddhism which was most peaceful and which also taught of all human's equality. He said that Buddhism was the only way to help liberate the dalits. He said that it was a religion brought forth by Buddha and although Buddha was no longer alive, he would observe and honor the teachings of the Buddha, become a Buddhist and bring all humans to equality. He believed this would change the way of the whole country.

Saying this in the Dekan plateau in the State of Maharashtra, he began the movement in the city of Nagpur to liberate the dalits from their caste oppression. The minister of justice himself became a Buddhist first. At the same time, in Nagpur 300,000 dalits also became Buddhists. This

continued to spread and all over India the cry rose for human's equality and one after the next people were becoming Buddhists. Very sadly, only a few months following that Dr. Ambedghar died. Nevertheless, Sassai shurei took on his mission and as a Buddhist he continues the work of Dr. Ambedghar and one after another the conversions to Buddhism are still taking place today. It is said that there are 2,000,000 people who are Buddhists today. Of course, the country of India says that there could not possibly be so many.

Of course the subconscious wish and vow of all of the dalits is for all beings to be treated equally. They believe that only if they believe in the teaching of the Buddha will this become possible. They are converting to Buddhism, one after the next continually. This is a natural flow which there is no way to stop. To be able to actually know how to realize that true teaching of the Buddha, to settle the mind and not to indulge in conflict, and to bring the truth to all beings, knowing them as equals, to actually experience this, these people have to sit and quiet their minds. To them we say, "Let's do zazen! Let's do practice! Please gather here!"

Bodhi has been teaching and guiding them in this way and to support and help him in this important work, I went to India. South of Maharashtra State is Karunakana State. In the center of the political scene there is a man who was a dalit and has been very active in this movement. His name is Mr. Audi. Mr. Audi lost his wife recently and he was so full of respect for her he built her a stupa. The bottom of the stupa is her burial place and above that in the stupa is a zendo and hondo. We did a sesshin there. Young people from all over southern India gathered there for the sesshin. Because almost all of the young people who come are very poor, Mr. Audi provided all of the money for the expenses of the people for the sesshin, and that enabled them to be able to participate in the sesshin. Thanks to this they can gather although it was only for a few days. It was the first sesshin in India, the country of the Buddha, and everyone wholeheartedly chanted the sutras which were read in Pali. For the other sutras, including the meal sutras, we used the English versions from Sogenji, and they had to work hard to chant the unfamiliar syllables.

Everyone sat wholeheartedly and after the sesshin they said they wanted to do it again and again and they would sit at home and

wanted to do more zazen, and saying this they went home.

In Vijapur, a city in Karukana State, Bodhi is now working hard. Here, Mr. Audi is building a large, dome-shaped building. Here many young people, from 12-14 years old, are living together, living the life of training in their everyday life. They get up at four am, do morning sutras, then zazen and after that they clean the grounds and at nine am they eat breakfast. They then take off their yellow robes when they go to school with Islam and Muslim children. When they return in the afternoon they have language studies in Hindi and English, at 7pm is sutra study, then some zazen, at 9pm they have supper, and around 9:30 they go to bed. These young people live the same life as the Dojo.

Of course they come from very poor areas so they really know how to live strongly and independently. All the young men cook, carry their own food, read sutras, clean up, clean the grounds, chant sutras, and Bodhi is teaching them. He is truly busy responding to all of the requests and he still teaches these young men. Their high voices were so beautiful as they chanted the sutras in Pali. A very lovely rhythm and they chanted in such harmony in big loud voices and then did prostrations. Their eyes were shining and bright and I was deeply moved for these young men not to have to live a life full of suffering from prejudice. Their parents all suffered greatly from prejudice, wishing for their children to live even a part of this life, even tasting a little the equality of all people. According to the teaching of the Buddha this can be observed. This vow comes forth from them spontaneously.

They are brought here to live until they become high school students. When they become high school students they each choose their own path. There are fifty people who would like to be able to live there, but since it is not such a big place there is room for only 22. And as it is still a temporary building, they all live together in one big room. Eventually there will be a second floor built and the others can join them. They hope for this. The meals and food are a big challenge. Even if Mr. Audi pays for their supplies and living, there are so many children to cultivate it takes so much money so they are also supported by people in the area.

Sogenji's zazenkai will also be asked to help with that in the near future. For one person, can you give five thousand yen for one

month? They can live on this support. From the world of prejudice to sincerely believing the teaching of the Buddha, they cultivate and live it in such a really sturdy and determined way, it was with a very happy heart that I returned to Japan.

From the fourth of September it was time for the sesshin in the United States. We have been doing this for over ten years continuously in September. There were fifty people in the ODZ there. All of them were full time for the entire week. There was a very strict selection system and only those who could participate for the whole week were included. People who could not sit the whole week-long sesshin, as unfortunate as that was, were not able to participate in this sesshin. There were twenty people left on the waiting list. Of course there were so many experienced people doing the sesshin the essence was very full and taut.

As you know, the sixth day of sesshin was the 11th of September and in the morning the woman who does the registrar work, Shosetsu Daishi, Gretchen Daishi, entered the room trembling. She had called to reconfirm our flights and heard that the towers in New York had been attacked and fallen and that all the airplanes in the country were grounded and you could not fly anywhere. We immediately brought in a television and saw the attacked and falling buildings, we saw that this was real. But the people of training there all continued sesshin - of course they were told the news.

Some people had to telephone to verify the safety of their close relatives and friends, but the sesshin schedule went on as planned. Everyone sat wholeheartedly and after the sesshin they said they wanted to do it again and again and they would sit at home and wanted to do more zazen, and saying this they went home. The sesshin ended well and we were planning to go to San Francisco and Los Angeles for a workshop, but since all the airplanes were grounded there was no way that we could get to the workshops. No matter which way we would try to get there we couldn't go. Within these conditions many people's minds are moved around and shaken deeply. All of America fell into a terrible state of fear, becoming insecure and wondering what will happen from now? How shall I hold my mind in these conditions?

The people who had been in sesshin all agreed how very fortunate they were, how glad they were that they had been at

sesshin. They said that even though the world was in such a severe state they were able to know a settled mind, and receive the things that are happening... "thanks to this sesshin. I now know for the first time what a huge meaning this has." People who come to One Drop from outside the sesshin are turning on the television again and again and see that hideous scene repeatedly shown. Over and over and over again.

Seeing this we become even more insecure and the shock we receive becomes even greater. Even though we turn it off our hand goes back and turns it on again. It is like a person who is deeply thirsty drinking and drinking and drinking water but still unable to really quench their thirst. The deep insecurity gets deeper and the wish is for something, anything, to hold on to and rely upon. The TV gets turned on, again the insecurity gets worse, and people who are unable to see clearly and objectively and make judgments are all over America. People who find themselves in this condition would come to the One Drop Zendo and say "What a relief! I am so glad to be here! At least there is somewhere where it is calm! When I come here I really feel relieved!"

I think it is really like this. Not only for the people who were attending the sesshin but for the people from the community as well, here there was one place where they could feel settled and safe. But from here on in is the big challenge. All over America, no all over the world, this anger and insecurity and also mistrust will whirlpool throughout the world.

Some people will say that what has been due has come, some people will say that something terrible that should never have happened has now happened. All kinds of thoughts are born and come forth. These thoughts give forth further thoughts. Our ability to see and view things clearly gets confused.

The Buddha says in the Dhammapada to his disciples:

"We are what we think,  
Having become what we thought,  
Like the wheel that follows the cart pulling ox,  
Sorrow follows an evil thought.  
We are what we think,  
Having become what we thought,  
Like the shadow that follows and never leaves one,  
Happiness follows a pure thought."

These are the first two stanzas of the Dhammapada. These words of the Buddha cover all things in the whole world. It is not the declaration of a God in Heaven or some play of destiny, or running away from how things are, or some simple way of how things go so we can just toss them off. No matter what happens it is all based on and exists from the consciousness of human beings. These are the very high quality words which say that exactly and clearly. Whether this is a world of hope or a world of despair, whether we give birth to joy or human misery, whether we will live a life of joy or live a life of resentment and revenge, this is not the will of God or the ways of fate that decide, rather all of it is in accordance to the will of humans. It is the mind of humans who decide the freedom and power of how things are. Here we have the basis of what the Buddha taught during his whole life. If our mind is murky and cluttered, then our words and actions and way of living are also born in that way...or will they come forth from a clear and bright state of mind...the meaning of all things, and their deepest value, this will all be decided from the state of the mind.

If we use words from a sullied state of mind, and act from that, our whole life and behavior will bring endless pain and suffering to the world. Just as the tracks of the oxcart are without fail following the wheels, it is as if our mind had wheels on it, as if we invent the tracks ourselves, and then the next cart gets stuck in those deep tracks, in this way humans suffering increases and grows.

In the same way, if we speak from a clear state of mind and decide things from an open and clear state of mind, and move from there, then happiness will never leave that person's way of being, and there will be no shadow; then always wherever that person goes and whomever they touch, there will always be happiness in what they express.

It was said that the Dalai Lama sent a letter to President Bush, and in it he was saying that even more so now than ever an objective point of view that sees to the far future is necessary. If we move from revenge then that will continue eternally, repeating and repeating itself. We have to be wary of this. Instead, if we use our wisdom then without fail that resentment will become the good fortune of all beings. It is said that he sent this kind of a letter to President Bush.

The Buddha said that while all beings have a clear mind from the origin it is covered over and hidden. On the surface of people's minds there are the waves and winds of any given moment. The waves come in accordance with the winds, but the bottom of the ocean is clear and transparent and not moved around by anything whatsoever. In this same way our true nature expresses itself in accordance with the varying conditions of each moment, but in the true source of our deepest mind we have a clarity beyond any joy or pain. To know this profound transparency, one who knows this state of mind, that it is human's true state of mind. This is where we have the true awakening of the Buddha. He never said we should not be happy and we should never feel pain. Rather, that we should not drown in that pain, not drown in that joy, not drown in that sadness. When we drown in these we lose track of the truth. Humans true mind is a state where the waves of happiness and sadness and pain don't reach, full and taut and clear and still. This is the teaching and deep faith and trust of the Buddha which comes from his experience.

In another place the Buddha teaches, "Don't do evil, do good, this is the true teaching of all of the Buddhas." The question is then, how do we purify and clarify our mind? This is the wisdom that has the most value and most meaning for all people. This is not only Buddhism but in Christianity as well, "Blessed are the pure in Mind for they shall see God." It is written clearly and directly. The more clear and pure our mind is the less we will lose sight of God. This wisdom is in our deep mind, there is this deep place of quiet and clarity which is never confused no matter what happens. This is the mind of God and the truth of the Buddha. This is also the true source point of all human beings Mind.

But without clarifying our own mind, we get twisted and confused in this shadow which we ourselves reflect back ourselves. The words that the Dalai Lama sent were also from the Dhammapada the teachings of the Buddha,

"HATRED NEVER CEASES BY HATRED BUT BY LOVE ALONE IS HEALED THIS IS THE ANCIENT AND ETERNAL LAW"

In any case, it is like the words of President Kennedy, who said that if civilization does not end war, then war will end civilization. Today there is not the same kind of conflict situation as there was in former times. Mass

murderers are common and when we see this we need to not be excited and scared but to see clearly how the unaligned minds of all people are killing so many people. Seeing this fear we see that it has to be a world of peace in every way, in our minds, in our homes, at our work, in our societies, there has to be peace. And then the world has to become peaceful. What breaks that peace, the source of that lack of peace, is found in each person's mind, that which is rooted there, the hatred and great resentment and deep attachment.

In China, in the words of Lao Tsu it says that we should not hold hatred and resentment in our hearts but turn it to gratitude and in the words of Christ we have "Love thy enemy". We have so much resentment. To use the political system for that is not the point but how can we become peaceful in our minds - it is this that we have to put our whole life energy into.

People will of course say that to receive such an attack and then not respond, but to sit back quietly, is not a possibility. Rather to die is even better than that. We cannot accept this pain and suffering. If that is a third person speaking maybe it can be summed up with that but for the person directly involved it is not quite so simple as that. Their family and friends and important people and children, if they were attacked and murdered in a terror attack - could you then be quiet and not seek revenge? Of course these kinds of strong feelings will come forth one after the other. There are no words to return to this when we think of this deep pain; we can't stand still and we can't move or sit down.

The Buddha gave these words but not as a third person. The Buddha's actuality is expressed in the Birio Sutra. In that sutra these words are given when right in front of his face the Buddha saw his own country destroyed, and this is what he spoke from. This neighboring country of the Shaei land was a huge country and was always pressuring and attacking the Buddha's country. The young people of this country gathered an army and attacked the country of the Buddha. At this time the Buddha sat down and did zazen right in front of the oncoming elephant troops of King Birio's army. It was a severely hot open place with no shadow and not a single tree and he sat there in this intense heat. King Birio saw this and stopped the troops and came to see the Buddha and said, "You are such a venerable old man. There is a cool shadow

under a tree, why do you sit here in this hot place?"

Buddha answered, "to have a true home country is like being in the cool shade of a tree"; he spoke these very mysterious words as an answer. Here the Birio thought that what the Buddha was saying was that leaving the Kabira country of the Buddha alone was that cool shadow; he understood it as this and took home the soldiers. But after a few years he couldn't contain his resentment and the armies returned, and again the Buddha sat in the middle of the blazing hot path doing zazen and the same question and answer ensued. Birio once more took home the armies. But then again, after several years, he could not control his anger and the king brought the armies and came again, and the Buddha had stopped the soldiers by doing zazen twice but the third time he did not appear. At this time he said, "the seeds which we have planted we have to harvest".

There is a continuation of this story. Shaie was a great huge country. The country of the Buddha was a small country but it had a long tradition. That new and excitable country, the Shaie country, wanted to marry into the family of the Buddha's country by receiving their princess, but Kapira was a country of long tradition and had great pride in their pure royal family lineage. Nevertheless if the Shaie country was told that they could not be given the princess of Buddha's country, they were afraid that they would get angry and destroy the Buddha's country because their country was so big. At that time there was a cousin of the Buddha in one of the government's top positions. He had a daughter by a slave and sent her to the other country pretending that she was the princess. But the person who was born of this disguised daughter of a slave and the prince was the current King Birio. When he was young he had gone to play at the palace of his supposed mother, the princess, as was the custom in those days. When he was there in the palace playing with the Shaka clan's royal children they climbed up on the royal throne near the altar to play. When one older Shaka clan person saw this he pulled him down off the throne and said severely, "someone as dirty as you cannot be sitting on that throne. God would not like that! You are the child of a slave! If a slave's child sits on the throne it will be defiled" and he pulled him down. He had been sitting and playing so happily with his friends there and now he heard these words with such pain and anger. He

was shamed by the Shaka clan, he was insulted and hurt by them. He vowed deeply in his heart to take revenge for this situation one day. As he grew up he pushed his older brother Prince Gida off the throne, put his father, the king, in jail, and he became the king. When the time was ripe he took the armies and went to attack the neighboring country of Kabira.

The Buddha knew the whole story very well. Even though he did what he could twice, he knew there was no way to stop that tormented angry mind of King Birio of the neighboring Shaie country. That suffering and anger of Birio could not be stopped. With a terrible feeling the Buddha did not go back the third time and King Birio defeated the country of Kabira and was able to fulfill his revenge. The people of Kabira had a very strong belief in the teachings of the Buddha and they did not even have an army to defend themselves against attackers. In front of his very eyes the Buddha saw countless fellow countrypeople killed. At this time, seeing this unbearable scene there was one desperate young man who was shooting arrows at the enemy and an elder of the Shaka clan said to him, "Don't kill them! To kill someone is the way to destroy the country! For the Shaka people this is not allowed!" he reprimanded him severely. At that time the person who was in charge of the politics, Mahamanawa, was the grandfather of King Birio of the Shaie country. He said that for the Shaka people it was absolutely not allowed to kill people. They would not fight back. Many, many people were jumping into the moat around the palace. He begged his grandson, King Birio, to not kill anyone even just for as long as it took for his grandfather to jump in the moat and come to the surface. King Birio agreed and stopped the killing for the promised time. His grandfather then tied his hair to the nail of the plug that keeps the moat from emptying of water and he never came to the surface of the moat.

Kabira country was destroyed. As the Birio Sutra says, this is one of the most advanced stories of our civilization. The uncompromising way the Buddha's country observed his teachings, and the way the country of Kabira actually was ruined by keeping the way of the Buddha, is true.

Today, from the Buddha's time 2,500 years that have gone by. In this world the Buddha, Christ, Socrates, Confucius, all of these sages have come forth, they have taught the way for humans to be happy but

humans' resentment and anger is still not settled. All over the world there are religious wars, races and nationalities are separated, and great fear and destruction are taking place everywhere. HAS the civilization made any progress? Maybe science has, but human's mind has not made any progress I think it must be said. No matter how much progress science makes and no matter how much abundance of material things there is, how convenient things are or how much our culture advances, even if we can fly in the universe, and people can live in the whole universe, if there are murderers and war doesn't stop - how can we say there has been any progress?

To see this Earth from the darkness of the universe, this one bright light in the darkness that cannot be distinguished into the countries of the Buddha, Mohammed or Christ, like five brief moments these go by as this Earth turns. In this one universe why do people fight with each other? Russell Schweickart said, when he was flying as an astronaut:

"seeing it from space, I feel that I know the people that are on this earth so well. I am their representative. I am doing this for all of them and have become their eye and that is why I am here, and when I think that I feel very humble. I have such a responsibility. I have understood this. This is what I understand, I am not here for myself but for those others. If we cannot see with our eyes our body is not able to be put to use. We have eyes so that we can see.

This is the same, we are here for this. We are all one part of the universe, of life energy, we have the duty to return this life to the universe. This is a very important responsibility. Knowing this we have a new awareness of our relationship with all of human kind. This is a big change and a new discovery. When I returned to the earth the world was different. My relationship with everything on the earth had changed. This is because of my experience in the universe a very precious change for my life."

Because of the terrorist incident buildings were destroyed and in that moment thousands died. A hideous manifestation. That scene was repeated again and again on the television, and people see those techniques and images and get so excited. We concentrate on that and are pulled in and lose track of the whole picture. This Earth which is dying and suffering--we lose track of that, where the food is not sufficient, the water is not enough, where

the air is polluted, the resources are being used up and there are 6,100,000,000 people. Majorities are trying to rule over minorities and the various "isms" are trying to force their beliefs on others because they believe their opinion are the most true. Without seeing the whole picture we are absorbed into a small part and only see the passing phenomena. That which is transient and changing in each moment we take as the truth. Then people become so confused.

We have a wide horizon, why can't we see from that? In our Mind we have a huge wide open vision, and this is what the Buddha was teaching us. If we see from our own small point of view then without fail we will never melt the resentment and hate, but if we see and align the source of that hate, then, even when that hate is still present, we can go beyond it and we will not have to return it. There is no liberation without doing that. When we have that mind of hate our mind gets stagnant. Like that TV scene being repeated over and over our mind gets stuck and stopped and caught on that one point. Our awareness is huge and magnanimous and can see the whole picture but we lose track of that and get stuck on the small pinpoint view. That awareness that should flow doesn't flow. Like water that is stagnant it gets rotten and our awareness loses its freedom, gets hard and fixed, our mind gets hard and cold and stopped. Like in the Hakuin Zenji Zazen Wasan, Flowing water gives life to everything, but frozen cold water can only destroy all life and lose warmth and sympathy. We get stuck and hardened in our mind. This is attachment.

This attachment is stuck in our mind for years and years and this is what explodes and this is what is the source of all those problems in society, the deepest root is in this. People's minds always want to stop and get stuck and caught and for this the Buddha said that we should always align and free our mind. It is possible to access this wisdom when we align our mind and this alignment is zazen.

Zazen is for doing this. The words of how to do zazen are this. We align our body, we align our breathing, we align our mind. Those people who should be working and moving in society, because we get caught on things we encounter we get stuck. Instead we separate from that and "letting go of all external connections we become like a firm tall wall, letting go of all internal concerns we are at one with the Way". In

this way we let go of all of our confusion and we settle ourselves within. We put our ki in to our lower back and we let go of that which we are caught on externally and go within. If our lower abdomen is full and taut we are able to bring forth our independent mind and our quiet mind is clear.

We then align our breath. When we get excited our breath becomes upset and then it becomes faster and faster. This breath needs to be deep and slow and quiet. In just doing that we are not longer pulled around by things and we can see with clarity and an independent view. Our body becomes settled, our breathing becomes quiet, our expanse of mind gets wide and we can see things objectively, spaciouly instead of being caught on things from being up to close. This is very important.

Our mind, as has been taught from the times of the Buddha is a very dangerous place, like wild elephants, like a poisonous serpent, like a gang of thieves, this is all in our mind.

Our mind is always moving and goes in the direction of things which are most stimulating, the more stimulation the more movement. Our mind is hard to control like a wild horse. Our mind moves in whatever way it wants to and we get over-excited and lose our concentration. We lose our essence, we only see things superficially and from that we commit crimes without even knowing it and get violent and murder and do confused things more and more. To put it another way. our mind is something which goes to whatever it is strongly stimulated by and we are no longer able to align it and so we commit crimes and do things we never meant to do. We have to align our mind; that is the most important of anything we have to do. Just as the Buddha was also named, "One of Clear Aligned Mind" and as the words of Confucius said, "we can go beyond everything with our mind aligned in that direction, this law can not be gone beyond". Today especially there has never been a time when our minds have been more out of alignment. To align our mind is of the greatest importance right now. The Buddha also said that if we leave our mind to do whatever it wants to do we will lose our clear and correct way of being in Mind. If we observe this and live according to it we will have no reason to apologize.

To do whatever we want to do and be pulled around by things in the external world means that we lose our most

empathetic and warm mind. If our mind is scattered and upset we cannot bring anything into fulfillment. To clearly align our mind we use our breath, we count the breath and breathe to the end of the exhalation and then naturally inhale. We again count and exhale-two....and then naturally inhale and carefully doing the breath we do this simple thing and concentrate and then of themselves the thoughts fade away. Doing this our mind eventually become like the autumn sky with no clouds anywhere, only blue clear sky in every direction. High and clear, huge and wide open, we become this state of mind. Our mind, gathered into one focus and clarified, gives birth to our deep vow which is then doable. To guide us to this state of mind is zazen and then our highest quality of mind and wisdom can be born. To increase this abundance we then find a true teacher and our path is guided and we can deepen in it. But, for people who live in society this kind of secure and stable state of mind and hugeness of Mind are the most essential things in the world today. When our mind becomes quiet, then we can see things clearly and openly, and our humor is also brought forth from there.

When I was in India, it was just this spring that the Buddha statues were destroyed by the Taliban. This was made public by many newspapers, and for the Indian people this was a very sad event. I received a Buddha statue dedicated to that, which was a form of the Buddha with a smile like Mona Lisa. When I received it I thought it was so unusual for a Buddha statue to have such a smile and I asked, and was told, "That's

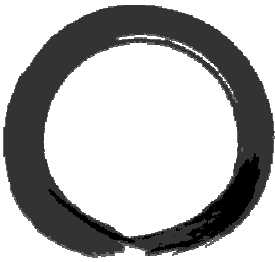
right. This Buddha has a theme. Those Bamiyan Buddha's that were destroyed made us so unhappy and we fell into the pits of despair and became full of anger. We wanted to make a Buddha that we could use for our life from now on. To relieve many people's insecurity we wanted to make a smiling Buddha like this. To relieve many people's pain and difficulty, not just to return resentment with resentment and hate, but to return a smile to many, many people and bring joy and calm with this."

Today the news tells us all that Afghanistan is in drought and famine, with the crops dying and so many sick and dying there from disease. When we think of this we have to wonder about those troops prepared to go there, can they really do any good at all? Can they bring our true sympathy to people in need? Are they not they just something to satisfy our own pain? We have to look back at that for ourselves as well. Of course the reality is not that simple, but we cannot be confused. We have to have our vow in giving life to the Buddha's teaching; we have to go straightforwardly and lead this era with our clear view and act correctly. We have to keep our mind settled and function in our best possible way. This is important for our best actions. To do this I want to continue deepening my state of mind. All the more so today this deepening of zazen is necessary to be able to, as much as possible, guide people without being confused by the phenomenon of today. This is my deepest wish.

For Sesshin information contact [sogenji@po.harenet.ne.jp](mailto:sogenji@po.harenet.ne.jp)

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**One Drop Zendo Association**

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED