

# 曹源一滴水

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

## Hakuin Zenji's Song of Zazen — Zazen Wasan

All sentient beings are essentially Buddhas. As with water and ice, there is no ice without water; apart from sentient beings, there are no Buddhas. Not knowing how close the truth is, we seek it far away — what a pity! We are like one who in the midst of water cries out desperately in thirst. We are like the son of a rich man who wandered away among the poor. The reason we transmigrate through the Six Realms is because we are lost in the darkness of ignorance. Going further and further astray in the darkness, how can we ever be free from birth-and-death? As for the Mahayana practice of zazen, there are no words to praise it fully. The Six Paramitas, such as giving, maintaining the precepts, and various other good deeds like invoking the Buddha's name, repentance, and spiritual training, all finally return to the practice of zazen. Even those who have sat zazen only once will see all karma erased. Nowhere will they find evil paths, and the Pure Land will not be far away. If we listen even once with open heart to this truth, then praise it and gladly embrace it, how much more so then, if on reflecting within ourselves, we directly realize Self-nature, giving proof to the truth that Self-nature is no-nature. We will have gone far beyond idle speculation. The gate of the oneness of cause and effect is thereby opened, and not-two, not-three, straight ahead runs the Way. Realizing the form of no-form as form, whether going or returning, we cannot be any place else. Realizing the thought of no-thought as thought, whether singing or dancing, we are the voice of the Dharma. How vast and wide the unobstructed sky of samadhi! How bright and clear the perfect moonlight of the Fourfold Wisdom! At this moment what more need we seek? As the eternal tranquility of Truth reveals itself to us, this very place is the Land of Lotuses and this very body is the body of the Buddha.

## Hakuin Zenji's Zazen Wasan; the fifth section.

Once again, Hakuin Zenji writes, "As for the Mahayana practice of zazen, there are no words to praise it fully."

We are talking here specifically about the Mahayana. In the Lotus Sutra, there is written this story: Once there was a very rich man with a very old house. He lived in that big huge house and it was in such a wrecked state there was no way for it to be repaired. Raccoons, foxes, snakes, and even scorpion were living there. It was in that sort of condition. One day there was a huge fire of unknown cause in this big old house. The rich man was so surprised that he ran outside, and then he remembered that he had many adorable children absorbed in playing at his house who had no sense of the great danger of a fire. He ran back in and yelled to the playing children, "It's a fire! The house is on fire!!"

He yelled but the children didn't know how terrifying a fire could be so even when they heard him, they didn't make a move to go outside at all. If there had only been two children, he could have carried them out of the house, but because it was a large family, there were many, many children playing together. He couldn't carry them out, and they didn't understand the danger they were in, so he used his wisdom and said to them, "Everybody, hurry up and come outside! There is something so interesting and wonderful right out here! There are carts pulled by goats and oxen; they are such beautiful carts! Come outside quickly and let's go for a ride!"

Due to the wisdom of the rich man, they were saved from the fire and were not burned up with the house. Hearing that they could go for a ride, the children were so excited they said in unison, "Let's go!" They all ran outside only to find an empty yard. Although the rich man had said so, outside

there was no cart pulled by a goat, nor any cart pulled by reindeer or oxen. The rich man seemed to have lied, but in so doing, he had saved the children.

In the same way, there were no carts pulled by goats, reindeer, and oxen, but Buddha had given a Great Chariot pulled by a big White Oxen. Of course, the rich man is the Buddha and the children are all sentient beings. The fire in the big house is the condition of this transient world in which we live. The sentient beings are all the children of the Buddha. Absorbed in all the world of desires and pleasures they are never working to realize their deepest human truth. In the material world of following desires and looking for pleasure, only playing without attempting to awaken to the life that is eternal; this is our condition. Here the Buddha put this expedient means to work by representing with the three carts the three various vehicles of entrance into the Way of Complete Enlightenment. As the Buddha taught to the people gathered, "All things move and flow." He taught the truth of how all is transient and there is no ego in anything existing; all things are without ego. To realize this truth clearly and not be caught on anything in the external world and from within our self is to not be attached to an ego. When all dualism is let go of completely is the entrance into the serene purity of Nirvana. That we can find the true peace of mind is the basic teaching of Buddhism. The people gathered heard this teaching of the Dharma with joy and everyone was liberated from the suffering of the three worlds.

With just our minds, peace being realized is a wonderful thing. Yet when the Buddha came down from the podium where he taught the Lotus Sutra, he said that everything he had taught up to that time had been expedient means, and that the things in the world are all transient. He said to everyone who was caught on the things of the world, "Don't be caught upon all of that; it all passes. Don't be caught on this physical body and don't be caught on this external world! All things are without ego. Because we think there is a fixed 'me' - a fixed self or ego - we get confused and conflict between egos arises as we try to defend our own. This 'ego' that we consider an ego is only an essence that is changing in every instant. There is no way that there could be anything such as an absolutely separate ego. The ego is not absolute. In our existence, there is no such thing as an ego. Within constant change it manifests as one phenomena."

He said that we could only find the Mind's true peace when we let go of all dualistic perception. In this way he taught. Yet all of these are expedient means. For all of you who live in that external world, to not be attached and caught in it, to separate from society and let go of that ego may seem like suffering that makes us bloody. The goal is not simply an ascetic training but for the eye of the mind to actually open. To open the mind's eye; in this we are all equal. To leave society and go into the mountains and do ascetic training may be fine for those who can do it; yet to imply that people who cannot go off and do that kind of training cannot be liberated - this is not at all the case. If we can't open our mind's eye right in the middle of society, then we are only suffering unnecessarily. Everyone is born from the origin already endowed with the Buddha's deep eye of wisdom. We have the eye of Buddha wisdom from birth, and if we all open that eye, we do not need to free ourselves from any original ignorance and having desires as they are is fine.

We have to open the eye that is no different from the deep-seeing eye of wisdom of the Buddha. For doing this, the three vehicles of the arhat, the middle way, and the Bodhisattva are just examples. There is only one Buddha Dharma. We have only to awaken that eye of the Buddha. This is how the Buddha taught in the Lotus Sutra teaching. The Great White Oxen Cart is not just a Great Huge All-Embracing Cart. Neither is it just a cart in which all beings ride together to another shore.

The Great White Oxen Cart is inside each of us in the deepest reaches of our Mind, beyond the Ego, and can see through everything right to the Truth. To believe that all people in the world are also endowed with that all-seeing eye; to believe in the eye and believe in it deeply is our work. Holding onto that deepest belief, we clarify our deepest mind. With people in society, we truly liberate all from their delusions and pain and suffering, and vowing to do that we powerfully and sturdily walk. In the very midst of society wherever there are people in pain, we walk through it firmly. This is the Mahayana.

For each person to have this great faith and deep vow is the Mahayana. To hold the deep belief that everyone has this same clear mind, as that of the Buddha, is the Great White Oxen Cart. It is not about judging some great dark ignorance or about becoming free from all delusions before we can be liberated; instead, it is about being clear while right in the midst of those. To be with ignorance in the world of delusion and yet not be moved around by them; to have the deep faith that allows us to move through all of these; to live freely in this way is the Mahayana.

The Mahayana is not just for a handful of people, a few ordained people, for a good birth in a next life. We are not talking about being reborn in a good life and then training and being saved. To have a job and family today with all their problems and confusions, yet to be realized and liberated as a layperson is the way of the Mahayana. In the olden days, it was said that women had such bad karma that they could not be liberated. Even in that era, the women in their feminine form and with all the desires and home life of a woman doing a job in society; even so, they were saved and their life was their training. This is the teaching of the Mahayana. As is said in the Vimalakirti Sutra, those who work on their path as a layperson are the Bodhisattvas of the Mahayana. Manjusri Bodhisattva, Kanzeon Bodhisattva, Fugen Bodhisattva, Seishi Bodhisattva; all of these manifested this form.

Politics as they are is the Buddha Dharma, and economics as they are is the Buddha Dharma. This is the essence of the Mahayana. What is the way of liberating in the midst of desires? This is in the practice of deep samadhi. Hakuin Zenji said, "As for the Mahayana practice of zazen, there are no words to praise it fully."

With this meaning implied, the Sixth Patriarch gave a definition of this deep samadhi: "To let go of all external karmic connections is 'Zen,' to be free from any concerns within is 'Jo,' (ZenJo is deep samadhi, the true practice of zazen).

We all have many varieties of appearances: an appearance of being a man, an appearance of being a woman, an appearance of being old, or an appearance of being young. From the point of view of society, some have good

education, some have only a little education, some have much knowledge, some do not have much knowledge, some have much money, some have not a lot of money; various appearances exist. Some seem good and some seem bad in appearance. We have many varieties of appearances. To let go of all of those, to ignore and not see them, to not judge them, this is Zen. We are always being caught on good or bad. If something is bad, we get stuck on thinking it is bad and caught on form. We are always judging whether someone is a good or bad person, whether they are educated or not, whether they know much or not. We don't even see it as our own problem and become conceited about ourselves. We have many of these various opinions, yet these are only forms and appearances and simply a mirror reflecting scenery, not the thing itself. Appearances are forms that have been manifested externally and are not the essence, only a temporary problem. To not fixate on these things, but rather let them be like something that is reflected in a mirror. We, like the mirror, are merely reflecting what comes in front of us without judging. A mirror reflects perfectly only what comes in front of it. To know this way of true being in Mind, being in this state of mind, is Zen.

We don't get caught on our own or external form, so we don't get upset and can be quiet and steady. This is samadhi. We take our zazen state of mind into our daily life and into the way we each live, unattached to the many things that come along. This allows us to be unshaken by what is within our minds, all the opinions and thoughts, and to realize that deeper inner essence clearly. That is samadhi. However, in the world we live in today, this samadhi is very challenging to realize. The economic situation and the various jobs sought after to make a living all affect us, and our minds are disturbed. Various religions and races are battling internationally. One country is divided and the people warring, with people in the same religion turning against one another. It is a very sad situation. Also the natural crises: the Colombian earthquake, the Turkish earthquake, the Taiwanese earthquake, and cyclones bring death to millions and cause chaos. The crises of nature make our minds very insecure. The changes of the new era and the flow of new products; when there are so many new things the old ones are wantonly thrown away. Where can we find the quiet of mind we seek?

People in the world use every possible method to appeal to people's minds, to pull their mind into an interest, and with this societal influence, our minds are affected. If we follow all of it naturally, we get neurotic and psychologically turbulent. Especially in these unsettling times, we need a firm and untroubled state of mind, one not achieved by turning our back on the problems of society, but by being in the very midst of these problems and not being troubled by them. We have to learn how to do this and make the efforts to practice it.

When Emmyo chased the Sixth Patriarch away from the Yellow Plum Mountain, he said, "Before any judgment of good or bad, before the birth of your parents; that is your original face." Not thinking about anything good or bad is your true and original mind. Before we had any thought of plus or minus, with no thought at all about being born or dying. Where there is no idea of winning and losing, not thinking of anything; that is the essence of the mind. How about that? Where there is nothing hardened or fixed, and

no thoughts arising, like a newborn baby. Receiving the world that is without dualistic discrimination. This is our natural mind; this pure mind in each of us is our original nature.

Today we all think this worldly temporal mind is our origin, but it is only something our ego has produced which judges things as good, bad, beautiful, or ugly. This judgment is the work of the ego, as we add on and gather together a temporary form, like one scenery passing in a mirror; only that and nothing more. Not the eternal mind or true mind, but only a reflection. That mind which holds on to nothing at all is our original mind. A mirror can reflect because it is empty. To hold on to nothing and reflect all is our original nature. No matter what active scene is mirrored, the true nature is not moved at all. No matter what situation, circumstances, or apparent disaster, the mind is not hindered or troubled at all. Our true mind is not disquieted by anything. We can realize this samadhi.

The mind of when we were first born of no judgment is pure and undiscriminating. Not thinking anything at all is to believe and not doubt. While we know this, we follow around what we reflect and are caught by it. To be able to realize and stay continually in this mind, free of affliction, we practice zazen. That means that we become this state of mind, clarified and realized.

The Sixth Patriarch also says that our truth in our life and the essence of Buddhism, the true matter of Zen, is to realize kensho. Our singular purpose in life is to directly see our true nature; that's it. Daruma (Bodhidharma), the first Patriarch, taught to have no obstruction in mind whatsoever, only to reflect and be mirrored naturally with nothing added and nothing thrown away. We were born pure and clear; we do zazen to realize this. He said this clearly. The Sixth Patriarch defines zazen as such: to not be moved around by anything that is external and to give rise to no extraneous mind moments within at all. He taught this way.

The perceptible world is always dualistic, a world of good and bad, likes and dislikes, according to circumstances and situations. There are good and bad things, people who are smart and not so smart, people who are healthy and those who are sick, people are born and people die, some young, some old. See this world clearly without taking your eyes off it, being afraid of it, or trying to avoid it. Simply receive the world exactly as it is. Do not let any of your own self in there, not one mind moment. Not budging from our deep faith whatsoever is to sit zazen. That means that not just our body is sitting but our mind is sitting. We are not just guarding a still body, but realizing the still mind.

As Takuan Zenji said to Tajima no Kami in his collection of letters entitled *The Unfettered Mind*, "To not think about anything and not be moved is the meaning of the unfettered mind. It must not be misunderstood as simply not seeing or perceiving." If, in Kendo ('the way of the sword'), it were considered best in a serious match to move neither mind nor body, but to rather stand there like a Buddha statue, one would be slashed to death in one blow. That is not what unfettered or unmoved mind means. It means that the mind does not catch any place at all, it does not stop anywhere. As soon as the mind stops and gets caught, a gap occurs and the mind stops and hesitates, pauses, and stagnates. The mind, in each and every situation and each and every

world encountered, never stops or sticks the slightest bit. In Kendo, it is said that we don't even get stopped on the tip of the other person's sword or on their hand's grip, nor do we pause to look at the other person's footsteps; nowhere are we entangled. In addition, we are not hindered by our own hands or feet, our sword or body, or on our own thoughts

This does not mean we are not thinking at all but we flow; our whole body and mind are eyes and pure energy of taught Ki. No caught response or echo. Therefore, if the other person has a gap, we can hit and if the other person moves, we can respond appropriately; that is the unmoved mind. Sitting is not merely not thinking, but our essence is neither caught nor wandering, and as the worldly changes go by, we are neither confused nor distracted.

In the dojo, zazen is the central thing, but just sitting Zen is not the only zazen. Outside doing samu work, takuhatsu, or any activity, is the same essence of the zazen in the zendo. We work to realize this. Doing cleaning we become the cleaning; while chanting the sutra we become the sutra, eating our food we become the eating, doing zazen we become the sitting, doing samu we become the samu. In this way from morning till night our zazen never stops. To work on this is the zendo and to live in society is the same thing. If our mind is lost as our refuge, we start wandering within and that becomes a problem. Our minds should always be matched with reality without any gap whatsoever between ourselves and anything. No gaps, no separations: this is living zazen.

Next, the Sixth Patriarch says, "Zen is to be undistressed by anything within." A person of old said that "Zen is the flow of the mind, mind is the body of Zen. To deeply regard the way of the mind is Zen, our inner mind empty as it is from the origin, pure with not any murkiness or a tiny speck." To see our true nature and not be unsettled by anything whatsoever. To be undisturbed by problems we may encounter externally is that unmoved mind of Zen.

Just our sitting and becoming empty of any awareness is not zazen. It is not wrong, but zazen cannot be just a superficial posture. Our mind is looking deeply at our mind and realizing that eternal world of the unmoved. Discovering this and looking into it deeply; that is the way of Zen. In fact, within our true way of the mind, we are always beyond the world of form, and to realize this is zazen. People talk about an absolute being, a god or a Buddha we try to imagine, but that is only a concept. There is no real substantial thing like that. Even if a magnificent Buddha to be thankful for manifests, even if a god comes forth, what shows it is the mirror of our mind. This is true for Daruma and all the Patriarchs. It is the same, because what is reflected is the same. To be everything with no sense of being. The source reflects but cannot be reflected.

Mind is a mirror in which all worlds are reflected and established. If they are reflected in the mind, we see the stars and even one tiny ant running in front of us. All is there. All sounds and feelings and smells and tastes are in this Mind. This is the true substance of our settled mind. There is no big or small, good or bad, lose or win, birth or death. That place has no judgment possible, just an echo with nothing to be added. To realize this state of mind is zazen.

It is just like the poem:

*Oh! Great all embracing mind!*

*The height of heaven cannot be reached*

*Yet, the mind is beyond even heaven's height.*

*The thickness of the earth is impossible to measure,  
yet the mind upholds*

*The earth*

*The brilliance of the sun and the moon is inherent,  
yet the mind is the*

*Face of that brilliance of the sun and the moon.*

Just like this, the mind matches all of it, never feeling full or narrow. Always respect and deepen this essence of all people. This is an infinitely extending universe, according to science, and this always widening mind all fits in this Mind. The Mind is immeasurably large and cannot be fathomed. As for time, there is history in time, and that future which is recognized to be becoming is infinite time as well. Both time and space are all included in this great Mind. This mind's essence has no small self, no such thing as a Me, and no place for even a mote like that to be inserted; only to be exactly as we are. Our Clear Mind at the origin is zero. We call it Ku or Mu, the mind into which nothing can come forth.

To cut away everything extraneous in the external world and give rise to nothing within is za (sitting). The sixth Patriarch defines zazen as such. The external world is only a world paralleled by our mind. All of the worlds are a different dimensional essence when seen through our minds, but in truth are all the same. To realize this is the mind of zazen. The external world is constantly changing and moving; all things are transient and all things are connecting through karmic connection with everything moving and changing without any exception. This body, the mind, and all things are impermanent. Our Mind is always reflecting this outer scenery because it is zero, holding on to nothing but perceiving all of it. It is beyond the law of cause and effect. It is not phenomena. It doesn't move; it is called the unmoved absolute. It only reflects and adds no judgment or opinion at all, and this is how the essence must be expressed by all of us. We all have this essence already; we only clear the way for it to come forth. Zazen is true in all minds. Where we realize the absolute is in fact the only absolute. Here we have to know this mind, which has no affliction; this is the source of all mind and is the Buddha. If we always are clarifying this source and in continuous clear mind moments, if we are always working creatively on this state of mind, then that is true zazen. Remaining unperturbed is the source of all mind and is the Buddha mind. If we always clarify this source and, in continuous Zazen, see our true nature for ourselves, then we will encounter it directly and clearly as ourselves and live in that state of mind.

The most important aspect of the Zen of the sixth Patriarch, the zazen of Kensho, was seeing directly. To know the Zen of the sixth Patriarch, we must realize this true nature for ourselves and not lose sight of it. It is not that maintaining the form of zazen is erroneous, but if we remain in a limited place and block thinking in such a way that we turn our backs on society, we are not living zazen that has meaning for society. We can't ignore society and the world outside of ourselves; instead, we must see it clearly and directly and have faith that is moved around by nothing. This is living

zazen. Nevertheless, the form of sitting Zen may be easy, but the zazen of the mind is very difficult.

From the ancient days, the various paths of practice, such as Kendo, archery, tea ceremony, flower arrangement, and Noh theater, have this state of mind clarified and further clarified. Dancers dance, whether someone watches or not, whether applauded or not, receiving something or nothing. The audience is of no concern for them at all. With no calculated idea of dancing well, or if there are mistakes, they simply empty-mindedly dance with their mind concentrated in every hand movement, every footfall, without being distracted by anything. To dance simply and with complete presence is the way of living zazen.

If we widen while in society, we become our work with no extraneous thoughts at all. People who raise their children with no extra thoughts whatsoever, focused completely and working without wasting their thoughts, are living zazen. What is important is that by living in this state of mind of zazen, our lives become deepened and abundant, our work goes efficiently, and we can function well in society in a constructive way. This inventive and creative work is also zazen. Of course, it is important to do sitting zazen. Whether we are sitting or walking or laying down, our mind is never upset or moved around; this is zazen.

In ancient ways of Japanese culture, samadhi is a state of mind of not being pulled astray by temporal things and not being concerned with anything within. Within this, we find the most excellent state of mind. There is always samadhi, from which an excellent quality of life is born. In this way, we actually live in the samadhi mind without turning our backs on society, not vowing for our own happiness only, but to give all of our energies and capabilities to those who need it. Offering ourselves in service is our most stable and secure way to live. This is the real meaning of, "As for the Mahayana practice of zazen, there are no words to praise it fully." In this way, Hakuin Zenji tells us about the importance of zazen and samadhi. As we realize samadhi, there is skillfulness in the way we live, so that the always changing, never stopping variation in the world will not be difficult. We will not be afraid of or stopped by anything in the world. Manifesting our zazen in this way, we find out how useful and necessary it is for our whole existence.

Hakuin continues, "The Six Paramitas such as giving, maintaining the precepts, and various other good deeds, like invoking the Buddha's name, repentance, and spiritual training, all finally return to the practice of zazen." These are the six functions of the Bodhisattva, the six functions of generosity, patience, discipline, energetic application, meditation, and wisdom. With these six functions, one awakens the Bodhisattva mind and with these six functions, one perfects and realizes it. This is the Bodhisattva Path where we offer everything to all people.

In the way of the Bodhisattva, the first Paramita is generosity. The Buddha emphatically taught unselfishness in the early teaching. Mahayana teaches this as one of its main truths. Daruma Daishi, the first patriarch of Zen, was the twenty-eighth generation after the Buddha. In the fifteenth century, he left India traveling to China across the Bengal bay and the Malaysian peninsula, arriving at Canton State. At this time, China was developing in the Yangtze area and was divided into the Northern country, Gi, and the

Southern Country of Ryo. The emperor of the Ryo State was an emperor who had built temples, raised many monks, wore a kesa himself, and was even a scholar who had interpreted many sutras. He was fondly named the Buddha Mind Emperor. When he heard that there was a great monk coming to China from India, he went to the capitol and welcomed Bodhidharma. First, he asked Bodhidharma a question. "You have come from India to this country; what teaching have you? Are you bringing a great sutra?" Bodhidharma answered, "I have not one sutra." He answered with no flavor whatsoever.

The emperor was astonished and changed the subject. "I am the emperor. Since I have been the emperor, I have made many temples, raised many monks, interpreted and translated many sutras, and created numerous Buddha statues. I have really made exceptional offerings beyond count. How about it? How much merit is there in all of that?" At that time the popular thinking was that if you were a deep believer in Buddhism, you would be able to have an excellent birth in a next life. This was the supreme value of merit at that time. Daruma Daishi said, "No merit at all." All of those things are in the world of material things and there is no merit in any of them. What a severe reply it was. The Emperor was silenced. Finally, he asked, "What is the ultimate truth?" If there was no meaning to merit and sutras are useless, then what is the thing to be thankful for in Buddhism? Being asked that seriously, Daruma Daishi answered directly and succinctly, "Only emptiness, no holiness."

The Emperor was left speechless by this state of mind. It was not that Daruma Daishi was trying to insult or criticize the state of mind of the Emperor. View the world from the Mind of holding onto nothing at all. He was saying to not rely on the world of material things or to be caught on things of form. Don't be caught on such a small frame of reverence; don't leave behind anything at all. If you are truly the master and creator of the world, there is no small thing to be caught on; you are the master of the whole universe after all. He saw clearly the state of mind of the person he was talking to, saying the most important thing for that person to hear and be told. This is what he was doing, but the Emperor could not follow this state of mind. Daruma sent his final arrow. The emperor asked, "Then who are you? You have come from India and are teaching the way of the Buddha, aren't you? Who are you?" Daruma Daishi only answered, "I don't know."

Of course, he would not advertise himself; that was too shameful after all. He answered like a small child, not interested in anything about himself. He wouldn't speak to describe his own experience and his own history; that is not the way he would ever talk. Someone who would talk like that is not a person of any true understanding at all. He held on to no status or position but was empty-minded and put everything into the moment. Human truth is what he was teaching, but the quality of Daruma Daishi's teaching was too hard for the emperor to follow. The emperor could not read Daruma Daishi's mind and Daruma Daishi left the country of Ryo and went to Bear Ear's mountain of Shaolin. He said, "To let go of all connections to anything external and to hold on to no concerns within whatsoever, then our mind becomes like a firm tall wall at one with the Way."

It is not about feeling good or bad, insulted or praised, failed or successful. To not be caught on what happens and goes

on, or caught on ideas like, "This is pretty," "This is ugly," "It should be done this way", "It needs to be done that way." No matter how many emotions and desires come forth successively, do not give attention to that at all. The essence of our mind is a firm tall wall and at one with the way.

To not be attached within and not pulled around by things outside. No matter what comes forth within, to not give it any attention whatsoever, and to face each thing that comes to us face on without adding in any extraneous thinking whatsoever. This is the essence of being in the true and clear way of living in the clear mind. The emperor had raised monks because it was necessary and had built temples because it was necessary. This is the correct living of the way. Because it was necessary, he had made offerings to the monks. Because it was necessary, he had translated sutras. If that is all left in his self-conscious awareness that is unclear mind. Clarifying and letting go of all of these things constantly and consistently, we are able to realize that way of being without impediment and can live in society not caught on the many things that are happening.

The truth of all of the actual circumstances has to be realized or we cannot truly practice the way of the six Paramitas. The best is keeping the precepts in a disciplined way. The teachings of the Buddha are written in the Bodhisattva's ten solemn precepts and in the monks' 250 precepts, and the 500 precepts for nuns.

First, the five main precepts are observed: 1) To not destroy life. 2) To not steal. 3) Relationships between people should be clear, open and bright. 4) To not lie. 5) To not become intoxicated.

The first of these is the precept of not destroying life. In the sutra books, there is a story about how the Buddha took his disciple Ananda on a trip and the Buddha put a small amount of sand from the ground on his fingernail. He asked his disciple Ananda, "Ananda! The amount of sand on my fingernail and the amount of sand on the whole earth, which do you think is greater?" Ananda answered, "Of course the sand on the whole earth is greater – there is only a tiny fraction of it on your fingernail!" Then the Buddha said, "That is exactly right. In this world, those who are born are as many as the sand in the world, but the number who are born with a human birth are as relatively few as this amount of sand on my fingernail. We must hold precious the importance of human life. We can't overlook the very important meaning of human life!"

The Buddha is not saying that only humans are important. Humans have compassion to know how important all beings and living things are. We have this wisdom, and we must awaken to it or we are living in a world where only the strong will survive as they defeat and destroy the weaker. Human wisdom can change this and protect all beings, weak and strong. We have a deep mind of this kind of breadth and we have to awaken to it. When we go on a trip, we should always carry a small cotton bag and filter all water though it so we don't drink down any insects by mistake. We mustn't kill any of them, and when we walk, we should have a staff with ringing bells to warn any animals or insects or reptiles that we are coming so we don't mistakenly step on them and they can get out of the way for us. The Buddha held even the life of one small insect precious.

Of course, human life has this wisdom with it and we must of course hold it important. We cannot take another being's life, but we also can't take our own precious life lightly. All beings have this one life within them, and if we take that life, we are taking the life of the Buddha. This precept says to not take any life unnecessarily, but what it is also saying is that compassion is very important to give life to all beings. To not fight and conflict, and one level above that to give life to all beings and not waste anything. To see with quiet eyes from the deep mind and look carefully, or we cannot observe this precept. The mind of samadhi has to be realized or we take life without intending to. To keep our awareness in each footstep and each hand motion. We have to live without a lapse in attention.

The next precept is to not steal. To realize that there is nothing in this world that belongs to us, that there is no such thing as possessing something. To look at things as if we can possess them is against this precept. To think, "this is my house, this is my possession, these are my things, this is my child, my body;" we have many things which we refer to as our own. It may be ostensibly true, but if we look very closely at it, what can we truthfully say belongs to us? Is there anything? In the world of nature, in the world of people, is there anything which we can call our own when everything is always changing and in flux? It cannot be grasped. As Hideyoshi said, "It all is transient like dew, a dream of a dream." As it says in the Diamond Sutra, "Thus shall ye think of all this fleeting world: a star at dawn, a bubble in a stream, a flash of lightning in a summer cloud, a flickering lamp, a phantom, and a dream." All things are transient and melancholy, always changing in every second. As Ikkyu Zenji put it, "Now I return this body, which I have borrowed until today, on this month and this day," and he died. Our body and mind are all borrowed things; there is not one single bit of dust in this world that belongs to anyone.

The Buddha had one robe for everyday wear, one robe for going out in and one robe for ceremonies. Three robes and one set of bowls and he owned nothing more than that. For all humanity, he offered everything: his life, his time, and everything he owned, he gave for all beings. In this way of being, the whole world could be described by the Buddha to be his home and all the people in it to be his children. This huge mind comes from here. This is samadhi.

In this world, there is nothing to possess; not even our life energy is something that can be possessed. It is like water that is always flowing and never stopping. We have to awaken to this. Right within that, a strong creative life energy actively moves in society. This essence is the truth of samadhi.

The third precept is that relationships between people should be clear, open and bright. "Self nature is subtle and mysterious in the realm of the unguilted dharma. Not creating a veneer of attachment is called the precept of not misusing sex." Along with human hunger and appetite for food, our sexual appetites are our basic and strongest desire. To cut that means that we have to make very, very great efforts, like the scraping off our flesh and bones, and offer them. Only then can we say that we have really realized this. For the Theravadin, this is a very important effort, but what kind of real value is there in doing this? For those in society, of what value is this? Won't this be rigidly defending one's own state of mind only? Is to be clear and



**Sesshins 2000**

January	6-10	Kosesshin	May	3-9	Kosesshin	September	2-8	Kosesshin
	15-21	Osesshin		14-20	Osesshin		14-20	Kosesshin
	25-29	Kosesshin		24-30	Kosesshin		24-30	Osesshin
February	2-6	Kosesshin	June	4-8	Kosesshin	October	5-11	Kosesshin
	10-16	Osesshin		12-18	Osesshin		16-22	Osesshin
	21-27	Kosesshin		23-20	Kosesshin		26-30	Kosesshin
March	2-8	Kosesshin	July	4-10	Kosesshin	November	7-11	Kosesshin
	12-18	Osesshin		15-21	Osesshin		15-21	Osesshin
	23-29	Kosesshin		26-30	Kosesshin		25-29	Kosesshin
April	5-11	Kosesshin	August	4-10	Kosesshin	December	4-10	Rohatsu
	16-22	Osesshin		17-21	Kosesshin		14-20	Osesshin
	25-29	Kosesshin		25-29	Kosesshin		24-28	Kosesshin

**Newsletter Distribution Update**

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**One Drop Zendo Association**

6499 Wahl Road Freeland, WA 98249

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