

曹源一滴水

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The gate to the new century has opened and already we have welcomed the second new year. Last year we entered this new 21st century and since the 11th of September our world has been completely disrupted. Of course the resolution of that is not completed yet. The huge pain and suffering and disruption from this event has to be looked at very clearly.

This year, according to the Chinese calendar, is the year of the horse. There is an ancient writing in China called the Enanji. There is one section of the Enanji, which says, "10,000 things happen to a person, but it is all Saio's horse". In the Kan dynasty in China, in the north of China in the area of Toreidei, there was an old man who was able to clarify the Great Way. This man's horse went over the border of his country into the land of Ko. His horse ran away to the country of Ko, the neighboring country. His neighbors all said, "oh how sad, how terrible!" and they all went to give their condolences to the old man whose horse had run away. But that old man said, "No, no. We can't say this won't end up with some kind of good fortune."

They thought he would be miserable because he had lost his horse, but in fact, that is not how he was looking at it. That very horse that had run away to the land of Ko, then came back and brought with it many many wonderful, excellent horses. The country of Ko is a country where many fine horses have been born and raised; it is famous for just that. The horse brought back many of those fine horses. The people around him were all very amazed by all of these excellent horses and they gave a celebration for this old man. But the old man was not so excited, not so joyful. He said, "Let's see how this will become a source of difficult problems now."

Between the new horses and the old man's first horse, a new baby horse was born. The old man's son used to ride on this colt and play. Suddenly one day the little son fell off the horse and had a terrible accident. He was disabled and limped and was not able to do the same work as most people. It was very sad and people were always comforting the old man, to which the old man would say, "Let's ask how will this become a good thing. After a year, the soldiers of the country of Ko came over the border to fight a war. All the young people of the country, all of them, had to go to war. Taken away from their fields and harvests, they were sent to war. Carrying swords they went and fought. It was an extremely savage war. Nine out of ten children of the neighborhood parents died. But the son of the old man who had a limping leg couldn't go to war, so thanks to that he was able to stay alive and live with his parents.

When we meet great tragedy, it often becomes the source of something wonderful. And when we meet something wonderful, it will often become the source of something terrible. Our views about the Afghanists and against the Taliban is an example. While people knew there was a country called Afghanistan, they didn't know anything about what was going on there. We were so ignorant about the inner workings of Afghanistan. For those of us who are Buddhists, Afghanistan is a very very important country. From India to China, Buddhism was transmitted, and the culture went in the same flow along the Silk Road, a very important line was followed. Three years ago, the Taliban destroyed the Bamian Buddhist statues, then for the first time people started looking at Afghanistan. In the ancient times of Buddhism, this was a very important piece of the history of Buddhism, and of

Afghanistan as well. Although the country had a very severe environment, it was very peaceful. Agriculture, farming, including sugar, wheat and fruit were all grown there. It was an abundant country.

The English, the Russians, and others have fought wars and battles there. In 1921, until it was independent, it experienced three great wars. And since it became independent it has had continuing civil wars. Within this turmoil, breaking apart, coming together again, 2,500,000 people have already died. This already impoverished agricultural and farming country has become even more destitute - not even enough food to be able to eat. It was calling more and more misfortune to it. But now inside the country of Afghanistan, the fragmented wars are still continuing. It is still not gathered into one, how will Afghanistan once more come to harmony. The whole world is looking at this now.

In Tokyo the other day they were having a meeting about how to bring Afghanistan back to health. Great amounts of money were pledged for doing that. And with that, a new departure has been realized. Their new leader Karzai said that he wants to talk to the people who are just normal citizens, people want to see the children going to school whistling. Karzai has been continually praying for the renewal of the real Afghanistan.

In the Chinese writing of the word peace, half of the word is written with a symbol for rice and the other half with a symbol for mouth. This is the harmony that comes from this combination of having rice to put in a mouth. And this is how we really are. When one is hungry and we get food in our stomachs, we get naturally smoother this is true not just for humans, but for all animals, eating is our most important source. After a baby has had enough of its mother's milk, it is in a very good mood. If you watch a baby and how they are you can see it clearly. They really look satisfied and have an abundant, tranquil face, and they can pick up a toy and play all by themselves.

In the east, we have the saying, "When our food and clothing are sufficient, then for the first time can correct behavior be born." If we don't have enough food, we get irritated and agitated and have a hard time being peaceful and at ease. That word for harmony, which is also half of the word for peace, is the word for

rice going into the mouth. The other half symbol in the word for peace is "to measure". On an old fashioned balance, there was a plate on which things were placed to be weighed. There was a center on the balance and in the center there were two dots. If both things in that balance were even then the balance would be in a stable and level position. Peace, and to be in accordance with peace, means that a world is created where everyone can eat. This is a basic condition for peace.

There are now people who are spending hundreds of dollars every night for a meal, and then on the other side there are people who have not enough food to have even one meal. When there are how many millions of those hungry unfed people there is no way that this world can become peaceful. The impoverished Arabs who have brought forth this terrorism at this time are pointing at this, at the difference between those who have food to eat and those who don't have food to eat.

In Buddhism from olden times, there is the rule that food should be distributed equally and with no differences in who gets offerings. If we go to zazen, we all eat the same things together. In today's world, the offering is the salary. Ability, knowledge, wisdom, according to these, the salary may change. We should still all eat the same amount because having something to eat is what makes people calm, quiet, and everyone eating the same food together is an even greater abundance. It is not our rank that eats. It is our physical bodies that eat. We all require calories. We all equally need to eat. Those who are working hardest need to be eating the most calories, and this is often the lowest rank.

In Zen we also have the Master Hyakujo. Master Hyakujo, who first made our basic rules, gave in his rules, the rule of "fushin" (everybody comes out to work). Today the word "fushin" has become a part of the Japanese everyday language. If we interpret it from the original meaning, it means that when we build a house or when we make a road for example, everybody comes out together and works together equally on a project. This is called "samu" in the temple. We have a drum, a bell, and that says to everybody to come out now. We are all going to work together on this big job. Everyone comes out, and works on the job harmoniously, with a shovel or a pitchfork; everyone brings their different tools. All the

way from the highest-ranking top abbot to the lowest ranking young novice, everyone comes out and works together. This is what is called "fushin". When everyone works together at the temple that is called fushin.

It was Hyakujo Zenji in the Tang dynasty in China who created this way of doing it. Hyakujo is the great master in China who firmed the basic rules of living in a monastic life. In Hyakujo's rules, this is what is written. Hyakujo Zenji lived until the age of 95. Even after he was 80, he did not rest from work, he always came out to the group work. These rules of the dojo that he made, without ever breaking them himself, he would always observe these same rules. There were many many young people there training too, and when they saw their old respected venerable teacher working with them, they said, "You don't have to work with us. We can do it. You make it possible for us to live here in good health.

Nevertheless, he said, "I won't rest at all." Since they knew that he came out because the tools were there they thought that if they put the tools away, then he wouldn't have any reason to come out. They hid his tools. When he came out when all were called out to work, there were no tools for him. He was quiet, silent, and went back into his room. After that, he didn't come out for his meals at all. He went on a hunger strike. This was the original hunger strike. People today make a complaint or they go on strike about their unfair wages, but this was a very different hunger strike. He wanted to work and that is why he was on a hunger strike. When that happened, everyone was very worried. Why didn't he come out for work?

He then gave the very famous, splendid words, "A day of no work is a day of no eating." meaning that if I haven't worked in a day, and then I cannot eat on that day. When they gave him back his tools, he very happily joined them in the work and continued to work every day. This is a very important story, one to be very thankful for, everyone needs to work together in this same way, and without that we will not have peace. From that peace we will all become bright and happy.

We also have this same teaching in the Buddhist sutras. From this teaching comes the great honoring of the sangha, the harmony of the sangha. Where I trained in Kobe at Shofukuji, in the Tokogawa era there was a

great master named Bankei Zenji. That was 400 years ago. This temple of Shofukuji was built in honor of Bankei Zenji. He was very demanding about this matter that all people in the temple should eat equally in the temple. He even said that the dharma of that time was decaying because people eat separately and the senior people eat more delicious things. One day at his temple they received an eggplant from the feudal lord. Even though eggplant wasn't in season, they received this special eggplant. They received three eggplants and the attendant made an eggplant dish and gave it to the roshi, and the roshi said to him, "Did you make this for everybody?" The attendant answered that he had not. "I don't have enough to make this for everybody. It is not eggplant season. We received this as a gift from the feudal lord, for you, master to have eggplant. This is what we received it with as a given instruction, please eat it." To this Master Bankei said, "If that is the case, cut it up so everyone can have it in their soup."

Used in that way, only three eggplants were able to become a part of each person's soup. Maybe there was no flavor and no fragrance, and we couldn't even find that eggplant that was in the soup, but Bankei's state of mind is what is important. Another time he was eating miso soup, and he asked if everyone was having it, and they said "No, everyone is having an almost rotting soup, so we brought a special one for you." Master "For you to say to me to eat something especially good is like saying to me 'don't eat at all'. I can't receive such food. I've told you every day. Don't you get it yet?" He went into his room, closed his door and didn't come out. Again, he was now doing a hunger strike. He was doing a hunger strike because he wanted to be fed terrible things, rotting things. They went to Dairyyo, the monk in the kitchen who said, "I was mistaken about that. That was a big mistake, I made a big problem for everybody." The cook said this out loud, just outside the paper doors where the master was having his hunger strike. They couldn't do anything about the hunger strike, so they had a congregation member go into his room and say, "This was a mistake. From now on they will give you the same terrible-tasting rotting things to eat as they have." Hearing that the master's state of mind improved and he stopped his hunger strike. This and Bankei Zenji's state of mind are dried up and have withered in this day and age.

In China, there is a very famous book, the story of Sangoku. In it his army is going into a neighboring land and he receives a large amount of sake from the feudal lord he represents, in support of their efforts. Instead of him drinking it all by himself, he decides to give it to the soldiers. He announces that he will send the sake down the river at this hour tomorrow, so everyone should gather there. He told everybody to drink at of the river's source at the same time. He poured put all of the sake in the source point of the river and everybody joined there and drank it out of the river. It is a very interesting story. Of course, if they put their mouths to the water at the river's source they are not going to taste sake; they are going to taste water. But this kind of state of mind, this greatness of mind, this kind of general, when people receive his mind and his teaching they will not feel that they have wasted their life as they put it on the line for a general like this.

Politicians as well, should not be grieving about poverty, but should grieve about losing people. To not have separation between upper and lower ranking people, but instead for everyone to have equal food. From there will come energy, power, harmony and peace. In the world as well it is frequently said that resentment about food is never forgotten. The other side of that is we should never forget the grace or our gratitude for those who bring us food when we are very poor, feeling so miserable. When people bring us something to eat we feel this huge gratitude. How glad we are when people bring us food. How thankful. We can't forget that. Humans are very similar, we all actually honestly want to eat something delicious and share it with only a few people. Yet when it comes to difficult times we want to go through them with many people to help. Human beings are all somewhere selfish in and thinking in this way. We need to throw away that narrow-minded selfish state of mind and to all together eat the good and bad things. This is our pure mind. And in this state of mind comes the cultivation of true humanism. Without a state of mind like this, how can we possibly have peace? How can we expect to have world peace?

In the summertime, in the hot hot, hottest part of the season, as we are sweating, our whole body gets sweaty, in that very most severe hot time of summer. In those freezing days of winter, when the snow is falling, walking barefoot, we feel it through our

whole body as we do takuhatsu from town to town. This is the way of the person training in Buddhism. Doing it that way we receive offerings from different houses and we are so thankful for this. We put our hands together and we pray in gratitude. And we put our hands together and the people at the house where we are receiving alms say 'thank you' and bow to us as well. Where is this world today? On the days when the ground is soaked with rain, we stand on the corners of the poorest streets and from some dark hallway; an old person holding children gives us an offering. I bow in a 90-degree angle and thank them. And they bow at my bare feet in the cold rain. We all forget our poverty and we are both deeply moved by this meeting. "Even for one like me, who has no merit, why would I receive such a gift? I have to do my training as hard as I possibly can. I am being taken care of by all of society and am able to do training because of everyone offering. This body, while I think it is my body, is not my body. I think it is mine, but it is not mine. It belongs to all the people. I offer it to all people."

This is the state of mind of a person of training. We vow deeply in our heart to be able to see this, and pray that the Buddha Mind is alive today, in this very moment, and in this dojo. We work to keep this alive. Getting up early in the morning, we go into the jikido, and we have rice gruel and chant our meal sutras:

First let us reflect deeply on our true effort and the efforts of those who brought us this food.

Second, may we live in a way that makes us worthy to receive it.

Third, what is most essential is the practice of mindfulness which helps us transcend greed, anger and delusion.

Fourth, we appreciate this food which sustains the good health of our body and mind.

Fifth, we accept this food to complete the awakening of the pure mind of all beings.

"First let us reflect deeply on our true effort and the efforts of those who brought us this food." We consider the amount of great labor it took to make this food available to us, even

for making simple rice gruel, for it to become rice gruel. All the way up until when it became the rice gruel, what a huge amount of energy and determination it took so many people. How much effort and work we have been offered. The great energy of all of that, to be able to receive so much, how is it possible? How great the honor of receiving that! We have to feel deeply the great blessing of the person who offers it to us. This is the most basic bottom line of receiving food in the dojo.

This is not about thanking a god who creates everything, but thinking about the humans whose labors and whose hands have brought this to us. This is a very important thing to remember, and this is the same point as Hyakujo's words. The rice, the wheat, all of the things that are necessary for making our meals are in some way touched by human hands. We don't just go to the deep mountains and pick things and eat them as they are. All of them are aided in their production and brought to us through the help of other's hands. The iron or coal, those things also have to be given human hands' help in order to become the labor that brings these things to us. This is a very important aspect of what we receive. As Hyakujo Zenji has said, we cannot live without the merit of others and without the work of others. To live without making efforts is stealing other people's offering of their efforts. To be thankful for those and not to steal them, but also to not even resent giving them most of all of our energy for working. And that is why we have the second line.

"Second, may we live in a way that makes us worthy to receive it."? To just receive that which other people work for, to not just to steal it, instead have we really done enough work to make ourselves worthy of receiving those laborious efforts of others? We need to see this very clearly. Some would say why do we think about anything in that ignorant way when, after all, we pay money for our food. Why do we need to bow to others and think about what and who has brought our food to us? But the people from the olden days have an ancient poem that says:

If we look deeply at that light from the lamp that is shining on our pillow, then we know that the sweat of other people brings even the light in that lamp to us.

Can we really buy people's sweat without paying anything ourselves? Can we receive these things, and without working ourselves, just buy things and say because we pay money for them so that's okay? Does that really resolve this whole question? Does that really account for the whole picture? Even one grain of rice, even one needle, all of those came from people's own toil, people's own sweat. We need to be able to *gassho* and see this importance in each and every thing.

The Buddha, when he was born, walked seven steps, raised his right hand to the heavens, and pointing to the earth with his left hand, he said, "In all of the heavens and all the earth, there is only one." This is how it is recorded in the legends of the Buddha. This is not about him saying that only he was splendid, and you are all stupid fools. Of course it is not that. And even though it was the Buddha, of course he couldn't walk as soon as he was born, nor could he talk as soon as he was born. A person who has understood the Buddha's truth well, one who could describe him in this way from his birth, writes this. Looking at things in the Buddhist way, there is no god in the heavens that humans bow down to, nor is there is a devil that tempts us and makes us lazy or evil. This is about humans' great clarity of mind, our splendid being. To say that he immediately walked seven steps. That is the great splendid mind of each person. The dignified, clear mind of each and every person. To be able to realize that, become awakened to it and build an excellent society and world is the teaching of the Buddha.

To be selfish and try to do whatever you want to with this world, to be immoral and live self-centeredly and selfishly is not how humans truly are. In our mind, we have a true deep potential for awakening. If we can realize this awakening, then we can see all things clearly and see the world as it is. We can see from a loving mind and realize and awaken to this true essence of our original mind. This is not something which gives birth to egoistic, self-centered actions. In the very important teaching of the Buddha, we have that teaching of "the one is the many, and in the many is the one. In one, all are embraced, and in all, one is embraced." In the many, the one is given life. One is the many. The many are one. This is the direct perception of the way of teaching of the dharma. Each and every individual human being is individually dignified, precious, and important. To become

awakened to this fact, for this state of mind to come forth spontaneously and naturally is to awaken to our true, clear Bodhisattva mind. In the UNESCO songs there is one of how the bird of peace flies in our heart. We can't solve the difficulty about peace only with the physical, and the material. We also have the words of Confucius. When one of his disciples asked him about filial piety, Confucius answered his disciple that one has to cultivate even all of the cows and horses. Even the horses and the cows and children, all of them when we are cultivating, we have to do it completely. Yet there are things we can only do with other human beings, that can only be born through being a human being. And this is a very, very important thing to observe. Even if we eat the same thing, we may all eat the same thing, but just that won't bring peace.

There has to be respect for other human beings as well; to be able to observe another's human character. If we don't have that, then it is not the most basic true human quality. As it says in the Lotus Sutra, about the Bodhisattva Jofukyo, who would meet all people and say to everyone he met, whether a man or a woman, everyone, to every single person, no matter what work they did, no matter what level in society, "I deeply honor you and hold nothing against you. I have no prejudice against you. I see you as a person who is a Buddha, and for becoming this, you have been born. All beings, all people, have been born to do this practice."

It is said that this was one of the Buddha's past lives, and it is also the ideal life of the future. This is the vow, what is described in this way of being - to see all beings as the Buddha, and to see that quality of Buddha Nature in each and every being. To see that potential, and perceive clearly that each being is endowed with that, to be able to prostrate to that dignified clear self in all people, this is true religion. Religion where all people can trust and bow to each other is most necessary in the world today. No matter what country, what person, whether they have knowledge or don't have knowledge, whether they have rank in society or no rank in society, are healthy or sick, a man or woman, child or old person all of them are alive to realize this true nature with which all beings are endowed. Even if we go to a country without any such religion, it needs to be come that human beings can respect each other and prostrate to them. This is the most

important teaching that all beings need to be able to realize and accept. To pray to god, to pray to the Buddha, to read sutras, and to learn doctrine, it is not only these that are religion. To be able to offer your whole life for society, it is this Way of life that is living religion.

When we see Christ on the cross and know that he is doing this for us, and he says, "follow me", here is the true essence. To offer our whole body and develop our original character are the words of Confucius. In this way, human truth is realized. In Buddhism, we talk about awakening to our Bodhisattva Nature. To be able to give up our selves and bring others to realization first is true religion's essence. First, we have to bring forth our Bodhisattva nature and then, to deepen within and see clearly our true nature. Within that to awaken to our original character and know that that was always there beyond mistake. To realize that we are all endowed with this pure nature and for us to bring forth this Bodhisattva Vow and to love all beings.

This love is very important, but there are also economic and material and human perceptions and physical needs. It can't just end with love. It needs to be something even deeper, something very spiritual. To deepen to that point we have to know this place where we are one with god, one with Buddha's wisdom and god's love, and to awaken to these directly. To know directly this deepest compassion and deepest wisdom this is true awakening. This is the highest ultimate love. To awaken to this, and to bring people to this awakening this is the wisdom and compassion of the Buddha that we all already have within us. Give life to this, and by doing this we find the most true love. Here we are at the 21st century, and in this 21st century maybe we have high technical and material progress, but in our mind we have no progress at all. In olden days people would defend and fight with spears and sticks. Maybe that was less terrible. But today with one great bomb, how many millions of people are destroyed? To have developed this kind of a weapon and to be looking for a chance to use it, we are much worse than the primitive people who used bows and arrows and spears.

We haven't realized any further than those quite objective places in our mind. 2500 years or more before, we were taught not to kill living things, not to go to war, not to kill even one bug. This was the Buddha's teaching, and

this is the most superlative, excellent way of human beings' living. Saying this, people would always have opposite opinions as well. Is it okay for people's safety to be disrupted? We have to protect politics or else what can we rely on? We have to defend our country, to defend our safety and security. We have to do this and that to defend it and protect it. This is absolutely necessary. In this way, arguments are always raised. But right now, as everybody knows, there is nothing as stupid as war, so why don't we stop it? Instead use this money that we use for defense for helping people, for welfare. We should now be coming to this time of transformation and change.

The Buddha himself, when his country was destroyed right in front of his face; he swallowed his tears, and instead went for the peace of all beings. Aren't we at a place where we should learn from this? And when we see this, and we think this way, and we look at the phenomenon of what is happening today, we have to raise our voices and say, "Return to the way of the Buddha." I think we have to see this time happen right now. From the interpretation of the way of Zen, I speak.

The Buddha dharma is the Buddha's awakening. In the teaching of the Buddha,

the meaning is not in the teaching, but in the awakening from which that teaching was brought forth. The awakening to the truth, the Buddha's awakening, that enlightenment is what cannot be stopped and never ends. It is in that deep awakening that the Buddha's life continues. As the words we find in the Inexhaustible Lamp, and the words of the Vimilakirti Sutra say, from one candle to the next, even though the candle melts, the light continues. In this way, for that light to continue; even if the bodies that carry it disappear, the light continues. And in that way, the Buddha who was alive 2500 years ago is still alive today as well. In the Mahayana, this is the teaching. This year, 2002, as we receive it, as we welcome it, to once again make our motivation and our passion bright, and firm and deepen our vow. To bring our vow to all people then this truth becomes the way people can truly become, to teach this to them. Every day deepen your state of mind with the teaching of the Buddha and the wisdom that comes from it, to deepen it within yourself, and to not let go of that vow.

Sogenji Sesshin Schedule

Feb	4-10	Kosesshin
	27-3/3	Osesshin
March	7-11	Kosesshin
	14-20	Osesshin
	24-30	Kosesshin

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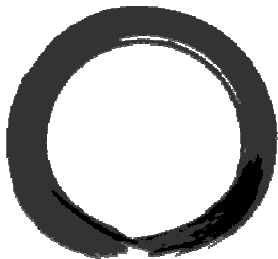
April	4-10	Kosesshin
	16-22	Osesshin
	25-29	Kosesshin
May	4-10	Kosesshin
	20-26	Osesshin
	31-6/4	Kosesshin

June	7-11	Kosesshin
	15-21	Osesshin
	25-29	Kosesshin
July	4-10	Osesshin
	15-21	Kosesshin
	26-30	Kosesshin

For Sesshin information contact sogenji@po.harenet.ne.jp

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