

# 普源一滴水

Number 63

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From Shodo Harada Roshi, Abbot of Sogenji, Okayama, Japan

We have now welcomed a new year. But although the year is new according to the calendar, we are still caught up in the same worldly circumstances. Not only is there no "newness" here, but all of our pain and misery continue. In Iraq there is not only an ongoing war but also the constant threat of attacks by suicide bombers. People are insecure, and that insecurity only gets worse and worse. Likewise in Palestine, with the ongoing terrorist suicide bomber attacks, the people have no peace. Added to this we have the precarious economic state of the whole world, with no solution in sight. In each person's mind there is only insecurity and instability, and with this continuing insecurity our minds become heavier and heavier. People today have no leader in whom they can believe, no one they can trust to lead them into peace. Everyone is sunk into profound insecurity.

Right now many feel that this country (the USA) is in hands that we cannot reach and is being moved around in a way that we cannot influence. We cannot know where it will go from here. We used to have the sense that our opinions and ways of thinking were at least considered, but where has this way of governing gone? This is what many people are feeling, and this loss of contact has become today's way of governing. People who do zazen and are influenced by the Buddha's teaching must not fall into this insecurity. As Rinzai said, "In this five-foot lump of red flesh there is a true person of no rank always coming in and going out; if you have not seen it yet, See it NOW See it NOW!"

Everyone has this red bleeding body, in which we live from morning until night. There is no one who leaves the body aside and goes out of it. This body is given great life through that "true person of no rank," and that person of no rank is in the very "middle" of the body but without being it, grasping at it, or clutching onto it. Without being caught on

the usual social values of fame, wealth, and knowledge, there are those who go beyond the physical body and ordinary ideas of being healthy or not healthy, of being rich or poor. This physical body is given life by that very root of our awareness, and this root is not dependent on our physical body. That awareness which can use the body abundantly and come and go in and out of it is the true master.

Everyone is so tossed and turned by the things in this world, by that which is going on around all of us. Moved around by circumstances and situations, we set the true master aside. There are many who have not even encountered it yet, but everyone can know it and realize it. It is always coming and going in and out of our body; through our eyes and ears and feelings it is always coming and going freely. When it goes out, if we see a flower it becomes a flower; when we hear a beautiful bird's song, we become a singing bird. When we go within, we are hungry, sleepy, hot, and cold. We can receive this whole universe; even if we land on Mars, we can receive that and perceive it exactly as it is. Whatever today brings, whatever our health or state of mind, we can see through it and adjust. There is this true person that freely comes and goes in and out. It is not caught, not stuck, nor fixed in our body. It is both one with the heavens and earth and one with the body. There is a true master like that within each of us.

We hear the insect chirping, and within that insect's cry is a true being of no rank.

"Hearing the insect's cry I become the insect"

We see the mountain and we become that high, firm, soaring state of mind; we see the river and we are flowing without pause--we are the flow of life's energy. We see the sky full of stars and throughout the universe to its far, distant past we

become it all, not stuck on any personal attachments. We dive into the suffering of all people, into society's most miserable layer. Within this is a true person of no rank.

Everyone has this true person of no rank, but everyone puts it aside and is insecure and depressed. To know this, but not just with mental understanding, we have to experience it and realize it directly and in its fullest tautness. We do daily zazen and work on this inventively--isn't this our truth? It is this state of mind that is no different at all from that of the Buddha and Daruma. Rinzai is urging us along and giving us energy.

The Sixth Patriarch told us "not to put any thoughts at all onto what we perceive externally, and internally not to have thoughts of winning and losing, good and bad." All of these thoughts are from dualistic words and the world of good and bad. Smart and stupid people exist, as do healthy and sick people, young people and old people, but that is the way of looking at things from the point of view of society. We ask, How can I live in the world without this point of view? But that is not the point. We have to look at this world right smack in front of us and not see it in a small personal way but as a reality. See it directly like a mirror that precisely reflects things as they are and doesn't add anything onto it whatsoever. Then there is no good or evil, profit or loss, and our mind will not be moved around the slightest bit by being praised or criticized. If we do zazen everyday, we become able to remember these occasions of direct seeing, or else we have to start again in each day. I do zazen every day, but if it is for being confused in the world it is of no use.

To see that which is in the mirror yet not to be moved around by it at all--to taste this is the "za" of zazen. The "zen" of zazen is to look within and not be moved around by anything.

"Zen is the name of the mind, and the mind is the body of Zen," Eno Zenji said. In our mind "from the origin there is not one single thing." In this way no matter what is brought to us we are moved around by none of it. In our mind there is this true and actual nature, and we have to see and establish clearly this original nature so our mind is not moved around by anything. In this the truth of zazen is found. Zazen is not sitting in the dark and becoming unconscious or not thinking or not being. Although it is about the body sitting,

just that sitting alone is not true living zazen. This body in this world of phenomena--how should we be in this world? This is the truth of our zazen. Our world is always changing, and within that we sit and see it. We receive it in every moment and are moved around by nothing at all. When we throw a stone in the water, ripples occur, but our mind is not something that responds in that way to having something thrown into it. There is no wind there, nor are any waves aroused. This mind of not being moved around is how we have to realize the truth within. This is the "zen" of zazen.

Zazen is that within our state of mind which is beyond all dualism. The realization of that which is beyond dualism is the truth of zazen. Even if God comes into this world, that is something that is within our awareness. It is only something reflected in our mirror mind. Even if something is said to be absolute, if we are aware of it, it is only in the mind or our mirror-like awareness. Even when what we see is a God or a Buddha, in our mind there is this way of reflecting everything yet not being moved around by anything that we are reflecting. It is not that we are waiting for some superior person in society to come along about whom we can get excited, and if someone of no status or position comes along neither do we suddenly become superior and look down on them. That is being moved around, and is not our mind's true nature. What kind of world is this? To reflect all changes equally within our awareness is zazen. No matter how bright the sunshine or how deep the relationship, our mind is vaster than any of those. In this world everything can be placed inside our mind.

No matter what crisis or catastrophe arises, it all is within our Mind. Of course such things cannot be resolved only in our own mind; there are things in this world that we have to actively address. Yet we cannot be moved around, or everything we do is only blind action. We have to know the hugeness of mind that is not moved around or affected by anything. If that state of mind is realized, we can say we have done a little zazen, maybe.

In our mind there are all of the events of the limitless past and all of the vows, hopes, and plans for the future; yet our mind never becomes crowded or narrow. This huge mind is what we all are endowed with. Having this huge mind, we cannot put it aside and be moved around by events. The outside world is always changing. There are sometimes good times, sometimes

difficult times; there are terrible times and peaceful times. The outside world changes constantly, and it is full of conflicts, challenges, and confusing circumstances. All of that has a source and is not made by some devil. If we look to the source, we can see that it is all coming forth from cause and effect, but in our mind there is no such thing. All of that is only the external world. In our mind there is no beginning and no end. In our mind there is no fixed thing called a "me." That which is nothing at all reflects everything.

This mind of nothing at all is what is absolute. If a man comes in front of it, it reflects a man; if an old person comes in front of it, it reflects an old person; if a woman comes, a woman is reflected; if a child comes, a child is reflected. And when they leave there is nothing left behind whatsoever. This is the way our mind is. If there is something that lingers, that is the confusion of our awareness. We do zazen to see well the confusion of our mind and to let go of that confusion and be born with each actuality. To clarify this is zazen. We become able to see clearly how to relate to each moment. When we can always see in this way of peace and harmony, rather than rejecting the things we encounter, we are able to respond without hesitation. We are no longer confused and moved around by the phenomena around us.

During the Tang dynasty the country of China was in terrible crisis and confusion, and there were many civil wars. Master Zuigan came forth at that time. This master was always practicing and doing zazen. He was always addressing himself, "True Master?" "Yes!" "Are you awake?" "Yes" "Don't be deceived by people!" "Yes yes!" He was always saying this to himself, giving himself this koan over and over again, and answering it himself. If you look at it from the outside, he looks foolish and crazy, but when we are not fooled by what we see and hear and look at this from the inside, Master Zuigan is one from whom we can learn much.

"True Master!" As long as we don't know where that true master is, we are the slave. The question "Are you awake" has to be answered with a "Yes." We all have to do that kind of zazen. "Are you all awake?" You may have that kind of a face, and be able to appear as if you are awake, but even if you look awake, if you don't know the true source, it is of no use. For everybody sitting sleepily in zazen, it is the eye of the whole universe that must be wide open. Only when we see and hear with that

eye and that ear of the universe can we possibly say it is the truth. If we are being pushed and pulled around, we can never hear and see truthfully, and we will constantly misunderstand. In every single thing and every moment if we see the phenomena only, and get caught on ideas of good and bad, then we are deceived by them as if they were the reality. We have to open the clearly seeing eye that can see through all the temporary phenomena, or else we think we are awake but we are blind. "Are you awake?" "Don't be deceived by people!"

We are so thankful for someone else's words, yet so often we are actually being deceived. "That is such a wonderful person, oh such a wonderful person!" We wander here and wander there and leave aside that which sees the truth. Everyone is fooled continually. The true Dharma has no form yet extends in all the ten directions. Our mind, the mind of each of us, extends throughout the whole universe; we cannot leave that aside and only see the shadow, only see that which is partial. This is what Rinzai is grieving about out loud.

Another monk went to Master Baso Doitsu and said, "Who is the one who is one with all of the ten thousand things?" Who is the one who is putting all of the ten thousand things over there and then reflecting all of them?

The ten thousand things are always in flux and transient. These are always changing, but that eye which sees these changing things--what is that? In the spring all of the flowers that bloom, in the summer the woods full of green trees, in the autumn the colorful falling leaves, in the winter the snow that covers everything with white: this deeply seeing eye reflects these, it reflects everything, and reflects throughout infinite time. What eye is that?

"Who is the one who is one with all of the ten thousand things?" This is how the monk questioned Master Baso Doitsu, and Baso Doitsu answered, "When you have drunk down the Yangtze River I will tell you!"

This whole universe! Drink it down. Our zazen is just like that. It can't be done in one small corner of the world, sitting in fear of what might change and wandering around in some personal despair. Zazen is not about sitting still and holding on to grief! While not ignoring our grief and our fear, we reflect it, but we are not moved around by it.

Everyone has been caught up in the current framework of economics and politics and the world's recent circumstances and situations. While making a living and a life in society, everyone thinks that these were real. We are continually planning within this framework, considering what we should do--and putting physical death in the center. We then lose our true center and become a slave to the world. We have to see this clearly and to realize this true master within, our true essence.

In society, people who are on their home ground are always thinking about who is doing what, and complaining about it. But that is all irrelevant. Whether something is good or not is of no meaning. The only thing of importance is that we are functioning with our whole body and being. Even on our home ground we have to work and become what we are doing in the best possible way, and in that is our joy. But even if we can do this on our home ground, if we can't continue it when we move about in the world, if we can't do it anywhere and everywhere, it is still insufficient. We have to be able to do it in our everyday life, and then zazen gives life to our everyday living. We can do everything better and more efficiently. We can work better and discover all kinds of creative inventions. That is zazen. This is a zazen not of form but of our true mind. Because that zazen of our true mind is so rare today, everyone is moved around. If even while doing zazen we are still pushed and moved around by things, that is a disappointment.

In this world there are hundreds of millions who are doing zazen, but the majority of them are doing only the form of zazen, sitting with their own private attachments. There is no awakening in zazen that holds on to personal problems. Zazen is not private; it is not about our character or our private concerns but is about throwing all of those away.

The same is true of the Nembutsu, or the practice of chanting the Buddha's name. One day, the disciples of Honen Shonin were discussing their many doubts. Is our true nature and our chanting of the Buddha's name the same as that of our teacher or different? The eldest disciple, Shinran

Shonin, said, "Of course, they are the same." But the doubting students protested and said, "No you have an awakened mind and that means it cannot be the same chanting! We are not awakened yet--it can't be so disrespectful!" They could not reach a conclusion, and so they asked their teacher, Honen Shonin. He said that his deep mind is not his own but one that is the whole universe, that he was endowed with this mind, as was Shinran, and in fact this mind is one and the same for all people. If there is anyone who says it is different, that is not true.

Our zazen is the same. It cannot be a zazen that is personal but must be that which is the same as the Buddha. Then, we are seeing with the same eyes and hearing with the same ears as the Buddha and the Patriarchs. If the Buddha or Daruma Daishi were here there would be no difference whatsoever. It has to be that kind of zazen. When we sit, there cannot be the slightest bit of any emotion or attachment inserted in our zazen whatsoever. Otherwise, it is not real zazen. In zazen free from any emotion or attachment, we encounter the truth of our daily life, and this is why our state of mind becomes no different at all from that of the Buddha and Daruma Daishi. We realize this with great wonder and amazement.

Please, those of you who are doing zazen, in today's world and times, it has to be living zazen. Please have this deep faith and realize this truth and awaken to our true nature. Please do not be moved around by the things that are happening in the world today in such a way that we lose our clearly hearing ears and our clearly seeing eyes. We should not be confused and tossed around, but instead be able to see and hear clearly and correctly and to touch the actuality directly. Actively work in this world, seeing clearly what should be done, and with bravery and courage make diligent efforts and go forward. Each person has this truth from birth. We have to realize this and, each day in our zazen and diligent activity, give it life. Cultivate this deep faith and this universe-sized energy and potential and bring deep peace to people all around you. Do this kind of zazen.

## Sogenji Osesshin Schedule

2004

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January	15-21	Osesshin
February	16-22	Osesshin
March	13-19	Osesshin
April	16-22	Osesshin
May	7-13	Osesshin

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June	7-13	Osesshin
July	4-10	Osesshin

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

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