

六祖壇經講話

The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch Teisho

Volume One

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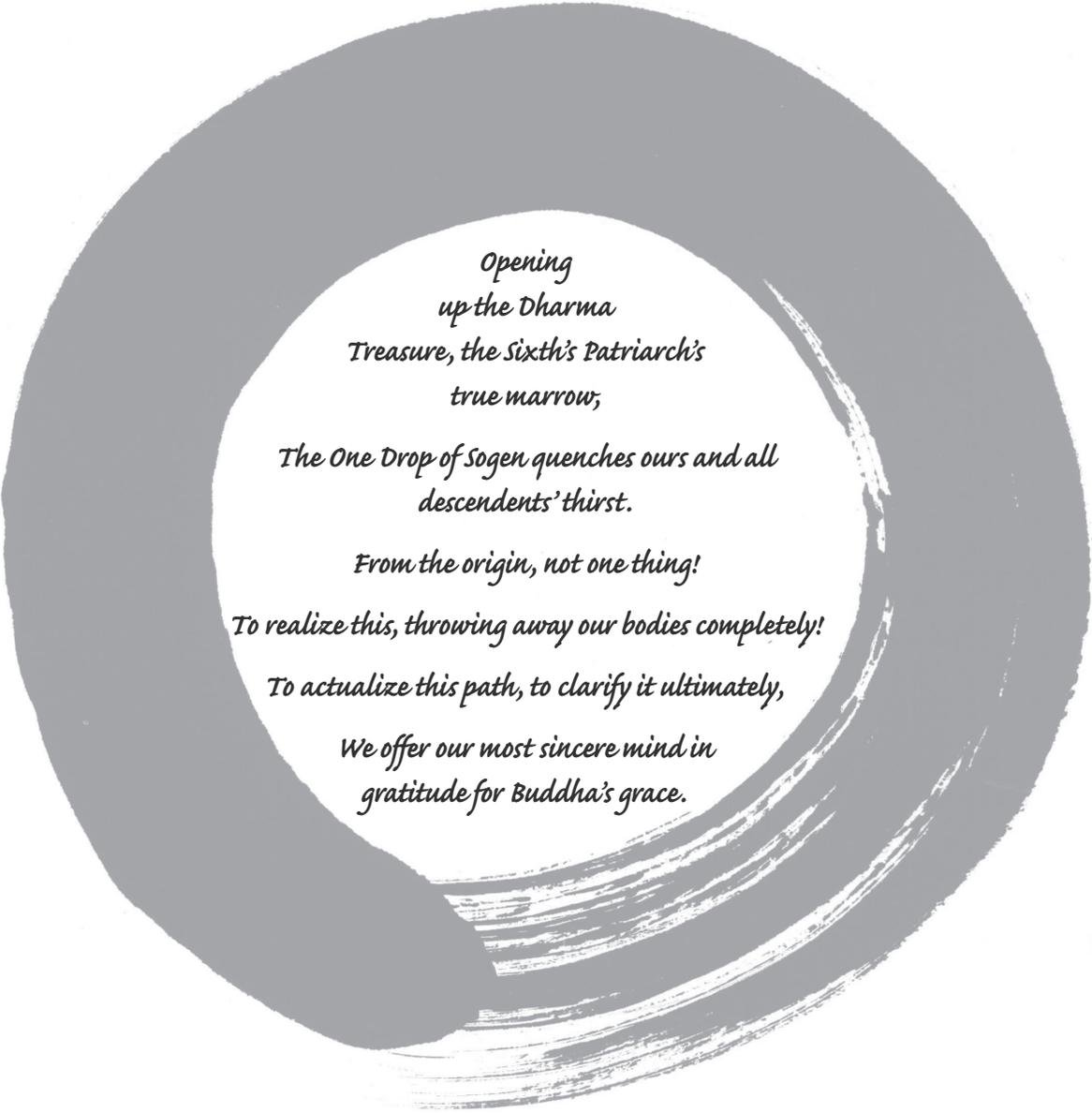
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Editor's Preface

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*The English translation of the text, beginning with Chapter one, is from **The Sutra of Hui-neng**, translated by A. F. Price and Wong Mou-lam. The Introduction is translated by Daichi Zenni, as it is not included in the print edition. A slightly different edition based on the same translation can be found online at:*

<http://www.sinc.sunysb.edu/Clubs/buddhism/huineng/content.html>



*Opening
up the Dharma
Treasure, the Sixth's Patriarch's
true marrow,
The One Drop of Sogen quenches ours and all
descendents' thirst.
From the origin, not one thing!
To realize this, throwing away our bodies completely!
To actualize this path, to clarify it ultimately,
We offer our most sincere mind in
gratitude for Buddha's grace.*

*Opening the Teisho
on
the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch
September 2000*

Introduction

OSSSHIN, 2000-09, DAY ONE

From today we will be reading together the Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra.

There are many translations and versions of this sutra. It was the Sixth Patriarch's disciple Hokei who first wrote this sutra down, but since that original was written, so many had copied it over and over. Not having the printing possibilities we have today, people would copy by hand what was useful and not necessarily copy it completely. Aurel Stein found the Tokui version in the caves at Tonko; this is thought to be the most complete, and this is the version which is most frequently used today. Priest Tokui lived in the town of Zuio in the Kokin area of China. Tokui added an introduction or a preface to this sutra, and it is with this we will begin our study of the sutra.

The Sixth Patriarch is the sixth successor after Bodhidharma. The official title of his sutra is **The Dharma Jewel of the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch**, and this title represents the deepest truth of this sutra. It is called The Platform Sutra because it was given at the same platform where the Sixth Patriarch in his later years received the Precepts—these Precepts which help us live a clear-minded daily life.

Without this clarity in our life we get easily confused, and so we join together here in osesshin, getting up at the same time, not just doing whatever we feel like. According to rules we all move in unison. Without having to decide anything, we go to the zendo, we do zazen, we go to meals—keeping the same rhythm, eating the same meals, letting go of our narrow, individual choices and small-minded opinions. We learn to live and move in accordance with the Precepts. The platform where these rules were taught and given is where the Sixth Patriarch also taught this sutra. It is called a sutra because, like the Buddha's teaching, it is guiding us to the truth, guiding us to let go of our egoistic, caught places. This truth is the essence of this title.

Sutra: The mysterious Path, ancient and profound, cannot be known with thought.

This mysterious Path—the teaching outside of words and phrases—is the source of the Precepts. "Direct pointing to Mind, becoming Buddha," realizing that Mind which is not in any way different from the Mind to which the Buddha was awakened—this is the mysterious Path. We cannot know this through thoughts and words and mentation, but only through direct perception. If we learn it only with words, it is not the actualized truth, it is not the truth to which the Sixth Patriarch is referring here. Leaving words behind, we further and further realize the way of Mind and awaken the radiance.

In our daily life we read books and listen to words and understand mentally. But as we clean and cook we aren't doing it with a head full of thoughts, or it is not true cooking or cleaning. We forget our bodies completely, absorbed in our cooking and cleaning, and let go of the ideas about it. We go further and further into the experiencing of it, and then we suddenly realize we have come to know this cooking and cleaning directly; we haven't been thinking about our physical body nor have we been full of thoughts. In the zendo, if we sleep or if we sit full of thinking or are fuzzy and hazy, this is not true zazen. To sit with not even a space for a thought to enter is what is true zazen.

Sutra: Accordingly, on Vulture Peak, the Buddha shared his seat with his able disciple, and then held up a flower. Like the passing of flame to flame, mind imprints mind; on Vulture Peak, the Buddha held out a flower.

On Vulture Peak, the Buddha held out a flower, Makakasho smiled, and the Buddha said, "I have the true Dharma eye, the marvelous Mind of nirvana, the true form of the formless and the subtle Dharma gate, independent of words and transmitted beyond doctrine. This I have entrusted to Makakasho." The Buddha was teaching in Shaie Koku where there was a famous tower at that time. He told Kasho Sonja to share his seat, to sit down in the

same place with him, meaning by that that their understanding was one and the same, that it matched perfectly.

When a teacher teaches his disciple it is for this clear understanding to be the same as that awakening at which the Buddha said, "How wondrous! How wondrous! All beings are from the origin endowed with this same clear Mind to which I have just awakened!" In this awakening there is no rational understanding or mental complexity remaining; it was that same essence of Mind of the Buddha that Makakasho knew, or the Buddha would not have shared his seat with him. "I have the true Dharma eye, the marvelous Mind of nirvana, the true form of the formless and the subtle Dharma gate independent of words and transmitted beyond doctrine; this I have entrusted to Makakasho. In this eye of Mind there is nothing left, nothing remaining whatsoever. This state of mind, which you now know, teach it thoroughly!" He said this to Makakasho.

And what was it that Makakasho had realized?

In the Vimalakirti Sutra there appears Jisetsu Bodhisattva, and Vimalakirti gives a teaching to Jisetsu Bodhisattva about the Inexhaustible Light: if we light one candle with our flame, it then continues lighting others, and they light others. The light of the first is not decreased because many others are lit from it. No matter how unloved a person may be, the light going from candle to candle is the same. The Mind of Makakasho is the same as the Mind of the Buddha and vice versa. It is not so difficult to light a candle, but it is not so easy for the flame to go from Mind to Mind. Only if we let go of ourselves and our body completely and offer up everything can it be realized—or the flame cannot be passed along. The Buddha gave his whole life for this truth, leaving behind no trace of a small self at all. If we are still caught on position, or guarding and defending a small self, then the flame doesn't catch. We have to throw away everything, totally and completely.

In zazen, all of our senses, our whole body, opens up totally. If we add anything at all

onto it, then that is not zazen. Here we are in the year 2000, the 8th of September, 1:50 p.m. If not here, then where are we—unless we are sleeping and totally out of it, or thinking about being someplace else? It's not about trying to invent or produce a particular state of mind, but about opening up so completely right here, right now, that there is nothing to be added at all. At the beginning we are unripe, and want to close our eyes and fade away. But we cannot do zazen in this way; we can easily mistake this for being empty. Rather, to do susokkan, or counting of the breaths. As well, it is not just about counting numbers, but to count clearly—also in your mother tongue when you do it—and so your whole body is doing this counting. For koans, we only need the words and phrases for a moment, and after that it is how totally open we can become. If there is any rational thinking, such as "This is a good state of mind," "That's a bad state of mind," then it is not true susokkan, and it's not doing koans. To be open and prior to rational understanding, or it's not zazen. Shikantaza is also the essence actualized in this way: the continually clear mind moments. Everyone is well informed here about how to do zazen, but if you become too familiar with it as well, you can become easily automatic and sloppy in your sitting; even though you know how to do it, you need to not forget the basics. What is important is how completely open you are, how utterly free you are of any obstruction.

It is the same with koans. Koans have nothing to do with intellectual understanding. They may start with understanding, since they are expressed in words and letters. But this is true only at the beginning; afterwards koan work is a matter of discovering how to be open with all of your body and all of your mind. This is the essence of the koan. If you don't penetrate to this point with the koan you're not doing true koan work. To become the entire universe, to become all of life—this is the essence of koan work. If even the slightest conceptualization occurs—I'm happy, I'm unhappy, I understand, I don't understand, I'm sitting well, I'm sitting poorly—then you're back in the world of rational understanding and are no longer in the world of fact.

If you are clear on this point then “Mind to Mind transmission” becomes possible. Both Shakyamuni and Makakasho were utterly, absolutely open. Utter, absolute openness faced utter, absolute openness with nothing in between and no concepts to separate them. If your zazen doesn’t penetrate this far it is not real zazen. This is the essence of shikan taza. This is the meaning of shonen sozoku, “maintaining true awareness.”

In our daily lives we need thinking, we need ideas, or we would be unable to live practically and creatively. When we have to think, then to think and decide and judge completely—but to not get drowned and pulled around by the judgment, either, or we will get greatly confused. Rather, that actuality itself has to be perceived and perceived directly! With nothing added in, mixed in, to be un-moved around: this is zazen.

To do it correctly we have to carefully attend to our posture. Our lower back must be set firmly, with no tension in any of our extremities and with the upper half of our body feeling loose and relaxed—only firmly based in our lower belly, or we will get stagnant and hesitant. We need to be like flowing water, which doesn’t get stagnant. We also can’t close our eyes. If our ki is sluggish or if we are not used to sitting or are sleepy, that’s when we close our eyes. But our bodies are built to be revived in five minutes of sitting intensely. To open up completely for five or ten minutes, two or three sittings, and then we won’t get stuck and stagnant; we are not getting caught on past decisions, ideas and events, and things to come. There is no need to hold onto these things from the past, nor to worry about what’s going to come at a different time. Only to be wide open and encounter directly this very moment and whatever comes in it, and then we won’t be deceived by the superficial appearance of things. “Like the passing from flame to flame, Mind imprints Mind”—this is what this is saying. If it’s not like that, then our sesshin and our zazen is wasted.

DAY TWO

We have now come to the place where we learn of the line of the Sixth Patriarch, and how the Buddha Dharma, which is not

mental knowledge, is passed along. The Buddha Dharma is that which is prior to mental knowledge. This is the true source of Mind, which matches perfectly in all beings. When the Buddha awakened, he exclaimed, “How wondrous, how wondrous! All beings are from the origin endowed with this true Mind to which I have now awakened! All beings are equally endowed with this same wisdom, this original source!” We don’t notice this only because we have attachments and judgments and preconceived notions. Prior to our opinions and our attachments there is an original nature which we don’t recognize because of these attachments and our concern with them. So we all do a great cleaning and encounter this clear Mind directly, and then that is confirmed by one who knows this; this is what is being talked about here in the description of what has come down to the Sixth Patriarch.

To say there is nothing at all, not one bit of anything to be transmitted—it is because our Mind is empty that one could say this. But to say there is something is also possible because that direct encountering is of greatest importance. All the Patriarchs transmitted this in order for us to realize it and have it confirmed. Some people say that it is too unstable to have to pass the truth on from one teacher to another, that that is so fragile. But that is only a mental way of looking at this. In actuality, in this transmission there is great joy and wonder, and this does not come if true transmission is not what is being realized.

In the year Seiden 47, Bodhidharma came to the people in the East, pointing his finger straight to people’s minds. He put them in touch with the direct sight of true, clear Mind. Twenty-eighth from the Buddha was the Patriarch Bodhidharma. There were not, of course, only twenty-eight people from the time of the Buddha to Bodhidharma; there were thousands of students and teachers. But if a disciple is not transmitted to and confirmed, that essence cannot be said to be carried on. Daruma Daishi’s [Bodhidharma’s] life and what he did during it is not so clearly proven and understood, but what is clearly

proven are the teachings that he left: “to see Mind directly and become Buddha”—to not be stuck on rational and mental understanding of ideas about it. Rather, to know it directly and know the joy of realizing this. In the Buddha Dharma and in Zen, the point is not found in sutras, Precepts, written words. These are all tools and aids; we have to touch this Mind directly, scraping away all of the veils that cover it to where there is nothing remaining. Then we encounter it directly.

And what is this true nature, this place which is prior to all mental understanding and words? This year’s [2000] great discovery is that of the human genome—the coding, the mapping. So where are these genes? They are, of course, in the cells. Each person’s map is different; each person has different experiences and history and so a different map. Yet the cell itself, as it is, is the same for all people. The programming of it, the map of it is what differs. In our genes all of our past experience is gathered, different for each person. These expressions are all different in each person, but the place from which all of these varieties come forth is the same. Although it manifests in many different ways, it all comes forth from zero. To realize this zero is what Zen is; to let go of everything, to scrape away everything and then this is revealed. That true nature with which we are all endowed even prior to our parents’ faces—if we directly perceive that, our essence will be expressed in many different ways. Some people may have a tendency towards getting cancer, some have a sickness such as Alzheimer’s in their elder years, or a tendency to be very irritated and violent, emotionally obstructed. But even while having these tendencies, to realize directly our true nature—then these will not be obstructive. This is the true flavor of Zen.

To merely drag along in our head an idea of a zero or a Mu which is prior to all of these things won’t do; it has to be done through direct perception. When Eka Daishi [Hui K’o, also known as Niso Eka Daishi] met Daruma Daishi, he was for the first time able to encounter the final word which allowed him to enter deep enlightenment—to realize this

clear Mind directly. Eka Daishi was already a specialist in the Buddha’s teachings, and yet he still did not feel settled or quiet. He only knew the saint’s true peace with his head, not with his own experience. He had studied and studied and studied, but this only brought mental understanding. He still did not know that great joy and wonder of the direct perception of true nature. Eka heard about Daruma Daishi and went to Bear’s Ear Mountain Cave—to Shorin-ji, where Bodhidharma was sitting zazen facing the wall in the freezing winter near Peking. Bodhidharma did not turn around at all when Eka Daishi stood at the entrance to the cave. Eka stood there all night long. The snow began to fall; it is said that it was near his knees when dawn actually came and Bodhidharma turned to look at him and asked him what he was doing there. “Please teach me the ultimate truth of the Buddha Dharma!” he said. To that, the Patriarch answered, “One cannot know that with such superficial, mental understanding, conceit and lack of deepest interest! If you don’t put your life on the line, it won’t work! With a casual intention, you won’t be able to realize it!”

It is said in some books that when being spoken to in that way, Eka Daishi cut off his arm at the elbow to show how very serious he was, and only when it was seen that it was with deep intention that he came was he taken seriously. After that, Eka Daishi was with Daruma Daishi for three years, but still his lump of tangledness was unclear. His mind was not melted; it was not able to flow away. He felt he had to do something more, and so he said to Daruma Daishi that he still did not feel like he’d seen through it all. Doing zazen for ten years, twenty years, longer, but still feeling there is something we have to know more directly—this is the place where all religions still need to work to go beyond. Not just settling for books and rituals, we have to be able to live it in our daily life, or we will not be able to realize that true source and it is only superficial sliding around. It is for each person to actually taste this place, to touch directly that clear essence which precisely hits home, and to clarify it. To

realize this place takes our very life on the line. As for the words in Buddhism, “all beings are from the origin Buddha”—there were many students to liberate by sharing the Path with them, or by leading them to the Path; this is what Buddhism is about. But there are not so many who actually can realize that truth.

Daruma Daishi told Eka Daishi to put out that unstable mind, to show him that insecure mind, and then he would clarify it. He was not deceiving him, he was actually asking for that insecure mind, demanding Eka to show it to him clearly. But, of course Eka was not able to do this. “There, I have settled it for you!” These were not casual words. Bodhidharma sought that state of mind clearly, and seeing it was time, he was chasing it, going for it, making use of that state of mind and then cut it all away by saying, “There I have quieted it for you.” Niso Eka Daishi must have been dizzy and confused, and Bodhidharma said, “There, that’s it!” Sanzen is for the purpose of realizing this place, cutting down to the core with that last final slash where it all becomes just superficial and meaningless.

Daruma Daishi allowed Eka Daishi to enter deep enlightenment, and later he prostrated and realized the very marrow of Daruma Daishi’s teaching. When he was given the robe by Daruma Daishi, he openly and clearly had received the true Mind of the Buddha. Daruma Daishi was said to be 140 years old at the time, and must have felt his end nearing. He had called his top disciples together. Four top disciples were called and asked to express their realization; each spoke in turn. The first, Doiku, gave his answer and was told that what he had realized was the skin. The second, Ni Soji, was told that what she had realized was the bones. The last—the fourth—was Eka, who was told to say one thing but could not. He couldn’t say one single thing, and so he prostrated, and he was told that he had understood the truth. This does not mean that prostrations show this truth necessarily. But the actual essence of his state of mind was what Bodhidharma was responding to. This state of mind is not something which can be expressed by criticism and judgment. It can’t be expressed

differentially. Eka Daishi, who had manifested the truth in that prostration, was then given the bowl and the robes. He then transmitted the truth to San So Ganchi, to Doshin Dai I, to Goso Gunin, and it was from Goso Gunin Zenji that the Sixth Patriarch, Eno, then received this transmission.

Eno was a common lay person. Composing a poem, he became the Sixth Patriarch, Rokuso Eno. He had come to the place of the Fifth Patriarch, Goso Gunin Zenji. Eno was still a lay person then, and he was sent to the rice hulling room. With his very lightweight body it was so hard for him to raise the hammer which pounded the rice, and from morning until night he had to work to be able to hull the rice for the 700 monks training there at the monastery. So he tied a heavy stone to his waist, to better hull the rice.

The Fifth Patriarch, Goso Gunin was getting old and ready to retire, so he was at that time deciding his successor, and asked his disciples to write a poem. “*There is no Bodhi tree, nor stand of a mirror bright; Since all is void, where can the dust alight?*” Out of 700 monks, Eno, who had only been there eight months and had not been allowed to train with the others, had directly perceived clear Mind. Only twenty-four years old, with no education at all, only earning a living selling firewood he had taken from the mountains—and here he was receiving the transmission from Bodhidharma. If one puts one’s life on the line, it doesn’t matter: age, length of time training. And in the same way, if we’ve trained for 30 years but haven’t put our life on the line, it won’t work. There is something to be very thankful for in this—that someone who came in yesterday, if they put their life on the line, can realize it! This is where it comes forth from. In Hakuin Zenji’s teachings we also have the story of Heshiro from Ehara, realizing true Mind after only three days of giving everything to that zazen. It is not about being ordained, taking Precepts, but about completely, honestly, dealing with the tangled clotting of insecurity in our mind. That which is always waiting to grab hold of dualism and decoration and explanation, to clear all of that out! This is to become the

fulcrum for the liberation of all people.

In this sesshin, there is no need to wait for tomorrow, but to give everything to it—not giving any attention to what you’ve learned and heard about, but to grab directly and honestly. To encounter that original Mind, to clarify that is what is asked from everyone. No need to wait for it tomorrow! Here we are, at 2:25 p.m. This is not about a number of 2:25, it is about what uses this time! It’s also not about any question of the past or the future, but about this very moment: Where is its truth? To directly encounter that!

There are many whom we can care for in hospitals, nursing homes, but who is going to help the one who is on the very verge of death? How can we liberate their mind? We have not been born just to invent more systems. That is like a reused teabag version of living. It’s that direct purpose of liberating all beings for which we have been born; this is what the Sixth Patriarch is teaching us here.

DAY THREE

When the Sixth Patriarch left Yellow Plum Mountain he didn’t know the way through the forest there. So his Zen master, Goso Gunin, himself led the Sixth Patriarch. And Goso also rowed Eno across the Yangtze River in the darkness before dawn, saying that Eno would be chased after by the other monks because they would resent his having been given the transmission when he had no scholastic education. Goso Gunin said to him, “You are now twenty-four. For ten or twenty years, do not come out to the world to teach; stay hidden and continue to deepen your wisdom and essence.” He told him to stay hidden, and then they parted.

Fleeing to the south, Rokuso Eno kept secluded. For sixteen years he stayed secluded and deepened his awakened state of mind. Without doing that, it becomes nothing more than a selling out of small bits of knowledge. In the days he cut and sold wood. In the nights, he would sit and deepen. For sixteen years he lived like this until he felt the time was right and he came to the city of Kosho.

Priest Inju Hoshi first had the insight of open contact with the Sixth Patriarch at

the moment when he heard Eno’s sharp perception of how it was neither the flag nor the wind which moved. In Kosho there is a temple, Hosho-ji, where Priest Inju was giving lectures on the Nirvana Sutra. Everyone was there, waiting for him to show up, and while waiting, two monks were debating over a flag that was blowing in the wind. One monk said, “The wind is so strong today, look at that flag which is moving.” Another monk said, “What do you mean, it is not the flag that is moving, it is the wind, can’t you see that?” “No, the wind is moving—a flag can’t move all by itself!” “No, the flag is moving—you can’t even see the wind!” [Mumonkan, case 29].

The way Buddhism is practiced in some countries is with debating like this; it is not just a social way of spending time talking. Eno came along and gave the central point: “It is not the wind that is moving and it’s not the flag that is moving; it is your minds which are moving.” It is not true Mind which is dragged around by things, nor can these things which we encounter be ignored. Our truth is, the things of the world and our mind become one and therefore functioning. Eno’s answer was not an answer of trickiness, but of wisdom from much zazen and deepening of experience. But the monks were not taking the deeper responsibility for their argument.

If we sit, then the whole zendo sits. If our mind is settled, then everything we encounter in the world also becomes settled. If our mind is right in alignment, everything becomes aligned. Not ignoring society, but with our full, taut state of mind overflowing, we touch everything around us with this taut, full state of mind. This is not about ordering everything around and pushing it around for our ego view of how we think it should be, but to match perfectly with every actuality we encounter. If one person in a zendo is truly, seriously sitting, everyone else will straighten their collar and get down to it as well, or else we easily excuse each other and start sitting in a compromised way.

Priest Inju came out and heard the big fuss everyone was making about Eno’s comment. Since he had known from before of the Fifth

Patriarch's disciple being hidden somewhere in the South, he recognized Eno as that person and asked him to please teach in his place, saying he himself was not yet truly enlightened. Then he asked Eno to bring him to enlightenment. Eno said he could not read the Nirvana Sutra because he had never been educated, but if someone would read it, he would teach the central points, and this he did. Hearing them, Priest Inju was immediately enlightened. Then he requested that Eno be ordained—since he was the successor of the Fifth Patriarch—at the teaching platform there. Eno was ordained and became publicly the Sixth Patriarch at the age of 39.

Sutra: Then, in accordance with the prophesy of the ancient Indian, Badada, he opened the Dharma gate of Yellow Plum Mountain. At the request of Priest Inju, he shaved his head and put on the robes—putting on the kesa he had received from the Fifth Patriarch—and went up on the platform and taught.

He taught this very Platform Sutra. At this time, the transmission and the following of the teaching of the Fifth Patriarch was affirmed.

It was a public servant who ordered that Eno's words be written down. They were then titled *The Platform Sutra of the Treasury of the Dharma*. The public servant asked Hokei Zenji to write down what the Sixth Patriarch was teaching. In those days, all teachings were recorded, and this was so done.

From an ordinary, deluded man, he became a saint, becoming enlightened to the way of the Buddha nature and clarifying its expression in his everyday life, and liberating innumerable people in countless ways. With this abundant expression and experience, he taught. And there are so many who were enlightened from this teaching—famous and not famous. Eno continued teaching for 37 years, and he was recorded as a legend of great wisdom in action.

There are many, many teachings, but if they are only used for mental studies, this is not

the true teaching of the Buddha. The Buddha was enlightened to our true nature, returning to our bare, naked, original Mind; thus it is called the very teaching of the Buddha's awakening. But if this does not reach to our daily life, it is not yet truly realized. Not to live driven by our emotions, but to live in accordance with the Buddha Dharma—or it is not the true teaching. From olden times it is said that even if one is deeply enlightened, if that enlightenment is not worked on in order to be able to be used and given life in our daily life, it is like a deep well which has no water in it.

There is a story like this which happened at Sogen-ji at the time of Gisan Zenji. There was a monk training there, and he received a letter from home saying that his home temple had burned down and asking him to please come home to help rebuild the temple. This monk merely glanced at this letter, and threw it casually in the fire. Another monk saw this and others heard about it and they were very impressed, saying, "The life here at Sogen-ji is so hard, it's so rough and challenging and difficult, we'd give anything for a letter from home telling us to come home." Gisan heard this and heard all the monks making a big deal about it, and he called this monk into his room and said, "I hear that your home temple has burned down." "Yes," said the monk.

"I hear that you received a letter asking you to come and help, and you refused?" "Yes." "Why did you refuse to go back and help?" asked Gisan.

"I refused because there is no point to going back until my practice is realized. What use is there of making a new hondo if there is not a living, true enlightened person to be the Buddha in that Hondo?"

To this, Gisan Zenji answered, "You are right. But without any feelings for other human beings, even if you are enlightened, you will never be able to teach the Dharma. If you go home when you are training, please never go into the world."

Having realized the ultimate efforts beyond form, keeping his disciples, Nangaku and

Seigan close by, Eno taught them personally for a long time. Nangaku Ejo Zenji and Seigan Gyoshi Zenji were the two top disciples of the Sixth Patriarch who spread his Dharma everywhere. They had clarified the essence of the Sixth Patriarch's awakening completely, and taught it. They taught it with no traces of even being aware of teaching it—not by explaining it mentally and rationally, but by manifesting it in their every footstep and their every hand motion, expressing the Sixth Patriarch's truth. And because of this, he became the source of all the teachings that we even have remaining today.

Sutra: The disciples Baso Doitsu and Sekito came forth and the profound Wind of the mysteriously All-embracing Wisdom and Activity was clearly known.

Baso Doitsu Zenji, Sekito Kisen Zenji, were also great disciples enlightened under the Sixth Patriarch and were central figures in the Zen of the T'ang Dynasty in China. Throughout China they were perfecting all of the teaching of Zen, in the cities of Kozei, where Baso Doitsu was teaching, and in Konan, where Sekito Kisen was teaching. From here came the words in Japanese or Chinese for "monk," which is unsui—"cloud water." It is said that monks were gathering in the city of Kozei like clouds, in the city of Konan, like water. It was said that if you didn't train under these great masters—either Baso Doitsu, or Sekito Kisen—it was not true training in China at that time.

Sutra: Accordingly, the lines of Rinzai, Igyo, Soto, Unmon and Hogen were firmly established.

The current living lines that we have of the Soto and Rinzai Sects all came from this time, as well as the Igyo, Unmon and Hogen lines. All of these were coming forth from the teaching of the Sixth Patriarch. By far the best Path taught, its cultivation was rigorous and austere. The masters of this best Path would guide expansively, snatching away intentions and laying bare Mind. The patriarchs in the Teidai Denpo [the Ancestral Line chanted daily at Sogen-ji] are also courageous and living

the vow completely, without compromise, not for fame nor for gathering information and knowledge but all of them offering everything to this Dharma. Each and every one lived the Dharma in a way that affected the entire world. And these are the people from whom the Dharma was continually transmitted.

Sutra: When entering through one gate and going deeply, the five parts are the same.

While divided into the five parts of Rinzai, Igyo, Soto, Unmon and Hogen, they are all of the same awakening. Since the Mind's true source is one, though manifested in five ways, the five parts are the same. They all return to the teaching of the Sixth Patriarch, to Rinzai, and then from Rinzai back to the Sixth Patriarch, as well. Like a sword in the well-bellowed coals, with the sharpening of one's mind on the constant changes in the world, without exception the centers of the Five Houses can be found in the Platform Sutra. These patriarchs were not enlightened casually and coincidentally.

It is the same within our sesshin here: scraping away impurities, deluded desires, attachments, emotions. Cleaning our mind's stagnant, stuck places, to be able to be totally present in this very moment, clearly and sharply, and openly seeing what is actually there! Sitting fuzzily, our body may be sitting in the posture but our mind is not. But neither is it zazen if we just screw up our face to appear as if we're suffering and working hard. Rather, to give everything to it—or who else will take this responsibility? To sleep when you're sleeping, and when awake to be completely awake! Not being concerned about others at this point, but to do what you must to be able to sit like this!

With our body and mind we go beyond time and space. The Indian philosophy holds many ways of conceptual understanding of these things; in India they considered that very important. But in China, it was much more based on actual experience rather than a philosophy about a void. Experience goes beyond time, space and concepts of

emptiness. Our zazen must be like this as well, or our zazen will be wasted. If we realize it completely, we know the Buddha's deep awakening with our actual experience and physical body as well. And the essence of this is what is being taught in the Sixth Patriarch's Platform Sutra.

Sutra: All of the many Buddhas completed the same countless paths of the Dharma. In each and every one of the Dharma gates the mysterious essence is inherent. In each and every mysterious essence, the many Buddhas demonstrate immeasurable, profound truth. It conforms to Maitreya's and is also in accordance with Fugan's "hair pore," and yet all of the many sutras of the Buddha are also expressed here.

Many sutras in various sections such as that on prajna wisdom, that on zazen, the introduction, gave the Buddha's awakening essence just as it is, in teaching. If we realize this directly with our own experience, then in each and every mysterious essence, the many Buddhas demonstrate immeasurable, profound truth. But we must know this from our own, deep experience of it—this true flavor which is given here.

Sutra: In his youth, Tokui was able to read the old books. From that time until he was over thirty, he called on people until he put this whole work together. Finally, it was copied and printed by Gochuno Kyukyu Zenji and given to all the bright and prominent people of the time, without exception. It is only hoped that when this scroll is unrolled and looked at directly with open eyes, the great, perfect Buddha nature will be unified to the utmost degree, with the living wisdom of the Buddha's form.

Of course, there was no printing in these days, as was mentioned earlier, so as things are copied, there would always be some parts missed or left out. Tokui had read the Sixth Patriarch's Sutra in bits from his youth, but had only been able to find parts here and

there until he found Su Shonin, who had all of the parts, and he put it together and it was copied.

If we read the true Sixth Patriarch's Platform Sutra, we have to not be caught on a mental comprehension of it, but to realize our own deepest truth through it. The book was published because people's clear, actual enlightenment was in those days (and today) so far, far away. To read this and, with one's own experience and not intellectual understanding, to understand that deep awakening of the Sixth Patriarch and the Buddha as well is what is necessary.

Sutra: "I, myself, the present writer, make a deep vow that this shall ripen fully."

For each to realize one's own true nature, and with that to guide others—not to read this mentally—I ask from everyone who reads this.

Then, in the original, there is a date which is given, "Written in the Year of the Tiger, in the Day of Spring, by Tokui."

The Platform Sutra is written in simple language. Its essence is abundant and its truth is clear; its function is full and complete. It is very clear and simple with nothing complex and conceptual in it. In reading this without any struggle or difficulty, we can read the Ancestor's truth. But, for this one expression of truth, how many, many people worked so hard and made such huge efforts—and not for fame, possessions or knowledge!

Through this zazen we realize our true nature directly. We do this because there are so many suffering! There are even those on Death Row. Would they still be there if they had known this truth? As Shima Akihito has said in his poem, 'Night Before Execution': "If I had known of this clear Mind, I wouldn't be here now." We have our physical bodies, but our true wisdom is not limited to those. It is equally endowed in each and every being, but if we aren't able to be taught this and realize it, we can easily commit crimes and kill people. Knowing this, we have to realize this deepest truth even one day sooner and

share it with those in darkness, with those who don't even know its possibility exists or what to believe. Not to run away, but to use our whole, entire life to realize this truth and share it with others! We can't do this with a soggy state of mind, half compromised. It can't be done in that way—we have to not even waste a single moment! It has to be done totally and completely, and that is what this is teaching. With this deep, passionate determination, to offer this sesshin to all beings!

To do this clearly and with everything we have!

Chapter One: Autobiography

DAY FOUR

Today we begin the main text of the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch. Sutras are almost always from India, the actual words of the Buddha. But it was also said that there were times when what was written is what he would say if he was alive at this very time, and many Mahayana Sutras were born in this way. The Lotus Sutra is one of these, and the Sixth Patriarch's Platform Sutra is also of this variety.

Today if we want some information we simply go to the infinite resources of the internet. Yet, even if we have this information, if we don't have the wisdom to use the information it will be easily misused. Many religions have this same challenge; ancient religions which have been guiding people to liberation for thousands of years have been developing wisdom. Yet today these are leaning in a lopsided way toward knowledge, not wisdom. This will not bring liberation.

There are the words of the Emperor Hanazono, who was the one who began to open the land which gave birth to Myoshin-ji Temple. He wrote to the founder of this temple, Musō Daishi, of this great Dharma grace and gratitude. We must remember the grace of this teaching and this Dharma wisdom that we also are able to encounter and be blessed by being able to learn from. We thank our parents for our physical body, but that can be the physical body that even kills or harms people. That in this physical body we encounter someone who can open our true wisdom eye is even more precious than being born with a physical body. To the one who leads us to open our Mind's eye we return this huge grace for this great merit.

In Buddhism, virtue is often talked about, but the virtue and wisdom of bringing liberation to all beings is what is most necessary; without this wisdom and this awakening there can be no true living transmission. As Bodhidharma has said, "to directly encounter true Mind and become Buddha." Without the joy, the deep wonder of this great awakening, the Dharma will decay.

Every day, at morning sutras we read the Teidai Denpo, the list of the transmitted-to ancestors—this transmission which has been meticulously handed down. In this human body we are able to realize that original Mind which has taken so many teachers and ancestors so much effort to learn, to realize, and then to lead us to. And seeing it like this, we feel such great appreciation! From India to China, to Korea, to Japan, to America, this great awakening is being taught. And not as a conceptualized, external absolute, but this great wisdom itself is taught. For the Sixth Patriarch, who is bringing it to us in this way, we feel greatest gratitude.

The Sixth Patriarch was of the T'ang Dynasty in China. He lived until the age of 76. Many patriarchs are not so clearly known about, but the information on the Sixth Patriarch is well known. He was the disciple of Goso Gunin Zenji, and he was given the name Eno Daikan Zenji. This Buddhist name was requested for him by the Emperor Genso when the Sixth Patriarch died in the year 713.

His teachings spread all over China. Reading the Platform Sutra, we can see that while his understanding was deep, he was always unattached to that fact. The Sixth Patriarch did not call his own words a sutra; in fact he died before this work was completed. Once a nun named Mujinso asked him, when she was reading the Nirvana Sutra, to help her with a particular word that she was unable to read, and he apologized, saying, "But I don't know how to read." And she said, "How can such a person of wisdom, like you, not know how to read sutras?" To which he answered, "The Dharma is known in experience, not in words." He had this central part well understood. Today there are many religions, most without such a long history but so concerned with details and small angles they may miss this huge point and find it impossible to bring people back to a vivid liveliness that is able to accept and realize all things. Our gratitude to the sun, to the seasons, to the food—we know this gratitude spontaneously and naturally. Today's religions often have very little ability to bring people back to this kind of actuality and vitality. The Platform

Sutra, when we read it, does this naturally, and is to be very grateful to for doing this for everyone.

He had not studied with some teacher; he had been a simple woodcutter when he heard the words “while abiding nowhere, it manifests freely,” and understood. He saw clearly how this was the truth of the Dharma and of human beings’ Mind. There are few geniuses of this quality. Although we are not such geniuses, we can see that while we are so full of stuck places and attachments, if we let go of all of these we can see this truth directly. Knowing this, when we do zazen and do sesshin our Mind opens and the essence of all people is known. To have this same opportunity and possibility to become like that wide open and blue sky of today, with nothing being attached to whatsoever, is why we do sesshin.

The “Zen wind” of the Sixth Patriarch is very pure and very simple. While it is Rinzai and Tokusan who represent the formal Patriarchal Zen and even define it, the Sixth Patriarch is one who was truly simple and direct, giving life to the teaching of Bodhidharma.

The Sixth Patriarch, in asking the question, “What is our face before our parents were born,” gave these words that are now used everywhere. He spoke these when he was being pursued on Mount Daiyurei, to the one who was closest to capturing him, General Emmyo. He asked him to express this face before his parents were born, without any rational explanation. This is an expression which is just like that freshly cut daikon which has been cut through this very instant, directly touched by sun and wind. This is as it is, that face before our parents were born.

And also, this true essence he put into words that had never been said in this way before—that “from the origin, there is not one single thing.” Nothing to have, nothing to hold on to! No previous experience, no previous knowing. The past Zen of the patriarchs had pulled along a concept of a void, but it took someone of the greatness and the clarity and the deep experience of the Sixth Patriarch to be able to put it in this way.

Also, doing zazen in the Daruma line, the Sixth Patriarch gave a lasting definition of what zazen is: Not to sit in a hazy, dark, deluded way, distracted by each and everything that comes along. “Za” of zazen is to not give rise to thoughts about anything that we see and hear. This does not mean to shut down our senses and close our eyes to seeing and our ears to hearing; rather, we sit wide open, we sit even though our bodies hurt and we get tired and there are many challenges. We can’t sit in a deep, dark cave and avoid those, but rather, to encounter everything that comes along just as it is. This is the “za” of zazen: to be wide open, yet not to be stuck. At the same time, to give no attention to anything that comes up within. This is “zen” of zazen. All of those thoughts are external to that which gives birth to them. To not be pulled down by those things, but to realize that source from where they all come, which is empty. Will that source be in pain? Will that source be happy or be sad? We are always being fooled by such bubbles as our feelings and emotions. We have to let go of all of these.

We are able to do zazen here now, but we are not going to be able to do this here forever, or even until we are deeply realized. So what is sesshin for, anyway? We have to realize our true Mind, and then guide people to liberation. To do that we have to do zazen to where we can clearly cut away attachments to the outside and be unconcerned, not moved around by things that are within. We are all so concerned with that which we see, and that which we’ve done, and that which we are doing, and with what has happened here, and what’s going on over there. Because of these we are always turning outside with our perception, while our true Mind is only of this very moment. Turning outside we are caught by the various differentiations, even in this moment. To not add on any shadow of those differentiations to this moment’s actuality, but to know the place where we are unruffled by anything that comes along, is what we must do. Then, our ki will not get high, we won’t get disturbed. If our ki and our mind are going high, we can’t live truthfully. If we become upset, then we can’t

live appropriately; instead, we are pushed and pulled around by circumstances. Rather, to only move according to what is necessary. Then, in each moment we are free to know this undecorated actuality.

Regardless of how precious the teaching, regardless of how precious the truth, if we allow ourselves to get attached to it then we're caught and confusion is the result; the teachings and truths drag us about and we lose sight of our own inner truth. However, if we're utterly free of all such fixations and attachments, then no outer truth can bind us. If we are clearly aware of our open, unfettered Mind, then all teachings and truths are simply tools, simply devices for our living Mind to utilize. If we are deceived and caught, then even the most precious of words become sources of delusion.

The Sixth Patriarch, even as he left his own words of teaching for us, constantly warns us against the dangers of attachment to anything at all. We mustn't burden ourselves even with the teachings of the Platform Sutra. All that the Sutra says is useless if we don't comprehend the spirit of the Sixth Patriarch that permeates the text. We must experience this spirit in our own essence.

The Sixth Patriarch's teaching is not arbitrary in any way. If one studies the five thousand sutras and the eighty-four thousand gates of the Dharma and thoroughly masters their content, one will find nothing to contradict what the Sixth Patriarch says. Indeed, one will clearly see that his words reflect the central message of all of these teachings. It is from Shakyamuni's experience of truth that the entire body of sutras was born. Thus if one realizes personally this experience—not a hairsbreadth different from that of Shakyamuni—then it is only natural that every word emerging from one's Mind shares in the truth taught by the sutras.

In the sutras, to not be at all caught on ideas and words. Neither that nor concepts about truth. The Sixth Patriarch pointed out these many challenges and ways of mind. To realize that very same state of mind as that of the Sixth Patriarch, or all we are doing will

be wasteful. It has to be experienced, not just thought about! These words are not his own personal, private view; the Sixth Patriarch is speaking from his deep experience, which differs not in the slightest from the experience of the Buddha. He teaches this carefully and clearly.

It had been prophesied by Gunabhadra that the Sixth Patriarch would become ordained at the platform at Hoshō-ji, and then would go to Horin-ji at the place of the Sokeizan mountains. The Mayor of the Shoshu area, Mayor Ishi, came to Horin-ji and asked the Sixth Patriarch to speak, to come to teach at the temple of Daibon-ji in his city. Then the Mayor came to take him to Daibon-ji, and this first chapter's teaching was given at Daibon-ji on the high seat, where there were gathered thirty-four city officials and many Confucian officers who were in charge of various departments in educating people in the way of Confucius. Also, there were hundreds of lay people and ordained monks—everyone came there to listen.

Sutra: In due course, there were assembled in the lecture hall, the Prefect Wei, government officials and Confucian scholars, about 30 each, and bikkhus, Taoists and lay people, to the number of about 1,000. After the Patriarch had taken his seat, the congregation, in a body, paid him homage and asked him to preach on the fundamental laws of Buddhism. Whereupon, His Holiness delivered the following address:

Learned audience, our essence of Mind, which is the seed of enlightenment, is pure by nature. By making use of this Mind, alone, we can reach Buddhahood directly.

The first lecture then began.

"Everyone gathered here, you are all always carrying around so many thoughts, but that is not your true Mind. All of those varying thoughts, changing and different at morning, noon and night: They are only like the seasons, always changing, not the source.

That which gives birth to all of those is your true source, and there is no damage and no murkiness in that true source, whatsoever. But because we are moved around by those things which are always popping up, we get confused. The origin is pure, and clear—go there directly!

“Yet we are always deceiving that true, clear Mind and giving attention to all of those various thoughts. While they are completely unreliable, we try to rely upon them, chasing them around like chasing shadows. To go directly to the source—that is satori, and it is right in front of your eyes, right this very minute! Chasing around ideas, and thoughts, you are continually deluding yourself.”

In his opening lines, he gave the conclusion, not leading up to something with a hidden, teasing point. Rather, he asks: “What is important? What do you rely on? What are you sitting for? Don’t look away from it!”

“Everyone has their own experiences and truth. If we don’t speak from that truth, there is no joy in our life. Will it be a joyous life, or an anxious, insecure life? We have to live honestly and clarify that which has to be clarified or we will not know this true joy; it will be compromised. Listen to this story,” he said.

To have forty people gathered here doing sesshin together—this is the essence of a very honestly lived life. His hope for all of us is that we completely, honestly do each and every sitting this week to realize what has to be realized and to walk what has to be walked—and then the true and actual essence comes forth, comes alive. Material things all fade away. To walk this completely, even if it is difficult at times! When we realize it, we know its deep worth. Not to be thinking later with melancholy that I wish I’d done it then, when I had the chance! This is our precious encounter and our chance, right here and now!

DAY FIVE

Sutra: Learned Audience, our essence of Mind, which is the seed or kernel of enlightenment, is pure by nature,

and by making use of this Mind alone, we can reach Buddhahood directly. Now, let me tell you something about my own life and how I came into possession of the esoteric teaching of the Zen school.

This term “Learned Audience” is addressing all those who have the seed of enlightenment within. He isn’t speaking down to an audience, but to a wisdom already shared. “Listen to how I had the karmic affiliation to enlightenment—how anyone has this possibility to open this clear Mind and realize this wisdom! It is not about spending so long a time training, but about awakening our true Mind— and that everyone should be able to know this deep experience. Now, let me tell you something about my own life.”

Sutra: My father, a native of Fan-Yang, was dismissed from his official post and banished to be a commoner in Hsin Chou in Kwangtung. I was unlucky in that my father died when I was very young, leaving my mother poor and miserable. We moved to Kuang Chou and were then in very bad circumstances.

“My father was working as a public officer and he either made a mistake or disagreed with his superiors, but he was exiled to the South and made a living by farming. When I was three, my father died and my mother was left alone. So we moved to a place one hour south of there, and to make our livelihood, I cut wood in the forest and sold it in the marketplace.”

Sutra: I was selling firewood in the market one day when one of my customers ordered some to be brought to his shop. Upon delivery being made and payment received, I left the shop, outside of which I found a man reciting a sutra. As soon as I heard the text of the sutra, my mind at once became enlightened.

To support his mother, he would go in the dark of early morning to the woods to cut

and sell wood to his special customers. He took the wood into one customer's wood storage area and went to the kitchen to receive the small amount of money that he would make for that. "As I was in the kitchen, I heard someone chanting a Sutra 'The Mind, abiding nowhere, arises freely,' and I immediately and directly understood exactly what that meant."

Sutra: Thereupon, I asked the man the name of the book he was reciting and was told that it was the Diamond Sutra.

That quote is from the Diamond Sutra, which was given by the Buddha at Jion Shoja. The ruins of this place still remain, a slightly raised place where the sutra was given by the Buddha to many disciples. Shubodai [Subhuti] Sonja asked questions about emptiness, and the Buddha answered them; this is the content of this sutra. Shubodai Sonja, who was already an expert on emptiness, was asking Buddha questions on behalf of people who wanted to realize their deepest vow—like us, wanting to realize our clear Mind here. Being confused by other people, by relationships, by emotional challenges, we all decide to do zazen, thinking it will unravel our tangled problems. We want to know how to do this, and that's how we come to sitting—we want to know how to let go of those problems, as well as sit. So Shubodai, who already knows clearly about emptiness, asks the Buddha these questions on our behalf. And the Buddha says to hold onto nothing at all. Or, as Bankei Zenji has said it, "When the bottom falls out of the old barrel, there is nothing more than the boards and the three hoops which used to hold it together."

We all have such a variety of ideas and opinions, and these opinions and ideas bring conflict, friction, grumbling and dissatisfaction. If we seek our own happiness only, we will go on without resolution for eons. We have to give life to our deeper wisdom, seeing how to bring happiness to all people. If we look very, very carefully, this "I" and our physical body are only borrowed items. If we realize there is nothing to be attached to and there is no wall needed between a self and an other,

we realize that this old barrel, when the bottom falls out of it, is nothing more than the boards and the three hoops that held it together. When the barrel's bottom falls out there are only three hoops left. No such thing there as a "my self"—nothing left like that, nor anything left of any attachment or gathered knowledge. The eighth of the Ten Oxherding Pictures is the picture of a circle, where everything is shown to have been let go of. So, an empty circle. But, you don't even need that circle! Nothing like that to be so thankful for, nothing at all—and then to be reborn from that place where everything has been let go of!

If we did not feel and perceive with our senses, we couldn't live. Rather, to experience with our senses each and every encountered perception thoroughly, and then let go of it immediately, with nothing lingering! "Abiding nowhere, true Mind naturally arises." Since it rests nowhere, it comes forth freely. It comes forth as being hunger, or sleepiness, or thirst—it naturally receives and encounters whatever comes to it. But if we don't clear it out, we get the secondary mind moments intruding: "I'm so sleepy, what will happen to me?" "My legs are so painful, what will happen to me?" "How will I do this when I get home?" We add on thoughts and lose track of the actual direct life energy of that moment. We get confused by the shadows, even while we're doing zazen. We have to realize this place of "abiding nowhere, awakened Mind arises" for ourselves; no one can realize this for us. Only reading about it won't do that. So we borrow this opportunity for a short time: Doing sesshin together, we encounter that true Mind, and know that state of mind of "abiding nowhere, true Mind naturally arises."

Eno was a genius. He heard it once and got it. But only a few of us are such geniuses, so we have to work it out.

Sutra: I further inquired whence he came and why he recited this particular sutra. He replied that he came from Tung Chan Monastery in the Huang Mei district of Ch'i Chou; that the

Abbot in charge of this temple was Hung Jen, the Fifth Patriarch; that there were about one thousand disciples under him; and that when he went there to pay homage to the Patriarch, he attended lectures on this sutra. He further told me that His Holiness used to encourage the laity as well as the monks to recite this scripture, as by doing so they might realize their own essence of Mind, and thereby reach Buddhahood directly.

"I just heard that excellent sutra, what is that?" "That's the Diamond Sutra." "Where did that sutra come from?" "I was in an area named Kishu, at Tozen-ji for awhile, and the master there, Goso Gunin Zenji, was always teaching this sutra, and that way people there realized their true nature."

Immediately, Eno thought "Aha!" He had heard that sutra and immediately had known that it was about not only his own Mind, but the Mind of all people. When each person is born, that person has a karmic affiliation with a way of doing or being—good at playing the piano, good at some talent, things that are not just about our genes but about the response to the needs of the era we are born into. In each and every person there is such a mission, and direct perception. It was as if Eno had been born to hear and realize this Diamond Sutra and know his own interior world.

In the Blue Cliff Record there is a commentary by Setcho Juken, telling about Engo Kokugon, who on hearing a sutra at a temple when he was a child, felt that he'd found and recognized something he'd lost track of, and immediately became ordained. In Sogen-ji, too, we feel this connection and this line running through things. I think of this when I'm here [at Tahoma One Drop Monastery] also—a connection with the people here, living here and doing sesshin. How we all have a deep, karmic affiliation and in a past life have probably promised to meet each other here. If not like this, then why, out of six billion people on the planet, would it be these people here who are together now?

I'm not such a believer in fate like that, but when wondering why it is that we are here together, this is the only conclusion I can clearly come up with.

Sutra: It must be due to my good karma in past lives that I heard about this and that I was given ten taels for the maintenance of my mother by a man who advised me to go to Huang Mei to interview the Fifth Patriarch. After arrangements had been made for her I left for Huang Mei, which took me less than thirty days to reach.

He was merely a wood-selling youth, dressed in rags. And yet he wanted so much to hear and study this sutra. The customer to whom he'd sold the wood said that since he himself was already so old and couldn't go he encouraged Eno to go to Yellow Plum Mountain and learn about this sutra. Eno responded that he could not do that, that he knew it was a great sutra but that he couldn't go. So the customer asked him why not, and he answered, "I am selling this wood to take care of my mother; she has no way of making a living, and we live each day by the wood that I am able to sell. If I wasn't doing that, then she would die of starvation."

Then the customer said, "Well, then, if you have enough money for your mother's care, for her to be able to live until you come back, you can go. So take this money for her. There is greater value in you learning the Diamond Sutra. So, take this and go." It was a large amount of money, and the man enthusiastically gave it to Eno, who gratefully accepted it and went to his mother, telling her not to be lonely, that he would be back as soon as his training was done.

From the city of Kosshu to the banks of the Yangtze River to Yellow Plum Mountain takes a month by foot. It takes twenty-four hours by train even today—and back then, in his poor garments, this young man from the South went and waited to meet with the master.

Sutra: I then went to pay homage to the Patriarch, and was asked where I came from and what I expected to get

from him. I replied, 'I am a commoner from Hsin Chou of Kwangtung. I have traveled far to pay you respect and I ask for nothing but Buddhahood.'

Eno must have looked very ragged after his long travels, showing up at a temple near Peking, the center of Chinese culture. He must have surprised everyone, but with great courage, he stood in front of the master. "Where are you here from, why have you come to this monastery?" Eno answered honestly that he was from Hsin Chou of Kwangtung, "I am from a farming family, I have traveled so far to be able to meet you. I am looking for nothing but only to realize Buddha-nature." Eno was very simple and direct.

We all have so many things in life we think we want to do; we desire to learn, we want to go here, we want to do this and do that. Our life is brief. We cannot live the same time twice. We can choose what we want to do with it once, and we have to see what is most important. Life has been in existence for billions of years, but in this very short span, this brief chance we are given now in this human form, for what shall we use it? How shall we express it? What is its meaning? There has to be something which we know we have to do no matter what. Not something with conditions on it like to produce a great work; things like that all decay. But beyond anything that is limited by conditions, to become that life energy itself! To clarify this is the essence of our zazen. To do this with no conditions on it, for our life energy to shine brightly! When there are conditions on something, it will always fade away. The very thing itself, to realize this!

In saying this, some people will always respond, "I'm already shining completely brightly." But if you are self-consciously aware of that, that is already a condition on it. We have to

佛性本無南北

Bussho moto nan boku nashi

Buddha-nature knows no north or south



at once let go of everything—as Eno has said, “I ask for nothing but Buddhahood.”

Sutra: “You are a native of Guangdong, a barbarian? How can you expect to be a Buddha?” asked the Patriarch. I replied, “Although there are northern men and southern men, north and south make no difference to their Buddha-nature. A barbarian is different from Your Holiness physically, but there is no difference in our Buddha-nature.” He was going to speak further to me, but the presence of other disciples made him stop short. He then ordered me to join the crowd to work.

To this, Gunin responded, “You really talk big, don’t you, for some little bulldog from the boonies!” And Eno gave an astonishing answer, “We may look very different, you in your fine apparel and me so scruffy, but in Buddha-nature, there is no difference.”

Goso Gunin then told him to go to the back of the monastery to the rice pounding room and work there.

DAY SIX

Sutra: More than eight months after, the Patriarch saw me one day and said, ‘I know your knowledge of Buddhism is very sound, but I have to refrain from speaking to you, lest evil doers should do you harm. Do you understand?’

Eno had gone to the rice hulling room, where he did the rice for 700 monks for eight months. One day Goso Gunin appeared in the rice hulling room. Since Eno was not a formal student, he didn’t ever go to the hondo, the zendo, or near the roshi’s quarters. “What you say is very advanced,” Goso Gunin said to him, “but the culturally sophisticated students from the North here would probably keep you out of here if you were recognized by me. I do recognize your deep understanding. If you know what I am talking about, please come and let me teach you.”

“Yes, I understand. I am someone who has

just arrived here, and for this reason I did not go and do greetings with you for eight months, not wanting to stir up people and make trouble.”

Sutra: The patriarch one day assembled all his disciples and said to them, ‘The question of incessant rebirth is a momentous one. Day after day, instead of trying to free yourselves from this bitter sea of life and death, you seem to go after tainted merits only. Yet merits will be of no help if your essence of Mind is obscured. Go and seek for prajna in your mind and then write me a stanza about it.’

Goso Gunin had gathered his disciples, not for the usual lecture, but because there was something important to announce. The taiko drum sounded and everyone came to the hondo, wondering what it was that was going to be announced. Goso Gunin said, “I have something important to tell you all: Life is very transient. Having life this morning, we may not be alive in the evening of the same day. I am no longer so healthy, and don’t know when problems will arise, but then again, this is true for all of us. You can’t be indulgent because of your current good health. We cannot escape death—its law applies to everyone. Do not leave your essence unattended and only pay attention to your external daily affairs, or you will waste the chance you have been given by coming here. Just because we perform our social responsibilities does not mean we have fulfilled our truest responsibility. We are not limited to an emotional and self-satisfied life. There is no meaning to that. We get confused and deluded because we don’t align our clear Mind’s essence. It is because we have left our Buddha-nature behind for so long that the world has become as destructive as it is.”

We never know when we will be born again in a human form. The field of merit—to cultivate this, because no matter what we do in society, nine out of ten people are grumbling and dissatisfied. No matter what a huge company’s president we might become or how much deep knowledge we might

acquire, if our Buddha-nature is not clarified, we stay insecure. Goso Gunin told everyone to see this clearly.

Sutra: Go and seek for prajna in your own Mind, and then write me a stanza about it. He who understands what the essence of Mind is will be given the robe and the Dharma, and I shall make him the Sixth Patriarch. Go away quickly, delay not in writing the stanza as deliberation is quite unnecessary and of no use. The person who has realized the essence of Mind can speak of it at once as soon as he has realized it, and he cannot lose sight of it, even when engaged in battle.

It is not something we have to receive from outside, and they were told to put it out there in a poem. "You needn't go back to our room to write it—we all have it within us from birth, but we have become a slave of that mental knowledge, and that is not wisdom."

It doesn't matter how unskillfully the poem is written if the essence is expressed. Koans are the same. It is not in the answer's words, but in the direct touching with true Mind. It's not about mental understanding, but about the state of mind being realized in the answering. Here Goso Gunin is asking for a poem, because poems are excellent for manifesting direct perception. Poems go beyond mental understanding, and if we didn't have them in the world, it would be so dry, linear and intellectual. If you think about it, that's not your true Mind. It must be prior to your thinking intellect.

In the sutras it is said that even one who lives for 100 years, if they don't know the eternal true nature—that which is never born nor dies—it is not equal to one day of the life of one who knows the value of this great true nature, this great life energy. As Buddha always said, "If we lose things, we can find them again; if we lose money, we can earn it again, but time cannot be reused." Time cannot be used twice; do not be used by time! We have to use our most precious

time to awaken deeply. Not seeing the true source within but only seeing the external scenery—there is nothing more melancholy than this. Our life in this is not eternal.

Sutra: Yet merits will be of no help if your essence is obscured.

"If your Mind is not clear and bright, but is obscured by shadow and is not yet completely clarified, that is the most sad thing. We cannot use each day only for our small self satisfaction. You have all been gathering here to realize your true nature. If you know it directly, you should be able to express it immediately, as it is. This essence, please express it in a poem. When you bring me this poem, I will know how deeply you have realized this true nature. If there is one poem that expresses this clearly, this person will become the Sixth Patriarch."

In a company needing a new person to be on top, to chose the person who is going to be able to make it a company which can lead creatively in this world today takes a very serious choice. All the more so for this world where there is no visible form. This is why we have to do zazen.

We are most often relying on mental knowledge. We see a flower and know whether it is white or red, but that is because we are seeing it from the outside. Rather, to see it before those details were born—what about that? We are always being moved around by the shadows and superficial forms of things, saying this person taught this, that book says that. We have to pierce through all of that and go beyond it. We have to tear it away—and tear it and tear it further—and get rid of it more and more, to be able to realize and touch this true nature. To do this, we have to completely and honestly dig to the truest source. Everyone's most serious stance is needed for this. At the beginning we hurt, we get tired—but we continue and continue and continue until we are actually thinking nothing at all.

Today is the age of computers, but that is still the world of dualistic knowledge—not the direct seeing or the perception of this bright, blue sky. If we only see the computer screen

and miss the huge, open Mind that is freely functioning, that is a very melancholy thing. As one gets older, to learn to use a computer as a tool is useful but not necessary. Our Mind's clarification is the most important—not the gathering of books and great Patriarch Records about this truth and subject, but to know this very thing itself coming forth!

We are not sitting to develop our intellect; throw that all away completely! Then you can answer without thinking. If you think about it, it's not spontaneous, it's still mental thinking. Even right in the middle of walking or eating, that true essence is always present. As Rinzai said in the Records, he was in the monastery and there was a call for samu [work practice]. He went to look for his tools, but all of the tools had already been taken out. Obaku was out, beginning to work, and when he saw Rinzai, he asked where Rinzai's hoe was. Rinzai said someone took it away from him. Then Obaku said, holding up his hoe, "No one in the world can hold this hoe up!" To which Rinzai answered, "I can hold it up!" Rinzai and Obaku knew, without many words, exactly what the other meant. There was no explanation necessary. So Obaku called out, "Today's work is finished."

Baso and Hyakujo were walking as a duck flew by. "Where did that bird go?" asked Baso. Hyakujo replied that it flew away. Baso grabbed Hyakujo's nose, and Hyakujo exclaimed "Ouch! Ouch! Ouch!" "So, the bird hasn't flown away, yet!"

Sutra: Having received this instruction, the disciples withdrew and said to one another, 'It is of no use for us to concentrate our mind to write the stanza and submit it to His Holiness, since the patriarchy is bound to be won by Shen Hsiu, our instructor. and if we write perfunctorily, it will only be a waste of energy.' Upon hearing this, all of them made up their minds not to write and said, 'Why should we take the trouble? Hereafter, we will simply follow our instructor, Shen Hsiu, wherever he goes, and look to him for guidance.'

All of them said to each other that they didn't think there was any need to write such a poem. Jinshu Josa—"Shen Hsiu" in the text—was obviously the successor. Already he did teaching and sanzen. To work on such a poem is pointless, they said, and everyone agreed not to do it. "Jinshu Josa will become the Sixth Patriarch, and we will do sanzen with him."

Sutra: Meanwhile, Shen Hsiu reasoned thus with himself: "Considering that I am their teacher, none of them will take part in the competition. I wonder if I should write a stanza and submit it to His Holiness. If I do not, how can the Patriarch know how deep or superficial my knowledge is? If my object is to get the Dharma, my motive is a pure one. If I were after the patriarchate, then it would be bad. In that case, my mind would be that of a worldling, and my action would amount to robbing the Patriarch's holy seat. But, if I do not submit a stanza, I shall never have the chance of getting the Dharma. A very difficult point to decide indeed!"

Jinshu Josa was aware of the feelings of the other monks and knew that no one would write a poem because they knew he would do it. "But if I write a poem, it has to be an expression of my fruition of deepening, not for the status of becoming the Sixth Patriarch. If I do it for the name, it is no different from someone wanting to be famous in society. But then, if I write a poem, it will show the depth of my state of mind. This is terrible, terrible!" But who knows if Jinshu Josa was actually that nervous and anxious?

Sutra: In front of the Patriarch's Hall there were three corridors, the wall of which were to be painted by a court artist named Lu Chen with pictures from the Lankavatara Sutra depicting the transfiguration of the assembly and with scenes showing the genealogy of the five Patriarchs, for the information

and veneration of the public.

Gosu Gunin had the royal painter, Gubu Rochin, come to paint pictures on the corridor walls which he had recently had repainted. He asked him to paint pictures of the five books of the Lankavatara Sutra, which is said to be the only sutra which Bodhidharma brought with him and the only sutra which Niso Eka Daishi [the Second Patriarch] studied; it has a thorough summary of the essence of the Buddha Dharma. The wall was also to be painted with pictures from the time of Bodhidharma down to the Fifth Patriarch so there would be no misunderstanding.

Sutra: When Shen Hsiu had composed his stanza he made several attempts to submit it to the Patriarch, but as soon as he went near the hall his mind was so perturbed that he sweated all over. He could not screw up courage to submit it, although in the course of four days he made altogether thirteen attempts to do so.

When Jinshu Josa got to the corridor he started sweating and shaking and trembling, and couldn't put his poem up no matter how hard he tried. He returned to his room, and four days passed; time just kept passing. I'm no so sure Jinshu Josa was so hesitant—after all, later Jinshu Josa taught [the Emperor] Soku Tampuko in the capital. This story was probably written by some other disciples, not told by the Sixth Patriarch.

Sutra: Then he suggested to himself, "It would be better for me to write it on the wall of the corridor and let the Patriarch see it for himself. If he approves it, I shall come out to pay homage and tell him it was done by me; but if he disapproves it, then I shall have wasted several years on this mountain in receiving homage by others that I by no means deserve! In that case, what progress have I made in learning Buddhism?"

Jinshu Josa went thirteen times to put up the poem, and finally had a good sneaky idea to write it on the wall where the pictures by

Gubu Rochin were to be painted, and when the Roshi came out and saw it, if he praised it, then he would tell them that it was his. And if not, he would leave and live in the mountains for the rest of his life.

Sutra: At twelve o'clock that night he went secretly with a lamp to write the stanza on the wall of the south corridor, so that the Patriarch might know what spiritual insight he had attained. The stanza read:
*Our body is the bodhi tree,
And our Mind a mirror bright.
Carefully we wipe them hour by hour,
And let no dust alight.*

At the time when everyone was most deeply sleeping, he went and wrote his poem on the wall.

As for his poem: It is possible for us to do zazen and realize the truth because we have this body. This is an important feature of it, to sit in a correct posture and use our body correctly, or we cannot realize enlightenment. It is like this: If our body is not full and taut, then our perception of everything as if we can put it right on our palm will not be clear. Zazen has to be clear; we can't live blindly and carelessly, but have to align our sleep, our body, and the way we use it, and that will bring us to an ability to have enlightenment.

"Our mind a mirror bright"—while it has no shape or form, our Mind can reflect all the myriad things, like a huge great mirror the size of the whole universe. It reflects from the highest mountain to the tiniest ant, to the smallest particle even one you would need the strongest microscope to see. It is our Mind which perceives all of these and receives all the myriad things. Our Mind's source is like this, but we are always holding onto something and obstructing this clarity with veils of delusion, veils of distraction that prevent our seeing clearly. So we have to carefully wipe off all of these various delusions, all of these obstructions, and this is zazen. We must do this, we must get rid of all of this obstruction in our clear Mind, which is what Jinshu Josa wrote in his poem.

Sutra: As soon as he had written it he left at once for his room so nobody knew what he had done. In his room he again pondered: "When the Patriarch sees my stanza tomorrow and is pleased with it, I shall be ready for the Dharma; but if he says that it is badly done, it will mean that I am unfit for the Dharma, owing to the misdeeds in previous lives that thickly becloud my mind. It is difficult to know what the Patriarch will say about it!" In this vein he kept on thinking until dawn, as he could neither sleep nor sit at ease.

Jinshu Josa returned to his room and thought again and again about how the roshi would see his poem. Would he see it and say, "What a splendid poem of enlightenment!" or would it be a disapproving comment, showing how Jinshu Josa had no karmic affiliation with enlightenment. He couldn't resolve this discussion in his head; whether he sat up or laid down or tried to sleep, he was unsuccessful and finally got up, fuzzy and vague early in the morning.

But, as Goso Zenji later says, this poem's meaning is not mistaken and not bad. Although it is often given as a bad example relative to the poem of Eno, we still do have to work like this; even the Buddha, who joined the ascetics and also the followers who believed in the practice of thinking nothing at all and not thinking about that either, had to work like this. The Buddha trained with these groups as well. To not work to realize what has to be experienced will not bring us to a realization. To just think about it, 99.9% will not be able to realize this clarity of Mind and it will all end up in a mental discussion. Rather, to see this and practice, and continue this practice in an ongoing way consistently, without becoming lax!

DAY SEVEN

Sutra: But the Patriarch knew already that Shen Hsiu had not entered the door of enlightenment and that he had not known the essence of

Mind. In the morning he sent for the court artist and went with him to the south corridor to have the walls there painted with pictures. By chance, he saw the stanza: "I am sorry to have troubled you to come so far," he said to the artist. "The walls need not be painted now."

Goso Gunin knew that, after great efforts for four days, Jinshu Josa had finally put his poem up. But he knew from the start that Jinshu Josa was not yet deeply awakened. If he had been, there would be no need to go through the drama of asking for poems to be written. It's a master's job to see this clearly; he already knew well where Jinshu Josa was. When the painter came and he was showing him the walls to be painted, he saw the poem and told the painter he wouldn't need to paint the walls after all.

Sutra: The walls need not be painted now, as the sutra says, 'All forms or phenomena are transient and illusive.'

Goso Gunin said to the artist, "All things pass and are not the truth. I was going to have you paint the walls, but there's already a poem there which everyone can learn from."

Sutra: "It would be better leave the stanza here so that people may study it and recite it. If they put its teaching into actual practice, they will be saved from the misery of being born in the evil realms of existence. The merit gained by one who practices it will be great indeed!" He then ordered incense to be burned and all his disciples to pay homage to it and to recite it, so that they might realize the essence of Mind."

If everyone studies this poem and practices in this way, without any gaps or becoming lax, it is not a bad thing; if people train like this, there is great merit to it. But what was clear was it said nothing about going beyond birth and death—it is a poem of morality and doctrine, saying not to do anything bad, but it says nothing of deep awakening. Goso Gunin said to light incense, and everyone

bowed in homage to the poem, Gosu Gunin saying for everyone to practice like this and realize awakening. So everyone prostrated and went around chanting the poem.

Sutra: At midnight, the patriarch sent for Shen Hsiu to come to the hall, and asked him whether the stanza was written by him or not. "It was, sir," replied Shen Hsiu. "I dare not be so vain as to expect to get the patriarchate, but I wish our Holiness would kindly tell me whether my stanza shows the least grain of wisdom."

The Patriarch called Jinshu Josa at midnight and asked him if he had written it, and he said yes. Already having heard the poem praised, he felt confident, and said he wanted to know if his teacher saw enlightenment manifested in the poem.

Sutra: "Your stanza," replied the Patriarch, "shows that you have not yet realized the essence of Mind. So far you have reached the door of enlightenment, but you have not yet entered it. To seek for supreme enlightenment with such an understanding as yours can hardly be successful."

Goso Gunin waited for Jinshu Josa to give this answer, and then he told him it was not a poem of enlightenment. It can be said it is a poem of nearing the gate, but not having gone through the gate. It's not the experience of it, though a rational understanding of it perhaps—not the true experience.

Sutra: "To attain supreme enlightenment, one must be able to know spontaneously one's own nature or essence of Mind, which is neither created, nor can it be annihilated."

That enlightenment, which is not any different from that of the Buddha's, is not realized by a gradual application. Later, that becomes the Gradual Awakening School of Zen, as opposed to the Sixth Patriarch's School of Sudden Awakening. Ninety-nine point nine

percent of the practice is in daily, gradual efforts, as is clear in the Ten Oxherding Pictures, for example. But what must be seen clearly here is that if one thinks there are only ongoing, constant daily efforts, that is only hard work—and lacking the greatest joy and wonder of awakening completely.

Awakening is also not realized by always thinking, "Will doing this lead to awakening?" To think that if we do this, we'll get that, is a grand delusion—always trying for two points at the same time and wondering when something is going to happen, waiting for something special. A song from China sings of a farmer hoeing his garden, when suddenly a rabbit comes running quickly by and bumps his head on a stump and dies there immediately. The farmer sells the rabbit's fur and makes so much money that it equals the amount of money he makes in one year growing vegetables. So he decides to quit growing vegetables and sell rabbit's fur instead. He puts down a mat by the stump, and waits for the next rabbit to come along—like coming to zazen for two days a week on the weekend and calling that the practice, and not carrying practice into our Monday to Friday life. What point is there in that? None. Even looking forward to the weekend of going to One Drop to do zazen it doesn't work like that. To realize something in every moment and every movement—all of the time, to always be clear with that essence of the living energy!

In the Heart Sutra it says there is no birth and no death in the clear Mind. This can't be seen or designed with our intellectual mind—only in this very moment's life energy! The living energy of this present moment, is there birth and death in that? Where is there anything sullied or pure in this? To become completely revealed and open, not to be forcing loudly with an ego which can even be violent. No matter what murderer or thief there may be, even though a crime cannot be taken back, that clear Mind in each person is not touched by such a thing: nothing sullied, nothing clear. In this life energy of this very moment there is no decrease and no increase. But if we have thoughts about it, it's not the thing

itself.

Goso Gunin teaches Jinshu further here, saying that from momentary sensations one should be able to realize the essence of Mind all of the time. All things then will be free from restraint, as Eno later says directly in his poem: "From the origin, there is not one single thing." No mental understanding, no idea about it, no judgment on that pure, clear energy which is always freshly pouring forth and newly born in freshness just as it is. And this state of mind and the root of all existence prior to judgment and criticism—if we don't know this place prior to intellectual thinking, we can't see clearly. Of course we need our mind to think thoughts that help us live in society, but we have to know this source which is prior to all of these—the joy in it! If we don't know the joy, then everything turns into grumbling. Yet these thoughts as well are only like clouds in today's bright blue sky. Nothing eternal, always changing.

Sutra: "Once the suchness is known,
one will be free from delusion
forever; and in all circumstances
one's Mind is absolute truth.

Not to believe in our delusion, but to decide to die completely on your cushion, without fear! Koans are not for rational estimation, but to know the actual source from the tops of your heads to the bottoms of your feet, with everything you have. We have to cut to the root! Without any delusion or distraction let in, in each instant and moment, to be cutting and cutting, or else it is all superficial.

Sutra: "Such a state of mind is absolute truth. If you can see things in such a frame of mind, you will have known the essence of Mind, which is supreme enlightenment. You had better go back to think it over again for a couple of days, and then submit me another stanza. If your stanza shows that you have entered the door of enlightenment, I will transmit to you the robe and the Dharma.

Shen Hsiu made obeisance to the Patriarch and left. For several days, he

tried in vain to write another stanza. This upset his mind so much that he was as ill at ease as if he were in a nightmare, and he could find comfort neither in sitting nor in walking.

Jinshu had trained for a long time. He was also a very established scholar, yet he had not realized supreme enlightenment yet. He was not yet able to clearly function. Goso Gunin told him to go and sit and write another poem, but he was so conditioned to thinking and trying to analyze and see it from a mental point of view. It takes a state of mind of being ready to cut through, like diving off a high cliff, which was not possible for Jinshu. Jinshu was shrunken, uptight and unsure what he could possibly write; he was so upset he couldn't sit down and couldn't stand up. It was the great kindness of Goso Gunin to have told him in this way. There was a very strong, challenging place and deep karmic affiliation.

Sutra: Two days after, it happened that a young boy who was passing by the room when I was pounding rice recited loudly the stanza written by Shen Hsiu. As soon as I heard it, I knew at once that the composer of it had not yet realized the essence of Mind. For although I had not been taught about it at that time, I already had a general idea of it. "What stanza is this?" I asked the boy. "You barbarian!" he replied, "Don't you know about it? The Patriarch told his disciples that the question of incessant rebirth was a momentous one, that those who wished to inherit his robe and the Dharma should write a stanza, and that the one who had an understanding of the essence of Mind would get them and be made the Sixth Patriarch. Elder Shen Hsiu wrote this formless stanza on the wall of the south corridor and the Patriarch told us to recite it. He also said that those who put its teaching into actual practice would attain great merit, and

be saved from the misery of being born in the evil realms of existence.'

A few days later, a young novice passed by the rice hulling room, chanting Jinshu's poem. Eno knew that it was a good poem, but not one of clear understanding. At this time, he had not yet had his understanding confirmed—but a clear state of mind, which he had, is a clear state of mind. He asked the young man about the poem and the novice said, "Hey, bulldog from the South, you couldn't possibly understand this. The Fifth Patriarch said he is going to pass the patriarchate on to one who will write the best poem about awakening, and this is the poem by Jinshu Josa. Goso Gunin saw it and praised it and said that one who trains in this way will for sure eventually realize awakening."

Sutra: I told the boy that I wished to recite the stanza too, so that I might have an affinity with its teaching in future life. I also told him that although I had been pounding rice there for eight months I had never been to the hall, and that he would have to show me where the stanza was to enable me to make obeisance to it.

The boy took me there and I asked him to read it to me, as I am illiterate. A petty officer of the Chiang Chou District named Chang Tih Yung, who happened to be there, read it out to me. When he had finished reading I told him that I also had composed a stanza, and asked him to write it for me. 'Extraordinary indeed,' he exclaimed, 'that you also can compose a stanza!'

Eno said that he had been there, hulling rice for eight months, and still had no idea of where the hondo was—and asked the novice to take him there so he could prostrate to the poem, too. He was taken to the poem on the wall and asked the novice to read it because he could not read or write. People were always there, coming and going, and there was even a public officer there at the moment, from the district. He even had his

own cart, he was so distinguished. He read out the poem in a loud voice:

Our body is the bodhi tree,
And our Mind a mirror bright.
Carefully we wipe them hour by hour,
And let no dust alight.

To which Eno said, "I also have a poem. You could read, so you could also possibly write it down, this poem that I have written." The officer was greatly surprised and said, "How extraordinary indeed, that you also can compose a stanza!"

Sutra: "Don't despise a beginner," said I, "if you are a seeker of supreme enlightenment. You should know that the lowest class may have the sharpest wit, while the highest may be in want of intelligence. If you slight others, you commit a very great sin."

"Dictate your stanza," said he. "I will take it down for you. But do not forget to deliver me, should you succeed in getting the Dharma!"

The officer made a fool of Eno, almost accusing him of bragging. And to this Eno answered, "Don't despise a beginner. If you are a seeker of supreme enlightenment. You should know that the lowest class may have the sharpest wit, while the highest may be in want of intelligence. If you slight others, you commit a very great sin. The training here is to realize the true nature, but do you think that one only has true nature because one trains? From the origin we all have a clear nature. We don't gain it because we train; we are all originally endowed with it. But to awaken to it may take some time. If you can understand that you shouldn't make a fool of a beginner. Beginners can also awaken. They can directly perceive. It is possible for them as well. In fact, people with lots of intellectualization may even have a harder time. If you make a fool of me you crush your own eyes."

The officer couldn't even answer. "Dictate your stanza," he said. "I'll take it down for you. But do not forget to deliver me, should you succeed in getting the Dharma! You really talk big, but if you have a real poem,

that is splendid. However, if you are truly to become the Patriarch, when you become it, don't forget me."

Here Eno gives his poem:

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

Jinshu Josa had written in his first line, "Our body is a Bodhi-tree." But this body is always changing. To hold this body as precious is not to see the truth. We are, from when we are children to adolescents, to young adults, to elderly people, always changing in our physical body. Even during one sesshin, the first one, two, or three days we feel so much change in our physical condition. Our body hurts, we are so sleepy! We say over and over again, "This body is a Bodhi-tree," but this body dies at best after one hundred years! We polish it, we go to the health club—and then we end up dying and saying goodbye to it. It's like meeting a thief! And our Mind, Jinshu Josa is saying—"our Mind, a mirror bright." Where is there any such thing as a Mind like that? Have you ever seen one?

OSESSHIN 2001-02, DAY ONE

Because we hold onto nothing at all we are able to reflect completely clearly in the way that a mirror functions. In the zendo there are only the clappers and bell—although we may not even hear that. All of it melts together into oneness—people, sounds, the building, all melt together. And yet this is not nihilistic. We are walking in kinhin, and telling the person in front of us to hurry up because they are being pokey. We come into the dining room when the umpan rings. If you see clearly this moment, you will see that from the origin there is nothing. Jinshu was seeing it from behind the glass, and Eno opened that glass so fresh air could come in.

菩提本無樹

Bodai moto ju nashi

There is no Bodhi-tree



The fresh air from inside and outside could meet and blend.

And here it says, "Carefully wipe them hour by hour." What's that about?

Sutra: When he had written this, all disciples and others who were present were greatly surprised. Filled with admiration, they said to one another, "How wonderful! No doubt we should not judge people by appearance. How can it be that for so long we have made a Bodhisattva incarnate work for us?"

Seeing that the crowd was overwhelmed with amazement, the Patriarch rubbed off the stanza with his shoe, lest jealous ones should do me injury. He expressed the opinion, which they took for granted, that the author of this stanza had also not yet realized the essence of Mind.

The officer was astonished, as were all the others who saw Eno's poem and saw how complete Eno's understanding was compared to Jinshu's, saying how terrible for Jinshu that was going to be. Even though other people could not write a poem themselves they could see an excellent poem of clear understanding, and everyone reading it got noisily excited so that Goso Gunin heard it and came out to see what was going on. He saw the poem of Eno:

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

And he asked who wrote it, saying after he read it, that whoever it was they hadn't realized awakening yet. And he erased it from the wall with his shoe. And everyone agreed, so after all it was only a person working in the

明鏡亦非臺

Meikyo mata dai ni arazu

Nor stand of a mirror bright



rice hulling room.

Sutra: The next day the Patriarch came secretly to the room where the rice was pounded. Seeing that I was working there with a stone pestle, he said to me, 'A seeker of the Path risks his life for the Dharma. Should he not do so?' Then he asked, 'Is the rice ready?' 'Ready long ago,' I replied, 'only waiting for the sieve.' He knocked the mortar thrice with his stick and left.

Knowing what his message meant, in the third watch of the night I went to his room. Using the robe as a screen so that none could see us, he expounded the Diamond Sutra to me.

The next day, Goso Gunin himself came to the rice hulling room. Eno, who was small, had tied a hard rock on his waist so he could make more weight to pound the hulls. It was the first time Goso Gunin had seen him doing this. He felt how he had never even let him come into the hondo for teachings or go into the zendo. For all this time, for eight months Eno had been doing this with a rock around his waist. Goso asked Eno, "Is the rice done yet?"

Eno answered, "It's hulled, but not yet checked." Goso Gunin pounded his staff three times on the rice hulling stone.

In the middle of the night when the three sounds sounded on the watch, Eno went to Goso Gunin's room. Goso Gunin had lit a candle there and put up the robes on the window so no one could see, and at that time he told him all the teachings of the Diamond Sutra.

Sutra: When he came to the sentence, 'One should use one's mind in such a way that it will be free

本来無一物

Honrai mu ichi motsu

*Since all is void, where can the dust
alight?*



from any attachment,' I at once became thoroughly enlightened, and realized that all things in the universe are the essence of Mind itself. 'Who would have thought' I said to the Patriarch, 'that the essence of Mind is intrinsically pure!'

"Residing in no place, awakened Mind arises." Who would have known that Eno would end up here with the Sixth Patriarch, hearing this teaching from Goso Gunin? And that when he came to these words, "Residing in no place, awakened Mind arises," Eno was deeply awakened?

We are rarely residing in no place. Thinking what day this is in the week of sesshin, or hearing the birds and thinking of the names of them and seeing the flowers and thinking that they look so nice, we are always residing in a place of self-referral, referring to a small self. For working in the world this is necessary, but this is not the actual truth.

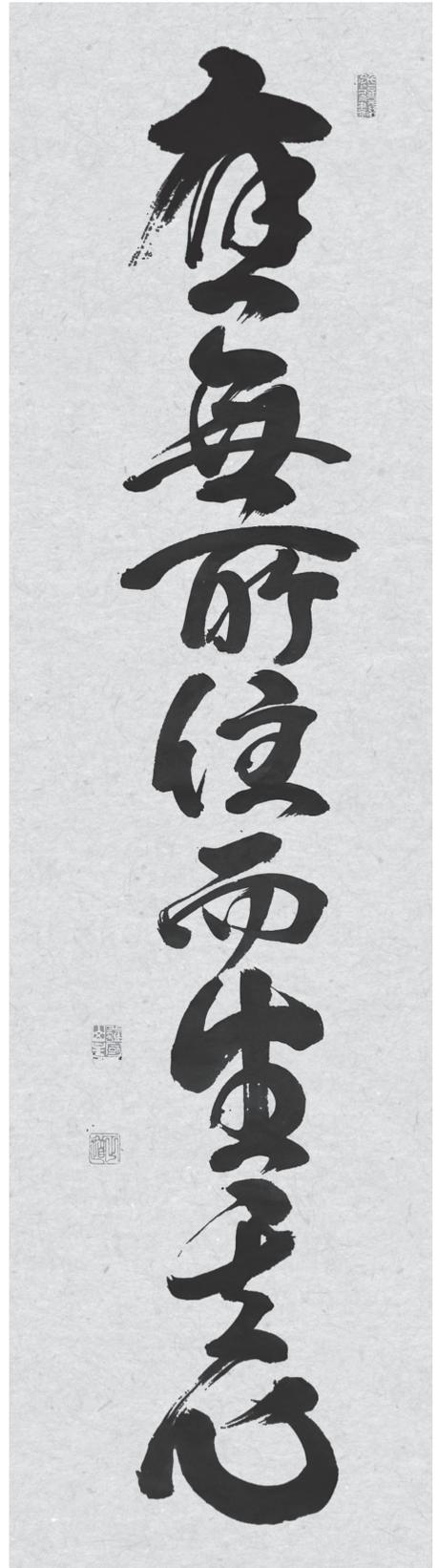
To come forth from residing in no place is the direct truth—hearing the birds chirp from no abiding place, our newly born Mind in every fresh moment. But because we reside in a decided place and get comfortable, then we are staying comfortable with our prejudiced views against certain others. We feel we have to reside somewhere because it's so comfortable. We feel we have to refer to others in judgment of them because this is how society works. But it is not how our Mind works in its clearest functioning. If we don't encounter the sunlight and moonlight and all the 10,000 things exactly as they are—and directly—we'll suffocate. And while perceiving directly, then to live and work from our responsibility and creativity. "Residing in no place, awakened Mind arises."

There are times when we even ignore others even though we know that we have the same

応無所住而生其心

Ō mu shojū ni shō go shin

Arouse the mind that abides in no place



clear Mind. This happens in society and is very sad—and also causes suffocation. We all have this great, clear Mind within. Eno had come to Yellow Plum Mountain and had encountered so much prejudice—but he hadn't been moved around by it because he had such deep essence. "Residing in no place, awakened Mind arises"—human's deepest truth! Eno's past experience came to light again, and he experienced supreme enlightenment.

Sutra: Who would have thought, I said to the Patriarch, that the essence of Mind is intrinsically pure! Who would have thought that the essence of Mind is intrinsically free from becoming or annihilation! Who would have thought that the essence of Mind is intrinsically self-sufficient! Who would have thought that the essence of Mind is intrinsically free from change! Who would have thought that all things are the manifestations of the essence of Mind!

There's no need to hold onto anything like a small self. To be born as the bell's ringing! To be born as the bird's singing! "This fills my eyes and my ears, and I am born fresh in each and every moment! It all comes to me, but no matter what comes, I am not stopped by it—residing nowhere—each sound or sight giving birth to a new world: giving birth to a flower, giving birth to a moon, giving birth to a sun!" And there's no time involved in that. The moon is the moon and the sun is the sun. Our idea about there being a day or a night—this is all a concept, as is our idea itself a concept of birth or death. The clapper sound is sounding eternally. Our idea that it starts or stops is only from our self-conscious awareness. There is only that clapper's sound. "I thought that there was an 'I' who sees and hears! That was a great mistake! It's only a sound perceived with a Mind residing in no place!" In the same way, all perception—good and bad, birth and death—are only coming from there.

"Now I understand there is no birth or death—this wide open state of mind is my

original Mind! My mind was always wiggling at everything that would come along, but now that I see, all this has disappeared. The mountains, the rivers, the sun and the moon are all me! Even if it can't be said that I made them all, with the heavens and earth they have become created."

Sutra: Knowing that I had realized the essence of Mind, the Patriarch said, 'For him who does not know his own mind there is no use learning Buddhism. On the other hand, if he knows his own Mind and sees intuitively his own nature, he is a hero, a teacher of gods and men, a Buddha.'

Thus, to the knowledge of no one, the Dharma was transmitted to me at midnight, and consequently I became the inheritor of the teaching of the 'Sudden' School as well as of the robe and the begging bowl.

"If you understand this," said Goso Gunin, "and it is clear, then the Dharma is clear. All the teachings only come to have meaning when this experience is realized. Knowing this very Mind is Buddha." Late at night, Goso Gunin gave Eno the transmission; no one knew he transmitted to Eno. He was given the robe and bowl; he had realized the actual essence of that which is the truth that is seen when we directly perceive Mind and realize Buddha—that which is beyond words and phrases. At the age of twenty-four, Eno became the Sixth Patriarch.

Sutra: "You are now the Sixth Patriarch," said he. "Take good care of yourself, and deliver as many sentient beings as possible. Spread and preserve the teaching, and don't let it come to an end. Take note of my stanza:
*Sentient beings who sow the seeds of enlightenment
In the field of causation will reap the fruit of Buddhahood.
Inanimate objects void of Buddha-nature*

Sow not and reap not."

That experience can't be hurried in its ripening. The experiences of an instant must be chewed and thoroughly, creatively worked on and expanded to all beings, or the Dharma will decay. You yourself must never be satisfied. All beings must realize this experience in the Dharma, so chew it well and make a path for all people. Goso Gunin continues "I have written a poem for you: 'Sentient beings who sow the seeds of enlightenment in the field of causation will reap the fruit of Buddhahood. Inanimate objects void of Buddha-nature sow not and reap not.'"

Don't waste your energy on external things but keep that direct perception of the essence clear always. Your place of seeing clearly cannot be mistaken. Please raise disciples who can see correctly.

DAY TWO

Next, Goso Gunin Zenji says to him,

Sutra: "When the Patriarch

Bodhidharma first came to China, most Chinese had no confidence in him, and so this robe was handed down as a testimony from one Patriarch to another."

The bowls and the robe were given to Eno. They had been passed down from Daruma Daishi, Niso Eka Daishi, Sanso Kanshi Zenji, Doshin Dai I Zenji. The Buddha did not give Kasho Sonja the bowl and robe because they were something special, but because there has to be a deepest truth and belief in this transmission and in the relationship between teacher and student. In this way it has always continued, since it is hard to know which teacher is a true teacher. To confer this trustworthiness and to be able to note that, this indicates an unmistakable trust in the giving of these things. But a Mind cannot be passed along.

Sutra: "As to the Dharma, this is transmitted from heart to heart, and the recipient must realize it by his own efforts. From time immemorial it has been the practice for one Buddha to pass to his successor the quintessence

of the Dharma, and for one Patriarch to transmit to another the esoteric teaching from heart to heart."

From the Buddha onward, the present Buddha would become the past Buddha, matched perfectly in understanding and state of mind, and so it would be with the Patriarchs. But in fact, Kasho Sonja was not the only one to whom the truth was transmitted. Nor was he the only one who was enlightened. Nor was Anan Sonja the only one who understood. In fact, Baso Doitsu Zenji had eighty-four transmitted-to disciples. But there was only one set of bowl and robe. Bowls and robes are only something symbolizing this state of mind, that deepest understanding.

If there is even one small trace of small self there, it cannot be the real truth. With that clear Mind we have to deeply awaken. In all the twenty-four hours of the day, letting go of all our previous conditioning, continuing until there is no longer any division between external and internal—no small self included there whatsoever, only one layer. Or else it would be easier to take sitting medicine and forget everything. To ripen and ripen that clarity until we suddenly, deeply, realize it: our Mind opens completely. And this is the central point of zazen: to scrape everything away, to become totally simple, totally open. Like a full, taut balloon that will explode with a single prick of a pin—to do that completely is our responsibility. To do it to that point is what we have to do.

Sutra: As the robe may give cause for dispute, you are the last one to inherit it. Should you hand it down to your successor, your life would be in imminent danger. Now leave this place as quickly as you can, lest some one should do you harm.

"To awaken deeply is the point, not to argue about bowls and robes. I give this to you because since you come from the South, people will not believe you, and you will need this to prove that you are the Sixth Patriarch. But this will be a source of dispute, so you must leave now." This true Dharma storehouse eye cannot be in the form of a

bowl or a robe. The transmission papers are given—even today as well—but it is the true capability of the enlightened student to know this deepest truth directly which is at the center of this.

“If you hand down this robe, people will be attached to its meaning, the meaning of that form, and with that Buddhism will be destroyed—no understanding, no attainment. It will bring many people to become distracted from the true point.” The Fifth Patriarch said it like this.

Obaku Zenji said to Rinzai as Rinzai was leaving, “Here, take this arm rest and sitting stick.” To which Rinzai immediately replied, “Attendant! Bring me some fire so I can burn these useless things up!” Obaku said, “Don’t be in such a rough, restless hurry! At least they will be useful in shutting people’s mouths in time of doubt.” But if it is used in the opposite way it is a source of great trouble.

“There are 700 people here in training, and you have only been here for eight months and came from the South. They will chase after you, murder you, and you mustn’t give them that chance. And also, if you’re mixed up in that, then the Dharma will decay right there.”

Sutra: “Whither shall I go?” I asked.

“At Huai you stop and at Hui you seclude yourself,” he replied.

Eno asks, “You tell me to leave, but where shall I go? I don’t know the layout of this area at all—I came in one straight line from the South.” To which Goso Gunin may have said that he should stop at this place called Eishin and at another place called Shikaiken he should seclude himself. But this was only the scholars’ later guess. When Obaku asked Rinzai where he would go, Rinzai said that he wouldn’t be going to Kanan, he would be going to Kahoku, saying that he wasn’t going to the South but was going to the North, that he would follow his feet and go in the direction that his karmic affiliations took him. This is the true way.

It was a completely dark, black night. Eno had no idea about how to get to the Yangtze River

for the boat. How to go down the mountain, which he had to do immediately, he had not a clue. “Don’t worry about that—I’ll take responsibility for it!” replied Goso Gunin.

Sutra: He then accompanied me to Kiukiang, and there ordered me into a boat. As he did the rowing himself, I asked him to sit down and let me handle the oar. “It is only right for me to carry you across,” he said.

This is an often-painted scene: Goso Gunin rowing Eno across the river himself—the true, deep love and compassion of a teacher and a student here. We have a teacher who will never see the student again, trusting in his deepest awakening, even though he can do more to help him after that. When both are awakened they then see each other equally. Among the ten deep Precepts, among the koans there’s a place where the teacher and the disciple prostrate and go up on the same platform to do the koan work together, now, two Patriarchs equally. The Fifth Patriarch rowed the Sixth Patriarch to the other side of the river. Eno begged him to let him do the rowing—his teacher was so old, so weak! But the teacher himself insisted that he would get Eno to the other side.

Sutra: To this I replied, “While I am under illusion, it is for you to get me across; but after enlightenment, I should cross it by myself.”

“Once I am awakened, I must cross under my own power.” It is the same crossing, but the essence of it is completely different: a student who is dependent on a teacher, or a student who is diving into society and taking responsibility for it.

Sutra: As I happen to be born on the frontier, even my speaking is incorrect in pronunciation, but in spite of this I have had the honor to inherit the Dharma from you. Since I am now enlightened, it is only right for me to cross the sea of birth and death myself by realizing my own essence of Mind.

“The culture of the South is very backward as

are the words; with a strong Cantonese accent I can't speak the cultured Peking dialect. But thanks to you I could awaken deeply. Now I will take this state of mind and go into society completely."

Sutra: "Quite so, quite so!" he agreed.

"Beginning from you, Buddhism will become very popular."

To give the transmission includes the independent functioning of the student, not always indulging in parental dependence. In this way of training, the functioning is of great importance and part of the transmission. "From now on you will go into society and save all beings completely."

Sutra: "Three years after your departure from me I shall leave this world.

You may start on your journey now.

Go as fast as you can towards the South. Do not preach too soon, as Buddhism is not so easily spread."

"It is not long before I will leave this world; go as quickly as you can, as quickly as possible. But don't be in a hurry to speak and teach! Cultivate that place of not being moved around by anything whatsoever!" For Eno, his deep understanding was clear, but he would also have to receive severe judgment because of where he was from. If he didn't have true essence he would fall and be felled by mental argument. To come to awakening and to develop the functioning—two experiences of greatest importance here!

Daito Kokushi was deeply enlightened and then went into a group of beggars to live under a bridge—continuing the whole time to deepen his state of mind. It can't be only the words one speaks, but has to come directly from how it feels to be near that person. Daito Kokushi would go to the East Mountain to do zazen every night—not for one or two years, but for twenty years he continued in this way. Musō Daishi as well, went to the farm country for eight years, helping the farmers harvest, doing errands, caring for the children—and then, every single night, consistently and continually working on his state of mind. If we're not careful we will be

only speaking with our lips and not from true essence.

Sutra: After saying goodbye, I left him and walked toward the South. In about two months' time I reached Mount Daiyurei.

After saying goodbye to him I left and walked to just the place where there was a line between the two states. Walking there, in about two months' time I reached Daiyurei Mountain.

There are some books that include a part here that we don't have in our text, saying that when Goso Gunin returned from sending off Eno, he stopped giving talks to all the monks. His attendant asked if he was sick or if there was something wrong, and he said no, he was not ill, but that the Dharma had gone to the South. This is one interpretation sometimes given. But the Dharma is not something which could only have gone to the South, and Goso Gunin Zenji would not have given up and ignored 700 monks training. The Buddha was still teaching through his 80's, and even at Kushinagara, nearly on his deathbed, he continued teaching his disciples there the Yugyo-kyo [The Sutra of Bequeathed Teachings] in his last moments. Squeezing everything out he possibly could, he continued teaching. There is no student who reads this part of the Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch without being in tears. Later this sutra was edited by Yoka Daishi and other disciples, and these details were probably added at this time.

"You say that it has gone to the South, but to whom did you give the Dharma that has gone to the South?" Goso Gunin answered, "To one who can function and give it life." Hearing this they knew that it was must have been that man who had been in the rice-pounding room for a short eight months—Eno, from the South. They could not accept this, and they all went to chase after him.

Sutra: There I noticed several hundred men were in pursuit of me with the intention of robbing me of my robe and begging bowl. Among them there

was a monk named Emmyo, whose surname was Ken. He was a general of the fourth rank in lay life. His manner was rough and his temper was hot.'

Among the men coming after Eno was a monk named Emmyo, who had been a general in lay life. He was extreme in his strong ki, and very stubborn and impulsive, often causing many problems for everyone. He didn't listen to others, this Emmyo, but his deep root was completely firm and strong, and he was very simple and clear in his determination. Later, in one of the cases in the Mumonkan we have a description of his deep awakening.

No matter what else, we have to be completely honest and straightforward, doing it in one straight line only, in our training. It's not about bowls and robes, but about this true essence! After receiving these bowls and robes, how often people would get shamed so easily. To sit zazen and throw away all of those things, because that awareness which is everything we encounter is what we have to become! It's not about bringing forth something we've learned mentally, or about our experience. No matter what past experience or knowledge, that becomes nothing but obstructive gold flecks in our eye. Zazen has to be, no matter what, completely honest. Please, for all the people here, too—people with much experience—to not depend on that experience and knowledge, but to become open, fresh, and new, completely the thing itself, just as it is!

DAY THREE

When Eno comes to Daiyurei, the ex-general Emmyo comes up to him:

Sutra: When he was about to overtake me I threw the robe and the begging bowl on a rock, saying, 'This robe is nothing but a symbol. What is the use of taking it away by force?' I then hid myself. When he got to the rock, he tried to pick them up, but found that he could not.'

Eno knew he could not escape, so he stopped trying. Knowing that the general was after the robe and the bowl, he put them on an

obvious boulder, and went into the bushes and did zazen. The general found the robe and the bowl on the big boulder, and as he went to take them, Eno called out from the bushes, "These are symbols of truth; they are not something which can be taken away by power." Nevertheless, Emmyo tried to pick them up. But he couldn't move them; the bowl and robe would not budge at all.

This episode is written here in the Platform Sutra, but it is also about our state of mind now. We may be able to go through life and somehow manage that which comes along, but there is something not resolved, something which does not sit right; we can't totally feel that great joy of being alive. The truth here is not the relative truth about health, wealth, fame, or family. In each of us there is something deep. Rinzai said that our only problem is that we don't believe in ourselves completely; in each of us it doesn't sink in completely. Our limbs and senses work fine, yet there is something that does not drop right into its place within. Then as we realized we were unfulfilled we did training. We sat deeply but there was still something missing. To realize this place of nothing missing, nothing lacking whatsoever—or we'll be confused by a word here or a bad vibration there, continually.

Sutra: When he got to the rock, he tried to pick them up, but found that he could not.

Do you really have what it takes to lift these up? If you do, then you can teach the truth of the heavens and earth to everyone, and will not hold onto it at all. Emmyo went to lift them, but they were immovable. He did have one very honest place, but why could he not pick them up with his physical body, in which he had confidence?

In his body he had confidence, but not in his Mind. Some books write here that he was covered with sweat. Emmyo had also been doing training at Yellow Plum Mountain; he had a deep vow inside which brought him to be able to train there.

Sutra: Then he shouted out, 'Lay Brother! Lay Brother! (for the Patriarch

had not yet joined the Order) I come for the Dharma, not for the robe.' Whereupon I came out from my hiding place and squatted on the rock. He made obeisance and said, 'Lay Brother, preach to me, please!'

After trying unsuccessfully to pick up the robe and the bowl, he called out, "Lay Brother! Lay Brother! I'm not here for the robe and bowl, and when they did not move, I understood! You are one who can receive these from Goso Gunin, I am not. Won't you teach me?! My deep vow for this truth longs to be awakened."

Sutra: "Since the object of your coming is the Dharma," said I, "refrain from thinking of anything and keep your mind blank. I will then teach you." When he had done this for a considerable time, I said, "When you are thinking of neither good nor evil, what is at that particular moment, Venerable Sir, your real nature [literally, "original face"]?"

"If you have no interest in just the bowl and robe—the objects—then I will teach you. First, let go all concerns about things external and stop any connection with things that are internal." In our sesshin we're gathered here as well for realizing this state of mind. Inside our mind there are so many thoughts—but don't be caught about an inside or an outside! Become like a tall, firm, wall, that state of mind where there is no possibility for the slightest thought to even begin to enter!

Eno is not telling Emmyo to sit zazen. Although Bodhidharma was sitting himself, he never told people to sit down and do zazen either. Rather, whether sitting or standing or walking, to be in that state of mind of continuing, pure, clear, mind moments. This cannot just be during zazen then letting go of it when we get off the cushion, or it becomes an empty form observed. We have to ripen through the various levels or these words are inapplicable. To let go all of our concerns outside and be free from anything we're caught on inside! Eno is telling Emmyo to sit throughout it

all and then to throw everything away. Eno had been there at Yellow Plum Mountain only eight months, and in the rice-pounding room at that, and yet he was able to help Emmyo in this way to realize that place with no obstructions.

The Patriarchs are teaching the zazen of the Mind, not only of the body. And if we don't do it like this, we'll be left with an unpleasant, insecure feeling. And so we come here and join our energy together, supporting each other in doing this, supporting each others' state of mind. Cut away everything! We have gathered together for that very reason—not to waste this precious time or think about how we'd rather be someplace else. Cut it all, and cut it all immediately!

In this world it may be hardest to imagine liberating murderers. But their time to die is a requirement for them, a definite decision. This is not about time, of course, but about cutting through that world of ideas about it and forms of it, to go right to the essence! That cutting edge is hard to bring together swiftly and all at once. And so we sit and sit and sit and sit. One week of sitting isn't enough even to bring this response speedily, so how will we do it? To always examine that, and with this in mind to bring it forth in all of the 360,000 smallest hair pores, in every single one of our joints in our whole body! With all we are—with our whole mind—to throw ourselves into it completely, as if the zendo is actually right on the palm of our hand! Without zazen we can only talk about letting go all attachments in this way. It has to be actualized, done in a real way—or we are wasting our time here.

Sutra: "Since the object of your coming is the Dharma," said I, "refrain from thinking of anything and keep your mind blank. I will then teach you." When he had done this for a considerable time, I said, "When you are thinking of neither good nor evil, what is at that particular moment, Venerable Sir, your real nature?"

In the Mumonkan [Case 32: A Non-Buddhist Questions the Buddha] it tells as well of a



man of a heretical path coming to a monk who was in fact the Buddha, and then saying, "Without saying a word and without not saying a word, speak the truth!" Until that time, the man had been one who could only think about it in his head. The Buddha then said, "When you are thinking of neither good nor evil, what is, at that particular moment?" Probably Emmyo was in that state of mind of piercing through the heavens and earth, piercing through past, present and future—that true essence that can embrace all of it, everything in the heavens and earth, the zendo, all of the 10,000 things—this place of actualizing the truth. This place where there are no eyes, no ears, no nose, no mouth, no arms, no legs, no inside, no outside, no good, no bad, no attainment, no non-attainment—at once, smack with the heavens and earth, in one layer, completely! Not thinking anything good nor bad, no beginning nor end, not a single shadow throughout the whole universe—right there! It is not about mentally understanding it or learning seventeen hundred koans or reading the 5048 sutras. That is all form and appearance. It has to be the actual essence of this! Our true human quality is actually very clear, without any front or back to it—transparent. But because we have things we add on continually, we have to cut through all of those, and that takes a deep, definite determination and commitment.

Sutra: As soon as he heard this he at once became enlightened.

Emmyo hear this and was enlightened. This is the part to be most thankful for, not that he had read 5048 sutras or learned something well. He was actually enlightened. There had only been a thin skin left, and that can take ten or twenty or thirty years to let go of. Emmyo at once became enlightened; it can happen just like that if we dig in with deepest

不思善不思惡

Fu shi zen fu shi aku

Think not good, think not evil

determination. It can actually happen in this very sesshin. But as Rinzai said, the problem is that we lack this deep belief in ourselves. And that is what obstructs us with our self-conscious awareness.

Here it says simply "As soon as he heard this he at once became enlightened." But in other versions it tells of how he was sweating and weeping and there were tears of joy pouring down his face. Tears are not only for sadness. His whole being was trembling with deep wonder and amazement. If we don't taste this joy—even a little—it will not be the true Buddha Dharma.

There is no religion that can be a true religion without deep joy, without true joy. Then we can live in any circumstance or place and no matter how it is, we live in this joy. We're not just joyful because we are comfortable or praised, but at the very fact of experiencing this precious life within. Today, religions have lost their energy because people don't feel this kind of joy in them. It is not superficial joy, but joy that comes from deep within, bringing deep amazement and wonder. Emmyo was able to experience this.

Sutra: But he further asked, 'Apart from those esoteric sayings and esoteric ideas handed down by the Patriarch from generation to generation, are there any other esoteric teachings?'

"I have truly understood in a very deeply satisfying way. If there is anything else I should know and you can teach me, please do." He had been steeped in deepest wonder and amazement. This was not in a book, or something he had heard from someone else; we have always been endowed with this—always! "If there is anything else," he said, "please tell me that." Not because he was missing something, but he had asked this from a completely different place than where he had previously put the question forward, in the same way as Makakasho Sonja was asked by Ananda when Ananda was finally awakened and he felt that he must ask one step further. And right there was a very important point in how it all went. Makakasho called out his name and Ananda

answered, "Yes!" And then he knew when his older brother disciple said, "Take down the flag at the gate" that this was a sign that this koan was over and had been answered.

Sutra: "What I can tell you is not esoteric," I replied. "If you turn your light inwardly, you will find what is esoteric within you."

"I am not hiding or holding anything esoteric from you." When Makakasho called out, "Anan!" and Anan answered "Yes!" in that place everything was revealed, nothing hidden.

Sutra: "In spite of my staying in Yellow Plum," said he, "I did not realize my self-nature. Now thanks to your guidance, I know it as a water-drinker knows how hot or how cold the water is. Lay Brother, you are now my teacher."

Emmyo then said that although he had been at Goso Gunin's place for many, many years, never had he been able to do this. "But now that I have seen you I have realized the actual truth, that all is esoteric within. It cannot be given to someone else with the mouth, nor understood with the ears. I've understood this deeply now." It has to be done within each of us—and every single person already has it from prior to birth! But because we have so many thoughts and attachments to external things we don't realize what we have inside. We do training for such a long time, but then we still don't remove that last skin. "Training for so long at Yellow Plum Mountain I was still not able to understand this, and now I have been able to see it. You are now my teacher."

Sutra: I replied, "If that is so, then you and I are fellow disciples of the Fifth Patriarch. Take good care of yourself."

Eno answered that he shouldn't be confused about this point, that it was the Dharma that holds everything equally. And within that, they were both disciples of the Fifth Patriarch and of the Dharma. Here is the important point of the Buddha Dharma. The Buddha realized and taught the Dharma, but the

Law, or Dharma, was alive before he had ever realized it. Within that, we are all the same family. You may say that there is someone to be thankful to for helping with this, but ultimately it is all the grace of the Dharma. To take each other's hands and for all of those who have not seen through it yet, to put everything into offering that possibility of understanding to them as well.

"Take good care of yourself! From now on, wherever you go, take best care of yourself!"

Sutra: In answering his question of whither he should go thereafter, I told him to stop at Yuan and to take up his abode in Meng. He paid homage and departed.

Then he told Emmyo to go to this place called Enshu and to stay there, and that it would become clear to him there where he should go in accordance with the Dharma.

Sutra: Sometime after I reached Ts'ao Ch'i. There the evildoers again persecuted me and I had to take refuge in Szu Hui, where I stayed with a party of hunters for a period as long as fifteen years.

This text is from the time of the Sung Dynasty in China. When Emmyo came down off the mountain where he had been with the Sixth Patriarch, he told everyone who was hunting for him that he'd been up there and no matter where he looked he couldn't find the Sixth Patriarch anywhere. Years later, as he continued, Emmyo was renamed Domyo.

These cases—this very one which is also found in the Mumonkan—these are very necessary teachings of the Way and of the lineage taught here. If this last final layer, this thin skin, is not let go of completely, a lasting, dark insecurity will remain. Our delusions are caused by this darkness, and it is the Way of the Dharma to clarify everything. That place where we are not sure—to cut that away! Let go of that! We have our life and our sesshin for clarifying this completely.

If there is anything to be said, it is this: to be able to do what we do completely and totally, and sit completely in each period to where

we are cutting away everything completely! To be determined to cut through all of it! Will this work while we are burning here, hot? Or will we run out without making that deep, determined commitment? We must each see this deeply and clearly within ourselves.

DAY FOUR

After Eno had helped Emmyo realize deep enlightenment, as his teacher Goso Gunin had said in his last wishes, he stayed with hunters for fifteen years, concealed. At the age of about forty, well ripened and now able to live without any difference between his inner life and its outer expression, he left them and went into the city. He had done his post-enlightenment training, chewing well what he had realized. If not for this, then what we say and what we do are contradictory; one cannot cultivate others with a life like that. His teacher had told him not to hurry to go out into the world. So for fifteen years he worked on this and watched for the best time to go. Timing is of the greatest importance, or we will not match with the needs of society. It would have been much more comfortable and easy to have stayed in the mountains and fields, not going into society. But that is not what the agreement had been with his teacher; he had made a deep promise.

Sutra: One day I bethought myself that I ought not to pass a secluded life all the time, and that it was high time for me to propagate the Law. Accordingly I left there and went to Hoshō-ji Temple in Canton.

Then he went to Canton, a big city near where he had been born. Eventually he entered the Sokei Mountain, which is three hours by train north of the city, near the monastery of Unmon Zenji. In the city he heard there was a temple where they were doing the Nirvana Sutra, and he went to hear the teaching.

Sutra: At that time Inju Hoshi, Master of the Dharma, was lecturing on the Maha Parinirvana Sutra in the Temple.

The Nirvana Sutra is a very important sutra in the teachings of the Buddha, although

it's not as important as the Yogyokyo Sutra [Buddha's Legacy Teachings Sutra], which is his last and most important one. To be able to have the opportunity to hear these teachings, Eno went to the place where the Master of Dharma was teaching.

It teaches in this sutra that the body of the Dharma is always eternally existing, and that without mistake, all people without exception are endowed with this same Buddha-nature as that of the Buddha, whether they awaken to it or not. It was this very important teaching which is spread out and seen clearly in this sutra.

Sutra: It happened that one day, when a pennant was blown about by the wind, two bhikkhus entered into a dispute as to what it was that was in motion, the wind or the pennant. As they could not settle their difference I submitted to them that it was neither, and that what actually moved was their own mind.

"It happened that one day, when a pennant was blown about by the wind"—this was a day just before the Master of Dharma, Inju Hoshi, came out to speak. Eno, who had just come out from the mountains and was probably dressed rather roughly, was sitting off in a corner. The wind was blowing that day—it suddenly came up in a gust very strongly—and a flag that was up to announce the Dharma teaching began to blow noisily. This is also a case in the Mumonkan [case 29], where one monk sees a flag blowing and says, "The wind is really blowing hard today!" Another monk argues, "That's not the wind that's blowing, that's the flag that's blowing!" But the flag can't blow without the wind; you can see the flag but not the wind. So there was a debate between two monks, and neither of them would retreat from their position, but they were still lingering in the world of mental discrimination.

Eno came in on the debate and said, "It's not the flag that's moving. And it's not the wind that's moving, either. It's you monks' minds that are moving." Both were deflated, and suddenly silent. The people who had

gathered had taken notice.

Sutra: The whole assembly was startled by what I said, and Bhikkhu Yin Tsung invited me to take a seat of honor and questioned me about various knotty points in the sutras.

Eno had said it was their minds moving, that they shouldn't be moved around so much. We are always chasing after this, chasing after that—flags, wind—spending our awareness on external objects, leaving our inner awareness out. To become that flag, to become that wind, with no place in which to be moved around—or it is all conceptual discussion. To become what we are encountering, completely, without any dualistic idea about it—that direct truth! And the teaching continues, saying to not have any idea within of how it should be like this or it should be like that, but to go beyond those. This is zazen. How simple and obvious it sounds, that it was their minds that moved. But he was speaking from his own experience. The whole assembly could only listen, speechless. They could say nothing in response, they were in such great surprise. This is not something just anyone would say, and soon they were buzzing, talking about what had just happened.

Sutra: ...Bhikkhu Yin Tsung invited me to take a seat of honor and questioned me about various knotty points in the sutras. Seeing that my answers were precise and accurate and that they showed something more than book-knowledge, he said to me, "Lay Brother, you must be an extraordinary man. I was told long ago that the inheritor of the Fifth Patriarch's robe and Dharma had come to the South. Very likely you are the man." To this I politely assented. He immediately made obeisance and asked me to show the assembly the robe and the begging bowl which I had inherited.

Because everyone was talking so busily, Inju Hoshi came to see what was going on. He knew that Eno was not just anyone, and

invited him to sit in a top seat. Then he asked him many profound questions. Seeing it in a positive way, he was honoring Eno. In another way, he was testing him. But Eno's answers were not only excellent, but in accordance with the truth—not with intellectual examples, but from direct experience. At this time, although he was not ordained yet—not with a shaved head—he still did not look so ordinary. Since there was news already from Goso Gunin's place of how there had been a transmission which was taken to the South, they asked him, and he answered positively, with humility and reserve, that it was he who had received the robe and the bowl.

"I have heard that you have the robe and bowl of Bodhidharma. There are many gathered here. Please, teach us. We would be so thankful!

Sutra: He further asked what instructions I had when the Fifth Patriarch transmitted me the Dharma. "Apart from a discussion on the realization of the essence of Mind," I replied, "he gave me no other instruction, nor did he refer to Dhyana and Emancipation." "Why not?" he asked. "Because that would mean two ways," I replied. "And there cannot be two ways in Buddhism. There is one way only."

Eno must have thought that this was the right time and so he happened to be carrying the robe and bowl. He was asked to show them and so he did. And then he was asked about what Buddha Dharma he had been taught by Goso Gunin. Eno answered that there was no particular thing that he was taught, only that there was to be great, deep, enlightenment, and not a teaching of samadhi practice—that human's deepest Mind must be realized directly. The teaching of the line of Bodhidharma made that clear, the teaching of direct perception of that clear nature.

Inju Hoshi continued, demanding, "Why is there no teaching about samadhi practice?" To get good at samadhi and polish this state of mind is not Zen. To realize enlightenment

and also to work simultaneously on samadhi divides it into two. To know this quiet mind first is not what it is about. Rather, only to realize that true Mind directly, where there are no lines of rational and mental deliberation; to see our Mind directly and clearly with no gap, directly perceiving it! Then our mind becomes naturally clear. It is not about a dualistic idea. The Buddha Dharma is not about dividing into two. Entering samadhi and enlightenment are one and the same. There is only one, not two.

In the Vimalakirti Sutra we have the part where it teaches that there is the Dharma of the not-two. To know that Mind of no attachment to birth and death is not the point only, but rather, in this difficult moment to know this one, deep Mind directly. While confused, be completely confused! To think, "I have to awaken sometime to this clear Mind that I don't know yet"—that is a great delusion. To know the truth beyond all delusion, where the subject and object are no longer divided, such as "flag" and "wind," "wind" and flag." It's neither. That whole truth as it is, is one!

Nor is it to think that society and I are two, that there is something to go out and something to save. Being in the middle of that pain and struggle is the whole truth. This is where we can find the experience of the Buddha Dharma which is not-two.

Sutra: He asked what was the only way. I replied, "The Maha Parinirvana Sutra which you expound explains that Buddha-nature is the only way."

Inju Hosshi, who as an inexperienced scholar, asked about what this "one way" is. Since he was asked, Eno had to put it into words, and said, "You were teaching that yourself, and that Buddha-nature that you teach is that clear nature. It is the Buddha Dharma. Not two, there is only one. Eno was teaching that place which is right within the Nirvana Sutra which, while he is a seemingly non-scholastic person, he understands. Everywhere we look and everywhere we go, there is a place of being unmoved yet still in accordance with the Buddha's teaching, in everything he said.

Sutra: “For example, in that sutra, a bodhisattva asked the Buddha whether or not those who commit the four acts of gross misconduct [killing, stealing, carnality and lying], or the five deadly sins [patricide, matricide, setting the Buddhist Order in discord, killing an Arhat, and causing blood to flow from the body of a Buddha], and those who are heretics etc., would eradicate their ‘element of goodness’ and their Buddha-nature. Buddha replied, ‘There are two kinds of ‘element of goodness,’ the eternal and the non-eternal. Since Buddha-nature is neither eternal nor non-eternal, therefore their ‘element of goodness’ is not eradicated. Buddhism is known as having no two ways.”

Eno said that that sutra was teaching that the Buddha told that you could not commit the five deadly sins or you would have to leave the Order. Of course Rinzai says we have to do all of these things in order to realize our true nature. But in the sutra it says that once a bodhisattva asked the Buddha, “If it is said that for these reasons one cannot awaken to the Buddha-nature, how can it be true that all beings are endowed with it? What does this mean?”

Sutra: “Buddha replied, ‘There are two kinds of ‘element of goodness,’ the eternal and the non-eternal. Since Buddha-nature is neither eternal nor non-eternal, therefore their ‘element of goodness’ is not eradicated.

Now Buddhism is known as having no two ways. There are good ways and evil ways, but since Buddha-nature is neither, therefore Buddhism is known as having no two ways.”

For example, today’s volunteers who feed hungry people—this is a transient kind of goodness. When people get hungry and need feeding, they help them. But people are going to stop being hungry and then get hungry again, and then that goodness is gone. Like giving someone a seat on the bus, this kind of goodness does not last. But

to awaken to that clear Mind is of eternal goodness.

Today’s usual social goodness is almost always the temporary kind. The kind which is never forgotten again is rare to find today. So there are two kinds of goodness—the shallow, temporary kind and the eternal, lasting kind. But that true goodness, where there is no such idea as “shallow goodness,” “deep goodness,” “eternal” or “transient”—this is the actual Dharma beyond all of these. This is where the Dharma extends in all the ten directions yet has no form. Then it can become that which fills every corner of the universe—our greatest, deepest, vow, our Buddha-nature which has no shape or form. It comes forth from nothing and so it could have no form. As well, Buddha-nature cannot be destroyed by heinous acts or breaking rules; it is beyond any of that, beyond any idea or concept of birth or death. The Buddha-nature is without two. The Buddha-nature is not good, not evil, not shallow, not eternal.

Sutra: From the point of view of ordinary folks, the component parts of a personality [skandhas] and factors of consciousness [dhatas] are two separate things; but enlightened men understand that they are not dual in nature. Buddha-nature is non-duality.

Personality and society are usually looked at as two, but this is the ignorant view. A wise person knows there is no separation here. Maybe it is the physical body which is sitting on top of the tambuton, but as we ripen we become full and taut and that full tautness pierces through the zendo. Our zazen has to be like this. Of course it is not that way from the beginning. We are aware of having a body and various thoughts. The zendo is a relative location, as are those seven palpable days of an oshesshin. But it is just like blowing up a balloon. We can’t stop until it is totally, completely, full. We can’t stop until that explosion comes. For those who do susokkan, to not open any cracks between the breaths, staying with it all of the time and putting the breath down like fish scales—one after the

next, with no cracks in between! We have to continue this with no breaks, no cracks in it whatsoever, just keeping with it all the time, letting that breath keep going! We continue putting it down like fish scales, one, and before that one is even over, putting down the next one. Also doing the same thing with the koan, so between doing the Mu and the next Mu there are no cracks or breaks. Not cutting or breaking them apart, this is just like blowing up a balloon. As we continue, our ki becomes more and more full and taut, and while our body is only this physically big, we also feel that we are not only filling the zendo up, but piercing right through it and going through the heavens and earth. That state of mind is like a single needle.

We can't be concerned with thoughts of "Is it there yet?" and be in a hurry, either. Filling the heavens and earth, one stimulus comes without fail: The Buddha saw the morning star and was pierced through. For Hakuin, he heard the morning bell and was pierced through. For Kyogen it was the sound of the tile hitting the bamboo when he was pierced through. To feel it—ZAP!—straight on! So that we can see that there was never anything to understand mentally and it cannot be rationally known. It can only be known by direct experience.

Sutra: Inju Hoshi was highly pleased with my answer. Putting his two palms together as a sign of respect, he said, "My interpretation of the sutra is as worthless as a heap of debris, while your discourse is as valuable as genuine gold."

This full, taut Mind, coming and going, is that Buddha-nature, where there is no way any dualistic thought could possibly enter. But we can also not mentally understand this. If we try to, or try to mentally divide it, it is no longer Buddha-nature. This is what Eno was saying to him. Inju Hoshi had never seen it this way before. "We have just been given the living Nirvana Sutra now, and seeing it from there, my talk and interpretations are meaningless. From each and every one of your words spoken there is a great light

radiating!"

In all humans the seeds of crime will never be exhausted, but to give rise to acting on these only happens because we do not know our true nature. The question of the flag and the wind—to go beyond that dualistic view to the one truth, and live in that one truth in our daily life! No matter what a terrible criminal a person might be, when they suddenly realize that true, clear nature, that is true goodness. The source of true liberation for all beings is to awaken—and then to bring this awakening to all beings. This is our responsibility, and to do this we have a sesshin like we're doing right here now, to realize that Buddha-nature and with that, to go back into society is what [the roshi] prays.

DAY FIVE

Sutra: Subsequently Inju Hoshi conducted the ceremony of hair-cutting for me [i.e., the ceremony of Initiation into the Order) and asked me to accept him as my pupil.

Eno went to Canton, to Hossho-ji to hear Priest Inju's teaching on the Nirvana Sutra. There he was recognized as the Sixth Patriarch who had been transmitted to by Goso Gunin, the Fifth Patriarch. Having been recognized, he then taught the true essence of the Nirvana Sutra. Priest Inju Hoshi was even more convinced. "I very well see that you are indeed the Sixth Patriarch. But about the way you look, it is very natural—but for teaching the truth it may sometimes be inconvenient. That Dharma which must be learned from a true teacher who knows the actual truth, to know this going all the way back to Bodhidharma's true teaching—people will be prostrating to that truth. And an appropriate form might be working better for that." At this, Eno was ordained.

But that doesn't mean that there was something special about being ordained. It is not about holding an area or about a particular look. However, there is a deep commitment in that. An ordained person's vow to liberate people in the most dire straits of society—for that, a person who is unmistakably doing what he is doing, to be able to be seen like

that can be very helpful. It is not about a preferred form or an attachment to tradition, but about expressing a vow in a certain way. For this, Eno considered it necessary to then become ordained. Also, a teacher liberating their students is part of this.

Among bodhisattvas, only Jizo Bodhisattva is seen in ordained form. Other bodhisattvas are always in the form of a lay person, wearing jewelry, and this is because enlightenment is not limited to ordained people. It is not about any difference in training as ordained or as lay people; the practice is the same in any case. But for people who look at them, for them to be able to see the difference, even though it is not a special thing to be ordained.

Sutra: Thenceforth, under the bodhi tree I preached the teaching of the Tozan [Tung Shan] School (the School of the Fourth and Fifth Patriarchs, who lived on Mount Tozan).

It was footnoted that it had been New Year's Day when Eno was ordained—on a celebratory day such as is often chosen for an ordination ceremony. Eno felt that it was a good time to begin teaching in accordance with his teacher's request. As had been prophesied, he taught the teachings of Goso Gunin's teacher and Goso Gunin from the Tozan Hermitage and opened up the true teaching of the Dharma, which had come from the Buddha.

Sutra: Since the time when the Dharma was transmitted to me in Tozan, I have gone through many hardships and my life often seemed to be hanging by a thread.

He is saying it this way not to show how hard a life he had, but how he worked it because it was so rare and precious to be able to hear the true Dharma taught. As it says in the Dhammapada, it is so rare and precious to realize human life! We all take it so for granted, but since life of any kind ever began billions and billions of years ago it has continued till today, never exhausted, never stopping once, or it would have been destroyed. From parents to children, from them becoming

parents to more children, never stopping. It is truly a great gift of grace, and rare, to be able to encounter this teaching as well. There are so many other creatures to be born that to be born a human being is very difficult and very unusual. And yet this is not forever; everyone dies. How precious it is to be alive in a life with both birth and death—to be alive there! How precious it is to hear the actual, real, truth! How precious it is to meet a true teacher of that actual truth! Even in the Buddha's time and in his home town, only about one-third of the people who lived there ever heard his teaching. Another one-third had heard of his name. And one-third of the people in his very town had never heard of his name or his teaching. To encounter this truth is very rare, and in order to hear this it also is not so easy.

Eno had been selling firewood himself as a youth. In a town nearby where he lived, he passed by a house where the person who lived there was chanting, "Residing in no place, awakened Mind arises." Hearing that, he deeply understood, and by that understanding his life was completely changed. So he went to Goso Gunin's monastery and was sent for eight months to the rice-pounding room. His body was so small and yet he had to pound the rice for 700 people. Then later, he was chased after by many monks and almost caught and killed when he returned to the South to live with some hunters in the forest. But now he was finally able to share what he had understood and learned. If the truth stays without ever being told by anyone it will be truly terrible. We have this wonderful gift of having a precious human life, and our life is hanging on a thread; we must live it carefully. Don't waste this precious occasion!

Sutra: Today I have had the honor of meeting you in this assembly, and I must ascribe this to our good connection in previous kalpas, as well as to our common accumulated merits in making offerings to various Buddhas in our past reincarnations; otherwise, we should have had no chance of hearing the above teaching of the Sudden School, and thereby

laying the foundation of our future success in understanding the Dharma.

“Today I have had the honor of speaking in front of the politicians, monks and nuns, and many lay people. I have been invited to teach and I have now done so. In receiving so much respect from all of you, I am sure that all of you have struggled greatly to come to today’s teaching as well, and now I can tell this teaching to you and you can hear it.” This is not something which is only suddenly possible. This is because of a long history among all of us. This offering is possible because of this long history, as is your ability to awaken just hearing this truth—the Buddha’s awakening, now alive in all of you. To learn it not by going to the fifty-two different levels, but to suddenly know it, encountering it directly, here, and then to clarify your Mind accordingly. Probably all of you as well have given offerings in the past, which makes this possible.

Sutra: This teaching was handed down from the past Patriarchs and it is not a system of my own invention. Those who wish to hear the teaching should first purify their own mind, and after hearing it they should each clear up their own doubts in the same way as the sages did in the past.

“This was not a teaching of my own invention but a truth which has been relayed down to me from the many before.” Through many, many generations, through teacher to disciple, this place beyond mistake has been recognized and then passed along. It was not Eno’s personal understanding. If it were something only a certain person could understand, then it is not the truth that has been handed down. It isn’t about race or words or personal history. Each person has his own personal history, a culture, a country. But the Buddha Dharma is prior to and beyond all of that. Before any of that comes forth, that is the Buddha Dharma.

That teaching that all sentient beings are essentially Buddha-nature—we borrow that word, “Buddha-nature,” to be the word for what unites all beings. There are some who

commit crimes and make grave mistakes. But even for those people who commit serious crimes, if they, on the spot, realize that true nature directly, they are Buddhas. This is the essence of the Buddha Dharma.

“This teaching of Sudden Enlightenment, if you want to understand it clearly, purify your mind from all distractions and extraneous, noisy, thinking.” If we look at each person as a vessel, if we are already too full of a personal flavor, we cannot hear clearly what we are taught. We have to empty that cup of personal opinion and personal ideas and measurements, or we have no way to really hear it. To empty and thoroughly clean out that cup, and then I can offer it to you. Clean it completely and empty it out, because the Patriarchs are not teaching something that should be memorized or mentally comprehended. But only in accordance with how empty and free of extra thinking we are will we be able to realize this. Only then can we listen and truly realize it—only if we let go of all of our experience in the past and our knowledge. To not rely on any of that. The Buddha’s truth is that all things are originally empty. Before knowing the separation between north, south, east and west—before even being in our mother’s belly—before giving rise to even one single thought, that is the Buddha-nature.

The teaching from the Ancestors is not something difficult if there is nothing held onto at all. We let go of our knowledge, or we will still have an idea of various levels of attainment, or prejudice. When we let go of all of that, we are all, then, equals. We hang onto so much previous personal experience and knowledge and make it hard to realize that teaching of not doing bad things but doing good things. Even if we are not told this, we naturally want to do good things and we naturally don’t want to do bad things, when there is no ego filter. Without any individual stance and rank and ideas we can see and receive this teaching of actual truth. This is the Buddha-nature prior to any preconceived notion of anything at all; this is the world of the Buddha-nature. But if we have preconceived ideas, then we can’t see

this clearly. That is not the Buddha-nature. So if you want to hear it clearly and know it directly, clean out and liberate everything that you hold onto in your mind.

Hearing the Ancients' teaching with clear Mind and without dualistic perceptions and narrowing mind, to see the truth directly! But we then bring in many ideas of what is "dualistic perception," for example. What "without dualistic perceptions" means is to not give any mentally limited idea to it, to return to that Mind where no thoughts obstruct—this Mind of the Ancients, this Mind of the Buddha. In this there is no difference from the Mind of the Patriarchs.

People hold onto their own thoughts from their own history, their own struggle, their own opinions. From within that there are so many problems from the past. We all want to resolve these. But it is not that our mind cannot open until we resolve every one of those past problems. We all have dark, unclear and murky places in our mind, but to believe and know that the Buddha-nature is like the sun. This is not something that we look to find there—not a something there—but to be that sunshine completely! As the sun rises and shines on everything the darkness disappears. Then everything is clear, right smack in front of our eyes. Houses, rivers, mountains—each thing is high when it should be high, and low when it should be low, as is appropriate. And the sun is shining equally on every single thing. And the sun does not only shine when there are no clouds at all. It shines even when there are many clouds. Even above dark clouds it shines on. To let go of all of our thoughts to where we have nothing to hold onto at all—this is zazen. To do zazen with a gloomy face, holding onto many thoughts, is not real zazen. Rather, to let go of everything we hold onto—this is the

無住無往亦無來

Mu nen mu so mata mu jū

*Without thinking, without form, and
also without location*



subtle flavor of zazen. But because we are so used to holding onto something, we have counting of the breath, koans, mantras—all for realizing that place where there is not one speck to be held onto at all. This is the truth of the Buddha-dharma.

Sutra: At the end of the address,
the assembly rejoiced, made
obeisance and departed.

They heard the Sixth Patriarch's teaching about how to clarify their Mind and directly realize the Buddha-nature. The monks, nuns, laypeople, officers, hearing this, understood well, and were gladly accepting and receiving it well. They told him their appreciation, and departed. This is written in the form of a sutra, which always ends this way. This is also true in everything we do in our zazen, in our samu. No matter what we are doing, to rejoice in the doing of it. But if we are obstructed and dark in mind we can't know that joy. We have to let go of that obstruction, then joy will naturally overflow and surge through us. For all of us to know this place where we can rejoice we have to throw away all of those stuck places!

Chapter Two: On Prajna

DAY SIX

Sutra: Next day Prefect Wei asked the Patriarch to give another address.

From today we read the second chapter, "On Prajna." At the end of the last chapter, in accordance with the orders of his teacher, the Sixth Patriarch taught for the first time to the many gathered there. Prefect Wei asked him again to teach, and at that request he complied. Without a request he would not speak, and he always spoke in accordance with those gathered. Originally there is nothing of Dharma to say, but if necessary in response to a request, he would talk. So it was that in accordance with tradition, he climbed into the high seat to give a sermon.

Sutra: Thereupon, having taken his seat and asked the assembly to purify their mind collectively, and to recite the Maha Prajnaparamita-sutra, he gave the following address:

The very first thing he said was from the Diamond Sutra—the sutra by which he was enlightened when he very first heard it: "Everyone, please give a great cleaning to all the past knowledge and conditioning you've ever gathered. Give up all preconceived notions. It is not about gathering more memory and knowledge, but rather, about opening our wisdom.

In Buddhism, knowledge and wisdom are classified in completely different ways. Knowledge is considered to be something we read and learn from others, while wisdom is what we already have—and have had from the origin. To know it we only have to let go of the more superficial knowledge and conditioning which conceals it. If we have a beautiful pottery plate, for example, and this is loaded high with wonderful food, we won't be able to see that plate. We have to put the food somewhere else and wash that plate in order to see it.

He had asked the audience to let go of whatever they were holding onto inside. Since everyone loves what they are holding onto, we need a way to do this, and Eno told the

audience to focus on Maha Prajna Paramita. As with people today, it is often taught to chant and repeat "Namo Amida Butsu," "Namo Myo Renge Kyo," or "Namo Jizo Bosatsu." Nowadays we also teach susokkan or koans, but here at this time, he taught the audience to go beyond any mentation and to repeat this sutra until they forgot everything else. It has to be done with our whole mind and body or it won't purify.

Sutra: "Learned Audience..."

He was not speaking in the sense of the learning of mental knowledge. Rather, it was about that wisdom with which we are all endowed. Some of us are awakened to it; that's called being a Buddha. Some of us are not there yet, but we are all "Learned Audience." Listen carefully!

Sutra: Learned Audience, the wisdom of enlightenment [bodhi-prajna] is inherent in every one of us.

"Wisdom of enlightenment" — these are basically the same: wisdom and enlightenment. As it says in the sutra, to practice Prajna Paramita is to give life to the Buddhas of all three realms of past, present and future. This is the most precious thing for all people. Everyone is endowed equally with a high quality, excellent character; this splendid Buddha-nature is, without exception, in each and every one of us; there is not one person who is not born from there. People say that humans are all equal and splendid beings, but if there is not this true nature in each person, how could one say that? It is because we all have Buddha-nature we can say that in that way we are all equal. "The wisdom of enlightenment is inherent in every one of us." Everyone! The wisdom of enlightenment is within us each from the origin! As Rinzai says, "In this five-foot lump of red flesh there's a True Person of No Rank who is coming in and out all the time. If you haven't seen it yet, see it now!" One person of truth, of no rank—the same thing as the wisdom of enlightenment!

In that body full of desires and distractions there is also a place of no self-conscious enlightenment whatsoever—no ego coloring,



no filter at all. When in our ears it becomes hearing, in our eyes it becomes seeing, in our nose it becomes smelling, in our mouth it becomes tasting, in our body it becomes feeling, in our hands it becomes holding something, in our feet it becomes carrying us. Inside us it is glad and sad and hot and cold and outside of us it is the mountains, the rivers, the sun, the moon and the stars. This Person of No Rank—do you see this? Joshu changed his kimono by calling it Mu: “In a dog is there a Buddha-nature or not?” To this question, he answered “Mu!” [Mumonkan case 1]

On our physical body there is a name, a place for each of us. There is the name of Shodo, or Daichi, or Doyu, or Dosho; people each have a name. But if right now there was to be a dog barking, would it be that name that heard the dog barking? We all hear the dog in the same way, so it couldn't be many and various names such as Shodo who hear the dog. It's not the name Shodo who sees that red flower blooming outside. Although people have different names and different histories there is a place within each of us which is prior to that, uniting all of us and the same in all of us; it's that place in each person which sees the flower the same way. The Buddha hearing a dog and us hearing a dog is the same sound of “bow-wow.” Hearing a bird we hear “chirp-chirp.” In each of us is a Mind that is the same in everyone, and there is also an individual mind. Yet these are not different nor separated. That mind which is influenced by cause and effect is a temporary one, concerned with “Are you making a fool of me?” “Are you angry with me?” “Are you ignoring me?” These are all in there along with this Mind which unites each and every one of us. No matter what person, we have this same unified Mind; the mind of individual qualities then comes later. This

眞性自用一切眞

Bussho onozukara mochi iru issai no shin

*Buddha Nature is inherent in every one
of us*

Mind which every person has from birth is given the name "Buddha-nature."

In old China there is a famous story about Kyogen Chikan Zenji, who was very sharp; he was known to be so intelligent that if he heard one word he would understand ten. He trained first with Hyakujo, and when Hyakujo died he later did training with his older brother disciple, Isan no Reiyu. Isan no Reiyu knew very well how brilliant Kyogen was. When Kyogen was wanting to do sanzen with him, Isan no Reiyu told him he would only do it on the condition that Kyogen would do as he was told, and that he wouldn't just spread out his knowledge. To this Kyogen answered, "Yes, I am plain and open to exactly what you teach me." Then Isan no Reiyu said, "I don't want to hear in sanzen anything about what books you've read or what you've heard from other people. Don't bring me anything you've learned from someone else. Rather, bring me that place from before North, South, East and West are divided, from before you know colors and letters, from before you were in your mother's belly—from there, say one thing! Speak clearly from that essence!"

Kyogen of course was brilliant and knew so many things. He brought in many words, one after the next, but Isan no Reiyu wouldn't respond. "You read that here!" "You heard that there!" One year, two years went by and he refused everything Kyogen brought in. Kyogen went through everything he'd written in any of his notebooks and could find nothing that would satisfy Isan no Reiyu, until finally Kyogen said, "I have nothing to answer you with. I have no more possibility of bringing in anything to say. Please, tell me the answer!" To this, Isan no Reiyu said, "I could tell you the answer, but then it would be my answer. It wouldn't be an answer which has come from you." At this, Kyogen was done in completely. Everything he'd ever learned was useless. He decided that doing this Zen practice was meaningless, and that he must not have the potential or karmic affiliation for it. He felt that he could never put on a kesa [the ceremonial robe of an ordained person] and give a Dharma talk in front of others, and so he left in tears, descending the mountain

of Isan no Reiyu. And yet this question about "this place before there's any division of North, South, East and West," this question of "What is it before we are in our mother's belly?"—this question stuck with him, and instead of training with Isan no Reiyu he went to do the cleaning of the cemetery where Nan'in no Echu Kokushi was buried, on a mountain called Hakugai where he had been living for forty years. Every day, Kyogen swept and cleaned and made the cemetery look neat. And one day, when throwing rubble away as always, he was discarding a tile in the rubble. And suddenly that tile hit the bamboo with a great "clink!" At that sound, Kyogen was completely reborn; for the first time, he had encountered his true self. With great joy, he lit some incense in the direction where Isan no Reiyu was, and prostrated to that teacher who had so kindly continued in his strictness, making this day possible. For this he had a great, deep, appreciation, greater than even that for his mother. His mother had given him birth into a human form, but it was to Isan no Reiyu that he was grateful for his true awakening.

He took his poem of deep understanding to Isan no Reiyu to see if that was in fact to be confirmed. How he had heard that sound was written in the poem, and how he was able from that to know the true, clear, Mind. This was something that was given to him not because he had done training; this clear Mind was something he had always been endowed with from birth.

We have so many things and we are always carrying them, so we don't see and feel directly. We see or hear a bird, or see a flower, and we immediately want to name it or analyze it, not just becoming naked in that pure perception prior to even God's imagining of this world and all beings—an awareness born from here. There is no other way to live truly than to live in this way, before our body's birth, piercing through time and space—that eternal energy which is in each and every moment! Not to wrinkle up our faces and be so anxious doing our zazen, but to realize deeply that clear Mind that we all already have! To know this! But to

know this we have to have the determination to do anything that we have to do in order to realize it, even if it means not sleeping all night. Teaching us in this direction is the kindness of the Sixth Patriarch.

Sutra: It is because of the delusion under which our mind works that we fail to realize it ourselves.

Because a thought comes in like a wisp, we make that thought into a habit. While having this clear nature we color it with that thought, and then we get confused, not clear what is ego and what is not ego. What are we making up? What is real? Because of attachments we gather delusions, then we add our own thoughts and get stuck. So we have to realize that true nature directly. Kensho is not seeing something special, it's about our seeing our own true self clearly, where that Light perceives Light.

Sutra: It is because of the delusion under which our mind works that we fail to realize it ourselves, and that we have to seek the advice and the guidance of enlightened ones before we can know our own essence of Mind. You should know that so far as Buddha-nature is concerned, there is no difference between an enlightened person and an ignorant one.

There are many kinds of people in the world, but there is no difference in this: All people have true nature equally, whether it's a man, a woman, a rich person, a poor person. In this whole world there is no difference; each person is endowed with this clear Mind.

Sutra: What makes the difference is that one realizes it, while the other is ignorant of it.

While there is no difference, it is a matter of whether we are awakened to this or not. A person who is ignorant, when they awaken to it becomes a Buddha. When a person is ignorant of it, then they are not a Buddha. If we are confused and deluded, our vision becomes very narrow and rigid, and we can only see our small self. So we are then an ignorant one. When we awaken we can see

wider. We can see everything, and not only from the point of view of our small self. We can see others' suffering, and everything that is going on, as well.

Sutra: Now, let me talk to you about Maha Prajna Paramita, so that each of you can attain wisdom.

"Now for everyone here I will teach this Maha Prajna Paramita." What you know and what you can learn in books and from others is always knowledge. Here we will learn true wisdom. Listen well. Listen with an aligned, quiet mind.

Sutra: Learned Audience, those who recite the word 'prajna' the whole day long do not seem to know that prajna is inherent in their own nature.

Everyone speaks about prajna but we don't know what it means. It's about each of us, but we repeat it so automatically, not realizing that this means us.

Sutra: But mere talking on food will not appease hunger, and this is exactly the case for these people. We might talk on sunyata [the Void] for myriads of kalpas, but talking alone will not enable us to realize the essence of Mind, and it serves no purpose in the end.

To merely understand these words mentally is like reading a menu and never tasting the food's spices and true flavors. Even though we repeat these words automatically forever, we will never have a deep awakening with that. And it serves no purpose in the end; ultimately it will make no one's belly full. From here on is taught the essence of prajna paramita, but because if it is taken mentally it will make a kindness into an injury, he has very carefully introduced it by saying how it must be heard and received with a clarified Mind.

Sutra: The word 'mahaprajnaparamita' is Sanskrit, and means 'great wisdom to reach the opposite shore [of the sea of existence].'

What this means is reaching to the shore of



all-embracing wisdom.

Sutra: What we have to do is put it into practice with our mind; whether we recite it or not does not matter. Mere reciting it without mental practice may be likened to a phantasm, a magical delusion, a flash of lightning or a dewdrop. On the other hand, if we do both, then our mind will be in accord with what we repeat orally. Our very nature is Buddha, and apart from this nature there is no other Buddha.

This has to be not just mentally understood, but put to use, from morning till night and from night until morning, always repeating it wholeheartedly. It has to be done in a way in which it is not just lip service! We have to give ourselves to it, pouring ourselves into the repeating of it!

We need to let go of all of this knowledge which we gather, not adding it on. To realize this wisdom, letting go of it is what has to be done. And only then, after we have thrown it away and thrown it away, and thrown it away completely, can we know this deep wisdom clearly and directly. That is the short cut to realizing great wisdom. And for this, the Sixth Patriarch has offered that to repeat mahaprajnaparamita is the way to go about doing this.

To use *maka hanya haramitsu* [the Japanese pronunciation of this phrase] is to continue, whether we are sleeping or walking or sitting or standing, to bring all of it into becoming completely these words—to continue onward in all moments. As we exhale, it is *makahanyaharamitsu*, as we stand, the same, as we walk, the same; as we eat, as we work, it is *makahanyaharamitsu*. Looking at the flowers, hearing the birds singing—if there is

般若從自性而生

Hannya wa jisho yori shozu

Prajna is inherent in one's own nature

the slightest bit of any intellectual intrusion, we again return to that. From morning until night, from night until morning, we continue, always, consistently.

This is the Sixth Patriarch's way of offering a koan. The koan practice was not developed yet, so this was used as a very important way of directly encountering and experiencing the true Mind.

Our five senses, our whole body, every bit of our consciousness, we throw all of it into realizing directly this clear Mind, by using makahanyaharamitsu. Yet, at the same time, we can't just repeat these words with our mouth only; it has to be the mind and body becoming one in the doing of this. If it does not go deeply within, it is useless. From the tops of our heads to the bottoms of our feet, every single bit of it becomes these words! In this way, whatever we are doing, all of it is thrown into becoming makahanyaharamitsu, and all of our information and conditioning we are able to let go. It is our consciousness becoming purified and clarified.

It is humans who have named flowers yellow or white, or some other color. In fact, all of those versions of awareness are only invented and not the thing itself. If we hear "bow-wow", we think it's a dog. If we hear "chirp, chirp," we think it is a bird. But that is only information, ideas about something. This sound is not a dog or a bird. In chanting makahanyaharamitsu there is not a place for such discrimination, not even a speck of it; there is not an idea about it. As our essence becomes more and more clarified by continuing makahanyaharamitsu, our conditioning flakes away. Our idea that things have to be done this way or that way, we are able to let go of that. We may look like a fool—being told to go right, we go right, being told to go left, we go left—but in fact, our ideas which have been so self-controlled, thinking that being self controlled is superior—this is an even greater problem than becoming a fool. Thinking that we have to control ourselves, we live always in an idea about that, and of course, being caught on that idea brings becoming un-self-controlled.

This is why, while taking care of others—being caregivers for sick or physically challenged people—we look down on them because we believe that being in strong self control is advanced; since they can't do that, we look down on them as being inferior, and we miss seeing their true nature, which is equal in all people. We can't, in this way, really care for people if we don't have true respect for all beings—and not just humans, but also animals and plants as well. If we don't have a deep sense of their greater equality, we cannot know the truth. It has to become clear that flowers and trees are also manifesting this true nature, and without knowing that, we can't truly care for others.

Eno is not saying that we should do zazen, but that all day long to repeat makahanyaharamitsu like this—to become it with everything we do all day long. Then there is no need to be concerned that we are busy and can't come for sesshin. Do it as we do everything in our daily life. Some people will say that we can't do what we have to do and complete this at the same time, but to do it even as we chop wood, or clean floors! It's not about the words of it. As we welcome guests, our whole body is repeating this. Of course it can't be done only orally, but it has to begin there. As we repeat it with energetic focus we finally lose all track of our physical body; we have no more sense of our body, and it begins repeating us. And we continue.

Sutra: What is Maha? It means 'great.' The capacity of the Mind is as great as that of space.

If we're going to recite it we need to know what it means; Maha means "great." Repeating it without a gap, we then experience that full, taut place where everything is pierced through and we are standing throughout the heavens and earth—not only to the North and South Poles, but to the furthest reaches of this galaxy! To the edges of the Milky Way! Not just complaining and bearing it grimly on our cushion in the zendo, but to throw yourself away completely, until you become one with this and there is no more division, only that huge, great, Mind! Our nature is

Buddha, and apart from this Buddha there is no other Buddha. Many Buddhas are named, but there is only one—that essence where one body and Mind are together and not moved around by anything. For all Buddhas, Mind and body are one with no dualistic perception remaining. The world and I are one, and there is no seeing between—only, to be able to realize this place where there is no division.

Sutra: It is infinite, neither round nor square, neither great nor small, neither green nor yellow, neither red nor white, neither above nor below, neither long nor short, neither angry nor happy, neither right nor wrong, neither good nor evil, neither first nor last.

It continues to where there is no difference whatsoever—no difference in skin color, in up and down. No difference in ranks, no difference in heights or falling short—no meaning in any of those differences. This is all about the description of phenomena, and everything that is phenomena will die anyway. "...neither angry nor happy, neither right nor wrong, neither good nor evil, neither first nor last"—when we become this state of mind there is no more glad or sad, good or bad, head nor tail. None of any of these! Just all of the heavens and earth as one, solid "Mu!" with nothing cutting through it whatsoever.

Sutra: All Buddha ksetras [lands] are as void as space.

So then one asks, "Where is God living in all of this, and where will we find the Promised Land here?" They are all held right in our bellies. That huge, great Mind—this is the Truth.

Sutra: Intrinsically our transcendental nature is void and not a single

心量广大如虚空

Shin ro kōdai kokū no gotoshi

The capacity of mind is as great as that of space



dharma [thing] can be attained. It is the same with the essence of Mind, which is a state of 'absolute void' [i.e., the voidness of non-void].

We are all born from here, like little bits of dust flying around, dropping down. We all get dressed up and look so fine and think we're walking so fancy in town. But after all, what are we but tiny bits of dust flying around? Our huge Mind is such a great expanse—don't be confused and deluded in this! There is no one who has ever been born from anywhere else. Babies are born completely without fear, coming into this earth. Even if they are born into a house where there is only one thin paper wall between this house and the next door one, or if they're born into a great mansion, it's all the same.

Sutra: Learned Audience, when you hear me talk about the Void, do not at once fall into the idea of vacuity. It is of the utmost importance that we should not fall into this idea, because when a person sits quietly and keeps their mind blank they will abide in a state of 'Voidness of Indifference.'

The Sixth Patriarch was most against the kind of zazen where one just sits there placidly, not thinking about anything in particular. He said that this is the zazen of the heretical path, and not the Way of Sudden Enlightenment. Rather, to sit with energy in our whole body and mind. We have eyes in order to see, we have ears in order to hear, a mouth in order to taste, a nose in order to smell. We have a body in order to be able to feel. Then to say that we should not hear or not feel—that would be eternally useless, and is not the zazen of the Sixth Patriarch. His is the zazen of the Maha, extending throughout the heavens and earth. We are always engaging so much with the external world that our inner essence becomes diluted. We check on our car and see if it's full of gas and the tires are worn or not, and if the shocks are right and if the engine sounds correct. Check this with our sitting, as well; we have to make sure that our sitting is being done in the right way. But like a car that's built for running, we

are not built for sitting still always. We can talk about someone who is always polishing their car so beautifully, and it just sits there and they're never using it. That's not really called taking care of a car. To keep it in best condition, the very best way is to use it. A deflated, dull mind is not the point. Rather, to be able to move without a hair's breadth of separation or hesitation. And we never know when that will be. If the need arises, we move immediately, spontaneously.

It can turn easily into bragging. Some will hear this and want to understand it only with their heads, and not experience it. Then they will brag, and if they do, they will turn their backs on the responsibility of giving to those in society. This is all ego, and we cannot perceive it in this way. If we hear this and think that we are all and everything, or fall into a state of nihilism, that is not the Zen of the Sixth Patriarch. He says this clearly: It's not the teaching of the Buddhas and the Patriarchs.

First we have to let go of all those caught, fixed, attached places. And then with that full, taut, Mind that extends throughout the universe, beyond any differences, we have to change the flavor of that place where there is no seeing of inside and outside. But we can't sit down there either. As with the Buddha, who saw the morning star, or when the morning bell was heard, or when the sound of the tile hitting the bamboo was heard—that place will be touched and pierced through. And from within it will expand everywhere; a joyous new birth of life energy is experienced or it is not the true Buddha Dharma. And then we need to be able to realize this deeply and continue it, letting go of all of those attachments to this place.

For each and every person, to not waste this precious opportunity, but as Eno, the Sixth Patriarch, says, to do it meticulously and with our feet firmly on the ground! To continue, always!

DAY SEVEN

Eno teaches about Maha, which means "great," not only with the usual meaning of "enormous," but also with the quality of "all-

embracing” and “most advanced.” And that state of mind has to be experienced as well.

Sutra: Learned Audience, the illimitable Void of the universe is capable of holding myriads of things of various shape and form, such as the sun, the moon, stars, mountains, rivers, worlds, springs, rivulets, bushes, woods, good men, bad men, dharmas pertaining to goodness or badness, deva planes, hells, great oceans, and all the mountains of the Mahameru.

All of the 10,000 things, and yet still spacious! Springs, oceans, waterfalls, grasses, trees, forests, and more; good people, bad people, heavens and hells—all of it are swallowed up without any narrowness whatsoever felt within! Our Mind includes all the myriad things, and yet we never sense any lack of space. The sounds of water, of talking, the waterfalls—all noises come in and yet we never feel any lack of space because after each sound, after each fragrance, we don't linger with it. It goes. Our legs hurt, but after kinhin we don't even feel it, and don't think about it any more. “Oh, great, all-embracing Mind! The thickness of the earth is impossible to measure, yet the Mind upholds the earth. The brilliance of the sun and the moon can't be measured, but the Mind is what gives life to that brilliance of the sun and the moon. From Mind the four seasons turn, the sun and moon keep revolving from Mind. Oh, great, all-embracing Mind!” Everything we perceive, it all fits within the Mind.

Sutra: Space takes in all these, and so does the voidness of our nature. We say that the essence of Mind is great because it embraces all things, since all things are within our nature. When we see the goodness or the badness of other people we are not attracted by it nor repelled by it nor attached to it—so that our attitude of mind is as void as space. In this way, we say our Mind is great. Therefore we call it ‘Maha.’

There are people in this world whom we like and whom we don't like, but we bow down

without attachment and without avoidance—not disliking, not being attached. If that Mind is full and open, then no matter what problem comes up, it is like reflecting it in a mirror; it is all only a reflection. A bad person or a good person become just reflections in a mirror. Compliments, insults, winning something, losing something, sickness—even death—all of these, only reflections in a mirror. This unengaged, uncaught Mind is Maha, or great—not the words of it but a zazen state of mind. Our original nature from birth is this very enormous Mind. And we accept it in zazen, not to add on knowledge or get small and trivial or get caught or stuck. That is too foolish. Eno knows, and is first teaching us this meaning of Maha.

Sutra: Learned Audience, what the ignorant merely talk about, wise people put into actual practice with their Mind.

People who are wise will experience this; so many only read or study it and think about the mental meaning of “Maha” or “great.” But a person of wisdom will constantly cultivate that state of mind. What is that state of mind of Maha? We have to walk it firmly.

Sutra: There is also a class of foolish people who sit quietly and try to keep their mind blank. They refrain from thinking of anything and call themselves ‘great.’ On account of their heretical view we can hardly talk to them.

People who are not awakened sit blankly and call that zazen, saying that they are void and empty within. “Since there is nothing there,” they say, “it must be ‘great.’” They say that just sitting is enlightenment. These are people who have no experience of what they are talking about. They say that everything is empty so that when we die there is nothing left—as if somehow they might know this. These people are irrelevant to Zen and there is no need to speak to them; they are not practicing zazen. And there are those who cling to form and think they will exist eternally, depending on those forms and relying on endlessly reborn souls which are

always to be there. These two points of view were looked upon by the Buddha as heretical views. People saying not to see, hear, or feel—he had no time for ideas like this.

In our living zazen we are not thinking about anything but we are full and taut. Not caught on what we see and hear and with no thoughts to be caught on, our Mind is full, clear and transparent, taut with energy. With one ring of the bell we respond from the bottom of our heart. If not that, then it's the same as being a dead person, murky and thinking about any old thing, sitting there, feeling anything we want to with our eyes closed. Rather, to extend throughout the heavens and earth, drinking down everything! Not flaccid and numb, not dark and dull, but bright!

Rinzai also said, "The source is one life energy dividing into six rays of light which radiate throughout the whole universe." Bright and clear, this life energy divides into six great rays of light. And that is why we hear the clappers and the clapper sound sounds right through our whole body. That light appears right in front of us, in front of our eyes! We become that light, we are born as that light—born as one bright light divided into six senses! This is how Rinzai says it. And this awareness fills the whole, entire universe. This is living zazen.

Sutra: Learned Audience, you should know that the Mind is very great in capacity, since it pervades the whole dharmadhatu [the universe].

And it is not only just big. It is truly huge in capacity as well. This state of mind is so huge that we can put the whole earth on our palm; it is as if Mount Rainier is sitting right on our sitting cushion! The winter chill wind blows right through our body, and without resistance, we let it; this not a matter of being resistant and stopping something.

When doing zazen we are really liberated from thinking, not because we are making such efforts not to think, but when our essence is deep we have no thoughts to hold onto. When that essence is superficial and shallow our head is like a beehive which has been stuck with a stick. Repeating without a break that mahaprajnaparamita until we become

huge and quiet and full, we have nothing at all there to be thinking about. It's not about closing our eyes and sitting with a numbed body and mind, but about responding immediately to whatever comes—our true, vividly alive state of mind. As we approach the dining room, are we walking towards this place full of thoughts of the next meal? Or are we empty and clear? With that state of mind we do samu and our work so easily!

Sutra: When we use it, we can know something of everything, and when we use it to its full capacity we shall know all. All in one and one in all. When our Mind works without hindrance, and is at liberty to 'come' or to 'go,' then it is in a state of 'prajna.'

We are able to know the universe from seeing a single flower. In each tiny pebble we can find the whole, entire, truth. Of course poems and poetry can be born from here. All of this is created from our living zazen, which touches our eyes, touches our ears. It cuts through everything, and from here our wisdom is born. As we see a single flower, all of the truth is clear, not by analyzing it as a scientist, but by becoming it completely. All the things—grasses, trees, stars and moon—are one and the same beyond any rational thought.

Our zazen and our state of mind are free, as in the way where it's written in the Zazen Wasan, "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 and dancing we are the voice of the Dharma." Whether we're in the zendo or walking or in samu we become it completely with no inserted extra thoughts at all. To say "Good morning" with our whole being—but not to be stuck on doing that and stay there. Every moment and every place we continue and let go of what has just happened, born in that one instant and then letting go of it! Like water which forms the shape of the vessel in which it is put—it could become a cup, it could become a bucket, it could become a vase. This is the way things are free in prajna.



Maha is great, deep, hugeness, and that which can fill whatever it is going into, freely, is prajna.

Even if we end up on the brink of death or in a great crisis or in some difficult moment, we should not feel weightiness; weightiness comes from the ego. When we receive prajna we become as if weightless. To taste this is to taste the Maha prajna. No matter what terrible circumstances we might find ourselves in, even life-threatening circumstances, or terrible, difficult circumstances, to have the state of mind to accept and receive them is the meaning of Maha prajna.

Sutra: Learned Audience, all prajna comes from the essence of Mind and not from an exterior source. Have no mistaken notion about that.

This Maha prajna is not something we receive from outside. We already have it. And this is why analyzing awareness and trying to get something that we don't have is not the point. We all have this same Mind, and when we're in the same crisis, some may feel this hugeness there while some may feel small and threatened. It is about whether we can accept whatever comes exactly as it is or not. We have to not get small. In each and every moment, to see this place clearly!

Sutra: This is called 'Self-use of the True Nature.' Once the Tathata [the essence of Mind] is known, one will be free from delusion forever.

Our state of mind's essence—will it see things as true, or as not true? That is up to the essence of our state of mind; this is not something that can be decided outside of our Mind. All of it is one truth. And what is that? There is in truth no world other than Mind because all things are transient although they seem to be lasting. Mountains, rivers—is there anything eternal or real? There is only that encountering with

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Issai soku ichi, Ichi soku issai

All in one and one in all

each other or things in every single second. If we cut everything else away sharply, like cutting through a fresh daikon, slicing it, this is the essence of our Mind. In doing zazen it is not about maintaining or trying to maintain a same state of mind. That is not zazen or a living state of mind. A living state of mind will not come forth from sitting, trying to sustain something. This is why we have the beginners do *susokkan*—to be able to know this life energy in every single second. With everything we are we do that breath until we cut completely at the most final end. This breath counting for each person is something that they have to master first, to be able to know how to cut away all thoughts, concepts and arguments. This is about how we perceive and see from the state of mind we realize from doing that.

Sutra: Since the scope of the Mind is for great objects, we should not practice such trivial acts as sitting quietly with a blank mind. Do not talk about the Void all day without practicing it in the Mind.

There is no form but there is this functioning in our Mind. No matter how we see it we include everything in that we see each and every thing as truth. The essence is clear, and our function embraces all things. It's not about never saying anything or that we shouldn't see or hear.

We shouldn't repeat automatically, or else there is no meaning to the doing of it. Rather, to do it without waste, one drop after the next, realizing this huge, sharp, state of mind completely. This is Zen. This is the Maha prajna.

Sutra: One who does this may be likened to a self-styled king who is really a commoner. Prajna can never be attained in this way, and those who behave like this are not my disciples.

To say how much you understand—to brag—will always bring problems for others. The Sixth Patriarch said to not to call those his disciples. The Sixth Patriarch is teaching us clearly about Maha prajna.

Today, as I see it in this sesshin, people are realizing a lot of full tautness. Some are also experiencing obstruction with physical challenges, but that is neither good nor bad. Everyone is sitting so wholeheartedly! If you are hitting problems, always return to basics, and see what's happening objectively—and don't give up. Rather, tenaciously continue, one step at a time, not being in a hurry but to do it carefully. Not to twist and force your body, but to learn your own body style as well. Seeing this will then bring forth this deeply seeing wisdom which we are all endowed with originally. In this way our breathing is born, not produced. Not to bring unnecessary knowledge into it and force your body; that will be more painful, and that is not zazen. It is fine to read books, but don't depend on them. Rather, see your own body clearly, keeping it heavy at the bottom and light at the top, and sit according to the best way for you. One drop, one drop, one breath, one breath done naturally, and eventually it will become full, taut energy—even within a single day. Please, don't get lax in your efforts.

Sutra: Learned Audience, what is prajna? It means 'Wisdom.' If at all times and in all places we steadily keep our thought free from foolish desire, and act wisely on all occasions, then we are practicing prajna.

OSESSHIN 2001-09, DAY ONE

Today we will continue talking about prajna, or wisdom—but not knowledge-variety wisdom, which comes after we are born and is stuck on later. Wisdom is what we are all endowed with from birth onward, from our original Mind. This kind of wisdom, even into Chinese, isn't easy to translate, so they call it "hannya." This is the working of deep Mind.

We have so many experiences since birth, and that gives us much knowledge. But wisdom is within direct perception. Children are more advanced at this than adults; adults always add on extra thinking, but children are truly naïve and simple. "How old are you?" "I don't

know." "Where is your house?" "I forget." It can seem that they are making fools of people, but they really forgot, and they don't know because they're so busy playing and being fully involved in this present moment. Therefore there is the saying that a child's mind is very close to a patriarch's mind. One monk asked Master Tozan, "What is the Buddha?" Master Tozan answered, "Three pounds of flax." It was morning and the early morning market was opening in the temple yard. People's harvests were being traded and the temple was having its harvest shared there. "What is Buddha?" "Three pounds of flax." Most ordinary and obvious, right in front of our eyes.

In Kyoto in the olden days in the part of Kyoto called Togano there was a priest, Myo-E. In his garden there was blooming a purple flower. Priest Myo-E was in tears, and his disciple came over and asked if there was something wrong with him, to which he answered with the poem,

Look at this flower's deepest purple!
Who dyed it such a rich color?!
So mysterious, so incomprehensible,
so impossible to understand!
Right in this flower we have the whole
of the Buddha's 5048 sutras,
The whole teaching of the Dharma!

Five hundred years ago there was a priest named Kitano Sodo who went to the prisons and met with the inmates there. He would gassho to them and say sincerely how hard it must be for them. This was the greatest of any possible Dharma talks. As he went and saw them all, each one was in tears.

"The color of the ridge, the sounds of the valley—all of this is the voice of the Buddha's teaching." This is how Hakuin said it. The mountains, which go from green to red—these colors! The river's voice! As they are, the Buddha's teaching, the Buddha speaking. If we can hear that and see it—right there is Buddha's wisdom!

Sutra: If at all times and in all places we steadily keep our thought free from foolish desire, and act wisely on

all occasions, then we are practicing prajna. One foolish notion is enough to shut off prajna, while one wise thought will bring it forth again.

Adults' wisdom always wants to judge and criticize, but true, deep wisdom accepts the whole thing exactly as it is. This wisdom, all year long to continue this, always clear and pure in Mind, receiving things exactly as they are—that practice of deepest wisdom! The whole thing, exactly as it is, beyond shadow! Repeating it until we lose track of all thoughts and differentiation and ideas about things, then in each and every moment we see clearly and without attachment.

Sutra: People in ignorance or under delusion do not see it; they talk about it with their tongues, but in their mind they remain ignorant.

In the words of Christ, "Those who are cruel to the impoverished are being unkind to me"—this is the same thing. People without material advantages, people who are in difficult situations, to receive them as one's own self.

Sutra: They are always saying that they practice prajna, and they talk incessantly on 'Voidness'; but they do not know the 'Absolute Void.'

If there is any judgment or remnants of experience left there, then it gets murky and is not the clear, true thing. True wisdom is clear right when it comes out—in each second, in each moment. How the truth is, to be able to see it in that direct moment, grabbing it right there—that is the wisdom of prajna. We don't get this because of training; we have it from the origin. Three hundred years ago in Hyogo Prefecture lived the Zen master Bankei, who taught that all we need is the two words: "Unborn Mind"—that that summed up everything. He was teaching, talking about how some people came and told him how terrible their mother-in-law is, how she's such a bully, such an awful person. Then there are others who complain about the daughter-in-law and her terrible habits. Bankei Zenji said, "But these are all from

memory about the person; these are not things about the person that we perceive at that moment, but things about the person that we remember. How judgmental that memory is!" This is why people can invent "bad" people and "good" people. It's from the memory, not from the direct perception. And yet when they drop all of that and meet them as if for the first time ever, then there is no person who is completely hateful. There is no one who is formally decided as "good" or "bad." To be empty of all previous intention and to see what we encounter in this moment—this is the wisdom of prajna.

Sutra: 'The Heart of Wisdom' is prajna, which has neither form nor characteristic. If we interpret it in this way, then indeed it is the wisdom of prajna.

We almost always want to be like this, but we are wearing colored glasses and seeing people in a tinted way—although if we don't do that, we have prajna wisdom coming forth from the origin. We say we went to the Tahoma Zendo and did zazen. But that is not prajna. That is memory. Prajna is direct perception of that moment only!

At first people are full of ideas and words, but continuing this Mu over and over, our mental understanding is then gone and it becomes our whole being, the samadhi of it continuing whether we're sitting, standing, walking, sleeping—no matter what we are doing it continues. No matter where we might touch someone, doing this, this comes out. In sleep it even comes out as talking in one's sleep. When we are in this state of Mu it doesn't matter if we are sitting or standing—we are in this state of mind. Our body sense appears and then disappears; there's only the Mu which remains—only that clear, crisp and open feeling. And then to continue this! You can see it in someone's eyes; they aren't looking all over the place anymore, but rather, are absorbed, sucked into one spot.

If we have heaviness it is because we are carrying around a lot of self-conscious awareness. We have to pierce through that. Not talking about Mu but continuing

it instead and becoming it, or else we will continue to be heavy and murky and with that feeling of birth and death. We have to continue until we let go of all of that.

This is why we work to always become one with that Mu, to go with its rhythm and match with it. Because we keep that going, our mind deepens and we know this place of forgetting everything else in all of the twenty-four hours of the day; it is like picking up garbage. All of it is useless for the clear Mind. We have to get rid of it, but instead, we are always stuffing it into our head. To spit that all out completely, like cleaning the rotten gutter mud out of our minds—the methane gas which has gathered with the garbage in our mind. And so moaning comes out sometimes when we're doing our zazen. We are cleaning our inner gutters. We have to clarify them. Not to purify them as in something impure, but to get rid of that mud and gas so that there's nothing whatsoever to hold onto.

Taste the flavor of this great matter of life and death! Lose track of our sense of this body, of our breathing, of everything! But it doesn't end there. We still have to open to that clear Mind which can function. That which is nothing at all then becomes the sun, moon, and stars, the valleys, the mountains, the sound of the clappers, the birds singing, all of the scenery, the sound of the bells! Our Mind is shaken awake; that serenity is shaken deeply, and we are reborn completely. This experience of true death becomes deep amazement.

To be deeply moved, and then to function—the prajna wisdom is born therein. Our eyes and ears see and hear the whole world. Our arms and legs move things, and then prajna wisdom's clarity is not just something that is quiet and sitting there; it moves and becomes our functioning. This place of not holding on to anything at all—this is functioning with prajna wisdom, the true, active love of all human beings. This is the actual love which is coming out, manifesting itself from it. This is the true, actual, wisdom which is coming out, and we act and function from it. This is the true, actual, compassion which

is manifested, and we act from it. This is the true functioning.

Knowledge which we have accumulated is often something which we calculate from and try to understand with, mentally. Rather, it has to be born spontaneously with each and every arriving situation, and not be the kind of learning which is lacquered tight and hard.

Sutra: What is paramita? It is a Sanskrit word meaning 'to the opposite shore.' Figuratively it means 'above existence and non-existence.'

The Buddha had wondered what it was all about, and for this he threw away his country, his family, and his rank. The last person he met was a teacher who taught about how there was no thought to be held onto in the mind at all, and not even any thought about that. In Western philosophy it ultimately says, "I think, therefore I am." In Eastern philosophy, even without thinking, I am. He took this to its ultimate point, like the bottom of the deeper waters—no movement, without a ripple, nothing left of any of the flames of ignorance, greed and anger. All of this burned up completely, and left only quiet, like ash where there is no more heat to be found anywhere. This clarified mind was broken open by the seeing of the morning star as if the Mu had exploded. And the Buddha knew that it's not empty of everything. It was there. He understood this and saw his own truth—that Mind which united with the star, that place where Mind and material became One. This actual wisdom that was realized there, even for a person like the Buddha—a genius—it took six years' breaking through all of this to be able to realize this and to actualize it. This was not done dualistically. but in direct accord with it, and with no separation between what perceives and what is perceived—the Buddha's deepest understanding of himself and the world as one, united, layer. The Buddha's deep understanding from this deep awakening brought forth this great love for all beings. This was not love from someone outside or from someone else, but that love within each of us which surges through from love for

all beings. For all of us to liberate ourselves in order to liberate the whole world! This is the most necessary thing. There is no value to thinking about this mentally and dualistically.

Sutra: By clinging to sense objects, existence or non-existence arises like the up and down of the billowy sea, and such a state is called metaphorically 'this shore'; while by non-attachment a state above existence and no-existence, like smoothly running water, is attained, and this is called 'the opposite shore.' This is why it is called 'paramita.'

We are always attached to something—to this or to that. But not to be moved around by anything at all or separated from things in any way, because then we lose clear Mind and become divided. In each instant, as if we are soaked or absorbed into it, then we become this place like flowing water, a new world always coming to us, matching completely to whatever comes but never stopped by it nor stagnant. When we get stagnant we get confused. "In all the boundless realms of space, and in the separation between self and other, not a single hair can be inserted. From the limitless past to the immediate present, we have never separated from this very moment." To realize and experience this directly, and then we can see how it is! The Buddha, here, listening to this very talk and this very moment! And the Buddha is teaching! This is not imagination or rational thinking. It is this very truth, this one moment—one clear moment after the next—that is called "paramita." But it's not about being caught or pulled around in this moment, or to have ideas of how things are given or taken away or come and go. This way of thinking is not what is being talked about.

As Dogen has said, to wander toward things ourselves is delusion. When things come right to us, as we are, that is enlightenment. Our mind is like a full, flowing, stream. As Hakuin says, "like ice, like water"—if it flows, it doesn't get hard. Flowing water doesn't get hard; rather, it can take the shape of whatever

container it enters and yet it doesn't change. Hard ice kills fish and can damage things. If our Mind is flowing freely, then this is the way of being a Buddha. If our Mind is not flowing freely, this is the way of ignorance. We can't be caught on reason, thinking, or we stop flowing. If we are caught on thoughts we get deluded. That is not the shore of paramita but rather, the shore of delusion.

Sutra: Learned Audience, people under illusion recite the Maha Prajna Paramita with their tongues, and while they are reciting it erroneous and evil thoughts arise. But if they put it into practice unremittingly, they realize its 'true nature.' To know this Dharma is to know the Dharma of prajna, and to practice this is to practice prajna. He who does not practice it is an ordinary man. He who directs his mind to practice it even for one moment is the equal of Buddha.

"But if they put it into practice unremittingly, they realize its 'true nature.'" This is exactly what we are doing here; every single mind moment, to not be moved around. Our Mind is not stopped anywhere; this is what zazen is. It's like a mirror which reflects exactly what comes in front of it. But if we close our eyes we get shut down and stagnant and caught on all kinds of thoughts.

We can't get caught in our brain on this Mu either, thinking that maybe it's this, maybe it's that. A mirror gets caught on nothing at all because it has no opinions or judgments. Each thing is received exactly as it is. In this way, everything comes right to us. The kinhin flows, the zazen period flows, the bells flow, the clappers flow, the walking flows, the samu flows, the lunch time flows, then we come to teisho. All of these things flow into us because we are open completely, and so we don't get tired—like becoming a complete, complete fool. It's because we stay so clever that we get so tired.

Sutra: To know this Dharma is to know the Dharma of prajna, and to practice this is to practice prajna.

"To know this is the Dharma of prajna" is to practice letting go of every single bit of it!

Sutra: He who does not practice it is an ordinary person.

If we don't practice it in this way and just think about it in our minds we are still a person of ignorance.

Sutra: He who directs his mind to practice it even for one moment is the equal of Buddha.

Open completely, crisp and clear inside, nothing to hold onto at all, free of any ideas of liking or disliking. When these thoughts come up—if they do come up—not to give them any attention whatsoever. Eventually they don't come up anymore. We settle deeply into that place, hanging on to nothing at all; without anything to be moved by, we know this inner place. This is what Zen is. So there is not really a matter of being moved around or not being moved around when there is nothing to hold onto at all in our mind. This is zazen, too.

In China there was a man named Inno To-o who carved into his face-washing basin which he used every morning, "Today a new day, another new day, and yet, another new day!" so that every day he would be reminded when he washed his face to live in this new way in this new day. In every circumstance in every world in every great crisis, every moment is all fresh and new.

Sutra: For ordinary man is Buddha, and klesa [defilement] is bodhi [enlightenment]. A foolish passing thought makes one an ordinary person, while an enlightened second thought makes one a Buddha. A passing thought that clings to sense-objects is klesa, while a second thought that frees one from attachment is bodhi.

If we are holding onto things we are ignorant. But if we stop that right here, right now, then we are immediately Buddha. To not give any attention to those things that we are always grasping after! If we are always concerned

and anxious, that is ignorance. Letting go of that is Buddha. As Rinzai puts it, in each and every mind moment, to end it there and not add on any second thinking or any association—that to continue that always is worth more than ten years of pilgrimage or training in the dojo. Not to add on any extra or extraneous thoughts. Not to associate, but seeing something and leaving it at that first perception of it. Hearing as well, cutting after each and every mind moment completely! And then there is no problem to pull along and worry about. Worrying about things is what makes the mind most exhausted. What has not even come along yet—don't start thinking about it! Always be fresh and not over-anxious, being ready for anything. If we can do this, then, as Rinzai has said, this has more meaning than even ten years of pilgrimage or years in a dojo.

Sutra: Learned Audience, the Maha prajna paramita is the most exalted, the supreme, and the foremost.

In our life this is of the greatest importance of all—not the words of it, but the use of it: To always be able to make a switch from one thing to the next without being caught on it and without lingering with it. Through the function of prajna paramita, this switch—this ability to change back and forth, to function freely—responds appropriately to the world.

Rinzai give in the preface of his Record these four conditions: “Sometimes I take away the person but do not take away the surroundings.” First, to forget yourself completely and throw yourself into society. To enter into society completely, not a bit of self-consciousness left, and dedicate yourself 100 percent to serving, no demands of your own.

Then the next, “Sometimes I take away the surroundings but do not take away the person.” Right in the middle of the world, to take away the person but don't take away society. To clearly state what's right is right, what's wrong is wrong, regardless of who you're talking to—to be the Master and correct things appropriately. Straightaway to “turn on a dime” according to circumstances,

and correct that which has to be corrected.

And then again, “Sometimes I take away both person and surroundings”—Sometimes there's not 'me,' there's not 'other.' Between heaven and earth, there's not a single thing”—that samadhi of zazen. You have to know that world, too. And if you think that's all there is, there is the last:

“Sometimes I take away neither person nor surroundings.” “Ahhhh! It's nice weather today....Let's get a bit of sun!....Let's take a walk in the forest!...Let's stroll around the pond!” To really taste the flavor of those times! Those sorts of occasions exist, too.

So, can you make that kind of completely free switch? If you're not careful you end up being dragged around by your desires. “Just a little bit more...just a little bit more...!” Not really willing to make that change, too comfortable where you are, you're stopped, unable to respond freely. Always, each occasion, to be completely free and adjusting to what is going on! To switch freely according to content. That kind of wisdom is prajna paramita.

Sutra: It neither stays, nor goes, nor comes. By means of it Buddhas of the present, the past, and the future generations attain Buddhahood. We should use this great wisdom to break up the five skandhas [matter, sensation, perception, dispositions or tendencies, and consciousness], for to follow such a practice insures the attainment of Buddhahood. The three poisonous elements [greed, hatred and illusion] will then be turned into sila [good conduct], samadhi and prajna.

These are all done with direct perception, not with thinking. “It neither stays nor goes nor comes,” as Monju-bosatsu answered when he was welcomed by Vimalakirti when he went to visit him. In answer to Vimalakirti's welcome he had responded that he came with no face of coming and no face of going.

Prajna is called the “Mother of All Buddhas.” That functioning from the empty Mind is the Buddha's source. We have to taste this state of mind and move from it spontaneously—

not after it's been fermented and raised. But rather, to do it with direct perception from true clarity. If we are that clear, then the purifying wisdom will manifest. To be able to do this will allow us to move through greed, anger, and ignorance. This is the actuality always of purer and purer wisdom which grows. And there's always purity that goes with it, allowing it to be manifested. If there is a true center then this will become true wisdom and compassion.

Sutra: Learned Audience, in this system of mine one *prajna* produces 84,000 ways of wisdom, since there are that number of defilements for us to cope with; but when one is free from defilements, wisdom reveals itself, and will not be separated from the essence of Mind.

As the Sixth Patriarch says, if you understand one you'll understand all of the Buddha's Way and won't need 84,000 ways of wisdom. And while there are 84,000 ways to where we're not attached to anything at all because there are that many kinds of delusion, that width and breadth will bring us resolution to any and every problem. No matter which of the 84,000 problems they are, the wisdom to resolve them will come forth.

Sutra: Those who understand this Dharma will be free from idle thoughts. To be free from being infatuated by one particular thought, from clinging to desire, and from falsehood; to put one's own essence of tathata into operation; to use *prajna* for contemplation, and to take an attitude of neither indifference nor attachment towards all things—this is what is meant by realizing one's own essence of Mind for the attainment of Buddhahood.

If we realize this, there is nothing to think about or memorize because it all comes forth to us in each given moment as we need it. No need to be stuck on thinking about things and holding on to ideas about it because in each moment, what we need—the wisdom

necessary—comes forth spontaneously. To hold on to nothing at all, to realize Buddha-nature and *prajna* wisdom, then no matter what terrible situation or crisis it might be, we won't be attached to or despise anything. Please, for everyone not to misunderstand your *zazen*, but see clearly what is most important and to not train in a misunderstanding way about this. "A foolish passing thought makes one an ordinary person, while an enlightened second makes one a Buddha." To believe this and know this state of mind which is caught on nothing whatsoever and to lastingly taste the flavor of this *sesshin*!

DAY TWO

Realizing that our true nature is this *prajna*, we know it's not that we have to train or do something else to know this *prajna*, but that we are already endowed with *prajna* wisdom from the origin. However, it is hidden due to our conditioning, our experiences, our characteristics, our education. We have to at once let go of all of the effects of all of that; it will then be revealed. Up until today, we have had our filter of ego through which we have been perceiving, and we get upset if people do not see things the same way we do. Originally—before this conditioning, education, experience—we respond spontaneously and harmoniously to whatever comes forth, but when our ego is blocking *prajna*, we are unable to see clearly.

Sutra: Learned Audience, if you wish to penetrate the deepest mystery of the dharmadhatu and the samadhi of *prajna*, you should practice *prajna* by reciting and studying the *Vajrachedika*, the Diamond Sutra.

According to Zen it is all one, continuous layer. "From the limitless past, to the immediate present, we have never separated from this very moment." Without any division into subject and object, without any kind of relativity, if we can directly encounter this, then at this moment we know the deepest mystery of the *dharmadhatu* and the samadhi of *prajna*.

The *prajna* being spoken of here is wisdom. Knowledge is that which understands the

external world objectively; in terms of science, for example, we study insects, we study society; we do this exhaustively and completely, and then we have a science of a certain thing we've studied. But, prior to all of this, the base of all of these things which are known, this is *prajna* wisdom, and that *prajna* wisdom is not something we can seek outside of ourselves. Religious truth is rather something which can be obstructed by having too much intellectual knowledge and information. Further, we don't need knowledge to know this great, deep wisdom of *prajna*.

In this direct encounter, our awareness becomes completely clear and we can see how all of the 10,000 things are manifested from here in this direct experience, the actual experience of this. The willow is teaching us the Kannon Sutra. Or as Sotoba has taught us—he who sat all night until he lost track of any sense of his body—all things are one in this.

Putting it another way, it is not about understanding it mentally with our heads. But rather to throw everything away. Not how it's a bird that says 'chirp,' but to directly experience what it is that knows that. In every single encounter, it is the same one truth.

Samadhi is most important. In our zazen, we have to have samadhi or it is not true zazen, it is zazen which is done for battling our bodies and thoughts. In the beginning it may feel that this is what it is all about. People get caught on this, and they don't let go. But if we begin to know the essence, we know not to be deceived by our physical pains. Especially at the beginning our bodies and our minds seem to be big problems, but as we continue, we learn how not to give them attention. This is not done by resisting, but by becoming one with your focus, and then one layer after the other is lifted off. To know how to bring the body and mind into oneness is most important; and that is done by not adding in extraneous thinking, but by jumping right into the middle of the doing of it.

It may seem like an impossibility at the

beginning. Regarding how to sit, our biggest problems are that we become overly excited and scattered, or become too drowsy, sleepy and lethargic. But there are the many and various words of experienced people to guide us in these challenges. Forgetting our own self conscious awareness, and not trying to analyze it and figure it out, but by becoming simple and throwing everything into just the doing of it; going about it in this way is how we take care of these problems.

And certainly our zazen can not be done by sitting haphazardly and hazily, or by calling in many extra thoughts. Only by letting go of all of it. Because many are so used to holding their *ki* high and keeping their physical body taut and tight in the upper half, then that brings a very difficult time. Rather, to let go of all of the tension in the top half of your body, and then we can come to know that unobstructed place. In old times, it was said that this was just like gathering water, drop by drop, into a cup. Or by filling up a balloon which has been flaccid and limp, and if we blow into it continually, it becomes more and more full and taut. At first we think that we are what does the breathing, but it is not really like that; the breath is born. This very easy to see by doing *tai chi* and *chi gong*. When we feel that energy in our body, at the beginning we may think that it is our own, but if we try and push that which we think is our own, we become tight. If we let go of it and know this place of no thinking, and then if we continue without any gaps there whatsoever, we are able to encounter this place in clarity. It is not about asking this to some Buddha, but about clarifying our own state of mind.

What has to be seen is that we are not doing this, but that it is being done through us. Letting go of our own stuck places, we can see our mistakes clearly. Today in the world, everyone is so lonely and isolated because they become attached to their idea of being alone—because they become attached to that place. If we are to make a society, we have to see through this clearly, to develop that zazen which knows that place of having forgotten oneself completely; to have this deeply and well established, or we cannot

see clearly.

We have to learn well to realize it thoroughly. Not saying “What good is this?” This is the problem today. We blame things on a place, an environment, a system, a person. We have to be able to do this letting go completely, to realize this is being done for ourselves so we can help all beings realize it. But who is it that is doing it?

Sutra: You should practice prajna by reciting and studying the Diamond Sutra, which will enable you to realize the essence of Mind. You should know that the merit for studying this sutra, as distinctly set forth in the text, is immeasurable and illimitable, and cannot be enumerated in details. This sutra belongs to the highest school of Buddhism, and the Lord Buddha delivered it specially for the very wise and quick-witted. If the less wise and the slow-witted should hear about it they would doubt its credibility. Why? For example, if it rained in Jambudvīpa [the southern continent], through the miracle of the celestial naga, cities, towns and villages would drift about in the flood as if they were only leaves of the date tree.

In India, where there is little rain and many superstitions, they teach this teaching in terms of the celestial *naga*, using these to illuminate the Way of the Dharma.

Sutra: But should it rain in the great ocean the level of the sea as a whole would not be affected by it.

What has to be understood is that it is not an “I” who is doing this zazen. People say then, “Who is left if I throw myself away?” This becomes a terrifying prospect, being told to throw away what we’ve always depended upon, when if we would just directly encounter this great truth, we would know the insignificance of our limited knowledge and our experience, and our ego. Then we see that it is like the rain in the great ocean that our small knowledge is so irrelevant.

Because we don’t see this, we could shoot a gun at someone who cuts in front of us in traffic. Where is our great all-embracing Mind in this situation? The Sixth Patriarch is extreme and sharp on this point, teaching that we have to see this carefully and throw away all of that dualistic, narrow knowledge. And that great Mind is within each and every one of us; no matter what terrible flood or what great drought occurs, we are a huge ocean-like state of mind, from the origin.

Sutra: The prajna immanent in the essence of Mind of every one may be likened to the rain, the moisture of which refreshes every living thing, trees and plants as well as sentient beings. When rivers and streams reach the sea, the water carried by them merges into one body; this is another analogy.

That which we have learned from birth, there is nothing more confusing and complex as this. There is a huge, great source, but—as Ikyū has said, “A new born baby is full of great wisdom, but as it grows and learns more and more, it becomes further and further from Buddha.” A baby has a clear Mind, and even though it can’t live out in the world and doesn’t know good or bad, win or lose, it lives in that place where all is only one. And while a baby only hears the ‘chirp’ or the ‘bow-wow’ or sees a color purely and doesn’t name it, it is still prior to that mental understanding and discrimination. But that bud is clipped. To sit and only hurt, that would not be as bad, but we add all the thoughts: “This hurts so much, how am I possibly going to last one whole week? What’s going to happen if it keeps hurting like this?” The insecurity comes in, the thoughts that we have around that pain are what bring the greater problems. Not to feel and perceive through a filter of what we have learned in school, but rather from our mind’s purest perception.

If we are in society, then we need techniques of knowing what is good and bad and winning and losing. It is perhaps necessary, but this is not like the pure energy itself. Rather, to wake up our numbed spontaneity! When

we see someone suffering, it is not a learned empathy that feels this, but a pure Mind that moves clearly. We are all sad if someone close to us dies and happy if someone we love becomes happy. We are born with that naturally, but we become anesthetized and unable to feel this empathy for **all** the people, animals, vegetation, for everything. We have the ability from the origin to feel this, but we get confused and attached. We have to let go of that; all of that has to go. This is what the Sixth Patriarch is teaching us.

Today, in society, we are always hearing again and again how we have to have peace, but why do we grow no closer to it? Of course, there is the need to decrease nuclear armaments and to put an end to having armies, but all people of training also have to see that each and every person is exactly the same in state of mind—that we are all of the same, original nature. We have to see and know this directly, to encounter it with our own experience. It cannot be deceived, nor can we gloss over it through a temporary, conceptual understanding of it. To know that place where from the limitless past to the immediate present we have never separated from this very moment, to know that all beings are equal—this is our zazen. Our deep Mind, when we are with this Buddha Mind, we can see and return to that place of seeing clearly. But this is not about thinking we are better than others by doing this. Society has to be awakened to this place of everyone's equal true nature.

Please, in this sesshin, realize that true original nature directly! That is our big job, our big work to be done right here, and a very important fulcrum for all of society. We mustn't be confused by our small, trivial thoughts. Don't be moved around by being concerned by them either; rather, to see this essence of Mind directly and clearly!

DAY THREE

Sutra: The prajna immanent in the essence of Mind of every one may be likened to the rain, the moisture of which refreshes every living thing, trees and plants as well as sentient

beings. When rivers and streams reach the sea, the water carried by them merges into one body. Learned Audience, when rain comes in a deluge, plants that are not deep-rooted are washed away, and eventually they succumb. This is the case with the slow-witted, when they hear about the teaching of the Sudden School. The prajna immanent in them is exactly the same as that in the very wise men, but they fail to enlighten themselves when the Dharma is made known to them.

When we hear and see, it is not from our education we can do this. As Rinzai has put it: "In this five foot lump of red flesh, there is a true person of no rank, which is always coming in and going out. As the eyes, it becomes seeing, as the nose, it becomes smelling, as the ears, it becomes hearing, as the mouth it becomes tasting. As the feet it becomes carrying us, and as a hand it becomes holding things." Of course there are those who cannot physically see perhaps, but any of these abilities we have are not something we have learned and been educated with, they are a capability we have. Hearing a bird, or the clappers, we think of their names, and these are learned. But our ability to see and hear is with us from birth. This wisdom is present even if we can't physically see and hear, this wisdom is present in all people. In the same way the rain quenches the thirst of all the various trees and plants and then flows into the great ocean. It is all from our true wisdom that this comes forth.

"In the five foot lump of red flesh, there is a true person of no rank, which is always coming in and going out of the orifices." This prajna wisdom, when it is coming from our eyes, it becomes seeing. When it is in our ears, it becomes hearing, when it is in our mouth, it becomes tasting, in our nose it becomes smelling, as our hands and feet express it, it becomes carrying things and making things. In its expression, it varies, but the wisdom itself is all one.

If we let go of our dualistic thinking and ideas,

this wisdom can function freely. As we sit, the dog barks and the birds chirp. We have different ideas about them, but that which hears them is the same for everyone. It's not about blocking out our seeing and hearing; we all see the floor, but if we sit and close our eyes, then this prevents us from being able to use this whole ability. At the beginning of doing zazen, everyone has so much past history and previous experience which we all hold on to and see through. Again, and again, we let go of that. As we sit more and more we need less and less until finally we are only reflecting what we perceive, without dragging in thoughts about what we perceive. We return to the same essence, yet each of us expresses it differently. It is not that we become robots. We return to that which unites all beings and see deeply that it is the same in all people, and we have to experience that to really know the love of all people and to be able to work for true peace. Even if we claim the labels of working for world peace, or loving all people, we can't just say it, we have to realize it. As the Sixth Patriarch has said, the rain quenches the thirst of everything equally and then it returns to the great ocean. This is the same as the *prajna* wisdom, our deepest truth.

Our deepest Mind is the same in all people—not moved around by anything. To realize this is satori; satori is not some special, supernatural experience that comes to us. But to realize that in which we have the deepest belief, that which is the same in all people, whether they do good or evil, whether they are ignorant or enlightened. To see this clearly is satori—not only knowing it by concepts but to directly experience it.

Sutra: The *prajna* immanent in them is exactly the same as that in the very wise men, but they fail to enlighten themselves when the Dharma is made known to them. Why? Because they are thickly veiled by erroneous views, and deep-rooted defilements, in the same way as the sun may be thickly veiled by cloud and unable to show his light until

the wind blows the cloud away.

Since we all have various characters and qualities which we carry with us, we hear this but hear it differently—so that even if we hear the truth, we often can't believe it. It is like the question of water vessels: how a small vessel hasn't room for a large amount, while a huge ocean has no concern for even a great rain storm. Some can hear this and understand it clearly, and be without any fear in hearing it, but it will not even be considered possible by others. That does not mean their ability and original Mind is any different from those who understand quickly. We bring so much dualism to it that it covers the sun; but this dualism is only clouds, and if we brush them away, the sun is as always.

Sutra: *Prajna* does not vary with different persons; what makes the difference is whether one's mind is enlightened or deluded. He who does not know his own essence of Mind and is under the delusion that Buddhahood can be attained by outward religious rites is called the slow-witted.

After sixteen months, we know that a baby can understand "one," and after twenty-four months, the concept of "two." At first we have no sense of separation between self and other, or between self and flower, but this world of one naturally becomes the world of two. This is like a plant that first has two new leaves on its stem and then grows to four new leaves. This is the way growing is. To learn what we all are united by is what religion is for. Some people are religiously inclined; some are into gain and loss, winning and losing, and some are into material things, but no matter who it is, all of them are endowed equally with this *prajna* wisdom.

Instead of seeing deeply into the truth, some are most centrally interested on themselves. Rather than seeing what makes the flower radiate, people seek a god or a Buddha way over there—somewhere else—when always looking for a safe refuge. But what is it that does seek God? Without looking into that, we search somewhere over there, far away. Today, people are unable to take any belief

in a god or a Buddha, or a heaven. We all have become so unsettled and melancholy because of this. We can't believe in anything, only doing what feels good and brings us pleasure.

Sutra: He who knows the teaching of the Sudden School and attaches no importance to rituals, and whose mind functions always under right views, so that he is absolutely free from defilements or contaminations, is said to know his essence of Mind.

It is not about something external to be gained. Only becoming more and more quiet, as thoughts stop coming and going we become settled firmly in that actuality, realizing the origin of what it is that is seeing and hearing. If we do realize this, we clearly see how we have never been born and never die. We are not something which is beautiful or ugly, not something which increases or decreases, but are only reflected exactly as we are, and we settle deeply into that which reflects. We all feel how we suffer so much and we work so hard—so much harder than anybody else. But no matter what terrible situation may come to us, we see that it is only a passing phenomenon. And this is not that we shouldn't feel these things and deeply experience them; rather to feel it deeply and not be pulled and moved around by what we feel and experience. We realize this state of mind and *prajna* wisdom shines, and then no matter what does come along, it can't move that around.

Sutra: Learned Audience, the Mind should be framed in such a way that it will be independent of external or internal objects, at liberty to come or go, free from attachment and thoroughly enlightened without the least beclouding. He who is able to do this is of the same standard required by the sutras of the Prajna School.

Then, he continues, no matter what comes along it is only one passing phenomenon passing by the window of our Mind. Sometimes we think we really want something, or that

something is really ugly, or very pretty. But while these are all just phenomena, people are still pushed and pulled around by them and our mind becomes so tired from that. Because we are so confused by what we experience, this is why we have to do zazen—and not just the form of zazen. We gather in this place, using it as a tool to align our Mind and to support each other. While coming here to sit is very important to us, we feel we have so many demanding problems in life. But in fact, our Mind is free. We can't come here and continue to pull around all of these problems into our zazen.

Rinzai calls this *to not add on a second or third associated mind moment to any thought*. Practice this, he says, and this is more useful than ten years of pilgrimage. We have to see everything, deeply taste its flavor, but to not add any second thoughts or ideas onto what enters our eyes, to what is reflected. But because we can't just let go of it as it passes, we are so unskillful at that. We have to **actualize** our decision not to be moved around and follow our thoughts and go further and further with more and more thoughts about what we experience. We have to see that it is all passing phenomena so that no matter what comes, we don't grab after it—neither stagnant nor chasing after something as if it's dangling in front of us and we have to grab for it. Rather, to cut it all, just as it comes. Then to also not add on third ideas, third thoughts about it, wandering around in our idea about how things might end up being. To not worry about what is coming, even if we are in a difficult situation—don't go and roam around there; this is Rinzai's kindness. And, as Hakuin has also said "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." We get so caught on thinking that there is a fixed self who is me and who is doing that seeing, rather than to simply and only see and not add on an idea of who is doing that seeing. It's not about imagining how many more minutes, how many more seconds we'll be here until this bell resounds, rather to just hear the bell, to become its

ringing. That extraneous use of our mind is what overtires us. To see only this moment, and not add on a label about it. And so, as the Buddha has said, people who let go of win or loss can sleep calmly and easily.

Residing in no place, awakened Mind arises. This is the main theme of this. Not that the Mind does not move, but it doesn't get stuck and caught on repeating thoughts. Rather, to only see the thing as it is; directly and exactly, to see how it is always changing. To not be at all caught, so we are sharp and clear and able then to respond freely and appropriately.

It is not that we are splendid because we sit, but that because we are so cluttered we have to sit. However, if as we are sitting we do a lot of thinking, then it just makes things worse. There is a meaning in this if we can do sesshin and feel that our noisy mind decreases and no matter what comes along, we are not moved around by it. But because we are always labeling things, we get caught. Even if we are praised or criticized, we are always adding on ideas of "Why did they say that, what did they mean by that?" and going further and further into it. But if we don't get pulled along by that person's difficult state of mind, and just cut and continue, then we are not moved around by it.

Whether it's about politics, economics or religion, our mind gets so easily caught on these subjects. While winning and losing are a matter of course in the world, without knowing that place of *residing in no place, awakened Mind arises*, we still get caught.

To still stay creative and productive no matter what happens, and even if we feel we can't possibly get out of some difficult, terrible situation, to remember it is just because we think of it in that way that we see it like this. In fact, it is a passing phenomenon; knowing this, a new state of mind is brought forth. No matter what comes along, to not be caught on it as something which is real and permanent; letting the fresh new ideas always come in, letting things flow by, and then in this way, our state of mind is satori. We have this Mind, we are endowed with this state of mind, all of us, from birth.

While we make efforts and do zazen, it doesn't mean that the stock market is going to get better, or politics are going to improve. But if we let go of our stuck places we can see clearly how to be in a most appropriate way with whatever happens. If we carry a small self into it, we cannot see the best way to go about things, but if we have a wide view, we can see how it should be. Is our deepest vow truly for our own purpose, or is it for all beings? If it is for all beings, it will always be able to be realized, to keep moving and come true because it is for all beings, not for the small self. When it is for this great vow, it will find a way to happen. The Buddha as well, was always asking what is most necessary for human liberation. But, it can't be something which we consider only when we feel like it, once in a while. It has to be something which is ongoing and guiding us in everything we do.

One who lives in this way will see how, from the origin, that life energy has always been the base, and will awaken and live from this base. If this *prajna* wisdom becomes clear, then we can see exactly how there is no discrimination ever existing. All beings are liberated within this *prajna* wisdom. To directly encounter our true Mind is human's most radical purpose. From here comes our true motivation, and the goal is born without fear and without any narrow idea of preserving a small self. We all have this state of mind within, and to realize it is to do zazen. We struggle because we have to know this *prajna* wisdom and realize this truth, because we have to know what is human's truest liberation and freedom—or else why would we endure such pain? It is because, for all humans, this equality is of greatest importance.

The Sixth Patriarch is speaking to us and saying we all have this radical state of mind within. The Buddha was not just someone special who happened to have it. Scientists throw everything, all of their possessions, their whole life, into proving a scientific truth. There are many who have done that, giving everything to being able to work in that way. That is the energy of science; and for humans, it is the energy to realize our truth

directly—not making up more prejudice and more delusions. Hearing the words of the Sixth Patriarch, we are challenged to clear out all of these delusions, and to realize this deep, true Mind.

DAY FOUR

Sutra: Learned Audience, all sutras and scriptures of the Mahayana and Hinayana schools, as well as the twelve sections of the canonical writings were provided to suit the different needs and temperaments of various people.

Eno is teaching about prajna, and the sutras have in all eras taught the unchanging truth. Sutras are called *Kyo* in Chinese, and the words of other sages in China called are also called *Kyo*. In India, the string through a flowered lei, which is given in honor or in gratitude, the string through those flowers is called a sutra—that which brings all the flowers together. But the source of these is one. That truth to which the Buddha awakened is then, in 5048 sutras, taught according to the listener's ability to hear it. In the Sui Dynasty in China there were already 5048 sutras recognized.

There are generally considered to be three divisions of what the Buddha taught. First, the sutras; these he taught directly. Then there are the rules of living, called the Precepts; then there is the description and interpretation of these rules and sutras, which increase in every era. But, in fact, while there are millions of words within these, the only truth is that an awakened one wants to help others awaken to the same truth. But this truth is taught, and needs to be taught, to each person individually. Once one disciple asked Confucius why he had so many teachings recorded. But Confucius said, "No, there is only one thing I have been teaching, and that is my Path is to take one thing to its final end." On hearing this, a disciple named Soji said, "Yes." Confucius went into his quarters. So Soji was asked, "What is that truth then?" "To live always with integrity and compassion for others." This is the same as the Buddha's awakening and teaching.

Sutra: Since all dharmas are immanent in our Mind there is no reason why we should not realize intuitively the real nature of tathata. The Bodhisattvashila-sutra says, 'Our essence of Mind is intrinsically pure, and if we knew our Mind and realized what our nature is, all of us would attain Buddhahood.' As the Vimalakirtinirdesha-sutra says, 'At once they become enlightened and regain their own Mind.'

In the world, humans are considered splendid, but in what way are they to be called splendid? We say we have to respect human's rights, but why? Does that mean people should be able to do whatever they want to do, whenever they feel like doing it? Is that what equality is? The constitutions of various countries say that all people are equal under the law; but sometimes that becomes the most unfair thing. Saying to respect human rights, we don't really know what to respect or where humans are worth respecting. And we can't just personally interpret this. There is the greater law the Buddha taught, the law of the truth of all beings.

That truth of all the sutras is right within the Mind of all people, and to have people realize that, Eno taught horizontally and vertically and Buddha taught in every way possible. If we only read books about this, we can read for our whole lives and never get it. There is only one truth to be awakened to. To even one day sooner realize this true Mind and perceive it directly! We don't understand it from interpreting. We must see it clearly and at this very moment!

While we can see how it says in the sutras that we all are from the origin clear, yet we are always changing like the clouds in the sky, happy one moment, miserable another moment, always going through these changes constantly. That Mind with which we are born is not happy, sad or miserable. From the origin there is nothing there, yet flowing like the small river coming down from the mountains, into that small river the leaves and the dead birds and the rotting fish

gather and make rotten-smelling methane gas. When we remember something that makes us think of these stagnant matters, we can't pull ourselves out of it. We know the least about our very own Mind, and so we continue to carry these things around, suffering through them over and over again.

We have to **not** carry these things around forever—even those habits which we have inherited from our parents; this is about what is even prior to our parents' **birth**. Yet we increase our education and information, and then we carry around all of those things—which we add onto as if they are something very precious, and think our essence is something which is our own.

In the koan of Joshu's Mu [Mumonkan,1], the monk asked the master Joshu, "Does the dog have Buddha nature or not?" Always going here, going there, checking things out, looking for the truth, I can't find it anywhere. I feel like a hungry dog, looking everywhere through all the garbage cans for the truth; wandering here, wandering there. Where is there in me, anything like a Buddha nature? To this, Joshu answered, "Mu!" How many people have suffered through this koan, and thanks to this suffering, how many have found this great joy? So, why did Joshu say "Mu" after all?

Mumon Ekai gave us his kind answer in this koan's introduction. He himself had broken through with this koan when he heard the *taiko* drum in the *hondo*. He taught us, "Don't you want to pass this barrier? Then you must burn completely with this Mu, using all of your 360 bones and joints and 84,000 pores, making your whole body into one great burning Mu. From night until morning, from morning until night, you have to become this." Mumon told us only to do this Mu. He did not give us some great God in heaven, or some Buddha, he gave us this great Mu, telling us to do it from the tops of our heads to the bottoms of our feet, to put everything into this Mu from morning until night.

All of the time, without even a single gap, when we do the in-breath it's Mu, when we do the out-breath it's Mu, until there is

nothing else in our eyes and ears but this Mu. Everything, all of it, melts into this one Mu. If not this, then it is all separation. If there is any absolute to be thankful to, that is still dualistic separation. There is no need to bring in anything dualistic, or self-consciously aware. Nor can it be said that there is nothing at all—it is not a nihilistic view. We can't ignore that there is still something alive and moving and eating. If we pretend that there is nothing at all, that is going straight to hell.

It becomes as if we have a burning, red hot iron ball held in our mouth; we can't swallow it down, we can't spit it out, and because we do it in a tepid, compromised way it doesn't become clear and bright. No matter how many sesshins we do, after all, we're not doing this for someone else. We're not being asked to do something for someone else in the doing of this. It's we doing it for ourselves. If we do it once, totally, we don't have to do it twice; we become clear and revealed. As Hakuin has said, "Young monks, do it once and you won't have to do it again!" And then, no matter where you are, there is nothing to fear. For everything to become that state of mind as if we are holding that red-hot iron ball, without compromising it! To decide to break through in this very sesshin! It's not about this sesshin and then there's that next sesshin—it's about doing it right now, doing it once and for all!

We do this, letting go of all past experience and conditioning in all of the twenty-four hours of the day, until we have no more need for it, until it all has no more meaning. One after the next, the thoughts come forth but we have no interest in them or in seeing or in hearing. Yet we are full and taut. All of those piled up thoughts, they don't come forth anymore. When we are this full and taut, our mind becomes completely quiet. A great cleansing of the Mind—nothing comes forth; we are just there, looking like a fool, yet our state of mind is full and taut. with nothing to hold onto whatsoever, continuing to where there is no longer any division between inside and outside. Sesshin is for realizing this state of mind. This is difficult to do all alone in our daily lives, but because we are here

supporting each other it becomes possible. All of our needs are provided by the *tenzo*; we have the *keisaku* to wake us up when we feel sleepy. Everything is prepared and ready for us. Told to go to the zendo, we go to zendo; told to walk we walk, told to go to meals, we go to meals. This is an impossible thing to do in our daily lives. In doing this, we get clearer and clearer and purer. Our state of mind is full, taut and bright, and we couldn't let go of it if we tried.

Who can describe the flavor of a peach? We can tell the size and shape of a peach, but only one who knows this place can understand its taste. It's not about bragging or being conceited about it, but our state of mind extends throughout the whole universe. Though having a physical body, we have no sense of it—the universe has become our body. We can try to put it into words, but it can't really be done. It is our true nature, and yet we don't even know that. Yet knowing this mind state, no matter what wonderful thing someone might bring to us in exchange, it is no comparison to knowing it, it has no meaning. A diamond becomes like garbage. Like bringing a candle into the sunlight, we realize here there is no meaning to any of it. The difference between that which will change and that which no longer changes—to make that difference clear, is zazen. Many things rise into our thinking, but it is all something reflected in the screen. But an empty screen or a blank notebook doesn't call itself an empty screen or a blank notebook. Whether we have realized this or not, only one with a truly seeing eye can understand.

And if we know our Mind and realize what our nature is, all of us would attain Buddhahood. While it was said that the Sixth Patriarch was illiterate, it's not true. He knew these sutras very well. All of the patriarchs studied and studied and studied, but it still couldn't reach this place they had to know, and so they came to practice. Before that it was only like scratching an itchy foot from outside of the shoe. Daruma Daishi and Niso Eka Daishi were among those who were great scholars. Niso Eka Daishi had read exhaustively and could

not find any resolution for his deep insecurity; he went to the cave of Bodhidharma and said, "My mind is not at rest." To which Bodhidharma answered, "Put your mind out there, and I'll put it to rest for you." To which Niso Eka said "That's not possible, you told me to put it out there, but even though it's not at rest, it can't be put out and taken in like that." Bodhidharma answered, "If you can't put it out there, that's clear it doesn't exist."

We have to see this completely and clearly. Daruma Daishi could say this to Niso Eka Daishi, because Niso was already so well educated and had been through so much already. You couldn't say these words to just anyone and expect them to understand. "*You can't put it out there? Fine, there, now it is at rest.*" That final place had been cut through with a sharp knife. Our truth and clear Mind is like that, and we have to take it to that most final point. We are all carrying around a picture on a screen, or carrying collected words in a notebook, but only when we go to the razor's edge with this, can we cut through completely! "Don't you want to pass this barrier? Making your whole body into one, great burning Mu, suddenly you break through the barrier. You will astonish heaven and shake the earth. You will walk hand in hand with the buddhas and patriarchs." If you take it to this place you will know this place for yourself. But it has to be done to this degree and this length, or we are only continuing along and a slight bit more settled, but never bright and clear completely; there is always some meat and skin clinging to the bones. When we suddenly get it, then we will not only see Joshu clearly, we will go hand in hand with all the masters of the past, seeing them face to face. And when we are still holding onto thoughts and to our consciousness, this can't happen. It is like a balloon which is totally filled to the bursting, fullest possible. We have to go that far with it and see to where you can no longer stand or sit. A single pinprick could make this balloon explode, and then we can perceive it clearly! Like water that fills the cup to the very brim, ready to spill over, we keep adding one more drop after the next, the water mounds and

then—with the last final drop, it all spills out.

Only for one who has truly thrown away everything can this be understood. We have the poem of Jinshu Josa, "Our body is the bodhi tree, and our mind a mirror bright; carefully we wipe them hour by hour and let no dust alight." It's that state of mind which is true up to 99.9%; this is true essence but it is not yet totally resolved: "There is no bodhi tree, nor stand of a mirror bright, since all is void, where can the dust alight?" This is one who has resolved it completely. There is no world without suffering, without happiness and sadness. It is not about listening to music, fluffily sitting on some lotus. There is only that state of mind of not giving any attention to what comes along. And we can't just hold onto an idea of this or a stance of 'I am doing this thing of not giving any attention,' or we will just get caught again, without fail. "There is no bodhi tree, nor stand of a mirror bright; since all is void, where can the dust alight?"

When Bodhidharma told Niso Eka Daishi that his Mind was now fine, he had solved it, he was not telling him that he was an old tree on a cold rock. Nor was he involved in telling him in happiness and sadness; he was responding to that moment and what was necessary in it, free from any concept. Neither can it be done by ignoring and pretending to be clear. This is what the Sixth Patriarch is teaching us.

Please, we are already on the fourth day of sesshin. If you get caught on trivials, it will go right by you. Rather, be determined to do it this sesshin! To not wait for something that will let you not be committed; rather, be committed and confirm this. It is because we don't make this decision to do it now that we hold ourselves back. When we do make that decision to do it now, the small things no longer concern us, things such as being tired or our legs hurting; there is only "I'll do it, and I'll do it now!" It's not something that someone else can urge us through, either. Only we can do it, and it is our own thing when we do do it. It is not an endurance contest either. Each person has to do it from their own responsibility and knowing that it is the most important thing to do, and not because they're being told to by someone

else. It is not about someone else. This is something for each person to do themselves, and we can't be vague about it.

DAY FIVE

Sutra: Learned Audience, when the Fifth Patriarch preached to me, I became enlightened immediately after he had spoken, and spontaneously realized the real nature of tathata. For this reason it is my particular object to propagate the teaching of this Sudden School, so that learners may find bodhi at once and realize their true nature by introspection of Mind.

"Residing in no place, awakened mind arises." When he heard these words of the Diamond Sutra at the young age of only twenty-four, the Sixth Patriarch had a deep understanding of Mind which was direct and clear. Philosophical clarity and explanation only teaches a theory, but this was the actual experience for him. The Buddha as well, after working on letting go of his small self for six years, was able to directly know the Mind's true law. The Sixth Patriarch, hearing the words *residing in no place, awakened mind arises*, realized that there was not something special in our Mind, but that there was nothing there whatsoever. So, we wonder, if I am not there, then who takes all the responsibility for the things in my life? But it's not that. All of the ancients taught how this is for the liberation of all beings. These words with which the Sixth Patriarch was enlightened, it wasn't about carrying these words around constantly. He realized through them that our Mind is empty. "I heard the truth from the Fifth Patriarch at Yellow Plum Mountain," he says here, "after I had understood the deep meaning of 'residing in no place, awakened mind arises.'"

We all say we like this person and dislike that person, but there is not some fixed 'me' who decides this. It is always in flux, so there is nothing to be caught on; sometimes we are happy, sometimes sad, sometimes joyful, but there is not a fixed something which goes on forever and is happy or sad or joyful. We are not happy forever, we are not sad forever,

we are not disliking someone forever, we are always changing again and again and again. So we cannot depend on the Mind always being the same and not changing. It is all borne forth from nothing whatsoever. But we misunderstand this and are unable to be present for what is right now—this very moment. Unable to hear the bird's song because we are stuck on the past, thinking about the future, and so we are never fresh and new. Like a cloudy, murky sky, we don't even know when a crime will be suddenly committed, so confused by changes in mind are people. Rather to be like that clear, bright, blue, wide sky! When we are happy we may be later sad, but there is nothing fixed there to begin with—like the ripples in a pond, which then get quiet and the pond gets clear. This is a healthy state of mind. We can't see the scenery in the water when the ripples are strong. Because we are always toying with the past, we miss the present and there is no fresh perception, no wonder, no joy. That bright, clear Mind—it is only necessary to realize that directly and immediately. But because we carry around our past conditioning, our opinions, our attachments, we can't see clearly, we can't know the present and what is the truth. When we see it directly, our Mind is clear. The Buddha has said that it is not about just doing it half-heartedly, but to do it thoroughly. "Residing in no place, awakened mind arises." "There is no bodhi tree, nor stand of a mirror bright, since all is void, where can the dust alight?"

Five thousand forty-two sutras were given by the Buddha, and millions of words were contained in them, but that was because there were various teachings given according to the listener. For example, if we go to a department store and see so many things, we don't exclaim suddenly that we didn't bring enough money to buy everything in a department store. We only need to pay money for those things that we need in that store. We don't go into a drug store and exclaim, "How can I possibly take all of the medicine in this store?" We only go in and give money for what we need. Or going into a library, we don't think, "How can I possibly read all of the books in the library?" We just

go in and take the ones we want to read. We don't need to read all the sutras, but rather, find the ones and read those which apply to what we need.

It just means that Buddhism has this much breadth and width. People misunderstand. Different great teachers of Buddhism in the past have emphasized different texts. Having emphasized the Dai Ichi Sutra, then it was Dengyo Daichi, the founder of the Nichiren, who said that the Lotus Sutra—which said that all beings will be liberated—the Lotus Sutra was the best to read. And then Honen Shonin and Shinran Shonin said it was the Jodo Sambu Sutra. Each chose a different sutra and supported it. But everyone is too busy to read all those long sentences in those long sutras. So, they said maybe it's okay if they just repeat one short line. And first it was *namu hō rengo kyo*, from the Lotus Sutra, but then Honen Shonin and Shinran Shonin said even *namu hō rengo kyo* is still too long, and they made it shorter to *namu amida butsu*. For Zen, even that's too long. Joshu said "Mu," that was all we had to say. All we have to keep going all day long is this one character of Mu, one character is enough. For Zen it is the truth beyond words and phrases that has to be experienced and realized. And so Joshu said "Mu." Unmon said "Kan." To do this all day, every day, is the point.

So in this way the Buddha taught especially in response to the ninety-six heretical teachings of that time in India. All of these were intellectual, so he had to provide something to respond to those intellectual theories, teaching that our Mind has not become settled because we are always inserting unnecessary thoughts. Even after a week of zazen, we still do that. So Buddha gave people various words to contemplate, brief phrases of the sutras. The word "kinhin" actually means walking while doing a sutra. This kind of creative working was taught by the Buddha to bring people's minds into oneness.

There was one disciple named Shuri Handoku, of unusually low intelligence. He couldn't remember his whole name at once. If he remembered that his name was Shuri,

he would forget that it was Handoku. If he remembered that his name was Handoku, he would forget that it was Shuri Handoku. He had a hard time remembering his whole name at once, and so they made him a sign with his whole name written on it and he put it around his neck. In fact, Shuri Handoku was so excellent at forgetting his name, that when he died, near his grave they buried what is called *myoga*; the name for this vegetable actually means “to forget your name.” And it’s known to be eaten by people who forget a lot, so they can remember better.

So Shuri Handoku would always forget the phrase the Buddha gave him to work on for his practice. No matter how many times the Buddha gave him his phrase, he would keep forgetting the whole thing. He could remember a part, but not the whole thing. So instead, the Buddha gave him a rag and a broom, and told him to clean any place he saw get dirty, and this would be his ongoing continual practice. And this he could do; when he saw something get dirty, he would immediately go and sweep and clean it up. He couldn’t remember his name, but he could remember to do this cleaning. After a long time of practicing this constantly, he was able to realize the same state of mind as that of the Buddha. Because of this, he was one of those who became among the top disciples, very revered by the other disciples as well. It doesn’t matter if we are not so intellectually strong; in fact, it’s even easier perhaps to become enlightened. Because when we are strong intellectually, we are so busy thinking about things all the time, it is hard for us to keep one thing only going; it’s hard to grab hold and not let go and keep it going to where we can break through completely. Our life is short, and we have to give flower to that seed we are born as. Born with that Buddha seed, we have to bring it to flower, not just caught on gain and loss, and pleasure. In this way, the Sixth Patriarch was teaching.

So even if we do zazen and sesshin and don’t get enlightened, to take even just one word and every day to gather our scattered state of mind; then that settled Mind will be easy for us to realize, and the person who does

this will live a life of great value. Mumon Ekai, who edited the *Mumonkan*, took six years to break through with the koan of *Mu*. He could edit such an advanced, difficult book and yet it took him six years to break through. He heard the sound of the great drum in the Dharma Hall and was suddenly enlightened. Kamakura’s Engaku Kokushi—it took him eight years of working diligently on this one matter consistently, intensely, continually. And for us, too, instead of a life with a scattered, turbulent state of mind, to gather this Mind and to realize the truth as the Sixth Patriarch did when he heard, “*residing in no place, awakened Mind arises*” and got it immediately.

Sutra: For this reason it is my particular object to propagate the teaching of this Sudden School, so that learners may find bodhi at once and realize their true nature by introspection of Mind.

I am not saying to analyze the Diamond Sutra, but to take one phrase and gather your scattered mind all day long—to gather into this one, and know the place of where there is no division between inside and outside. “In all the boundless realm of space, and in the separation between self and others, not a single hair can be inserted. From the limitless past to the immediate present, we have never separated from this very moment.” If we continue onward, constantly, we realize that “from the origin, there has been nothing at all.” There is only this moment. Everything we encounter is truth, but we add on interpretations of our ideas about good and bad. If we see clearly, we see that though we may have ideas about pain in our legs, in fact our life is only this one breath. So with our whole body and being we do this moment’s breath with everything we are, and we leave nothing behind at all. For doing this, we have to relax the top half of our body completely. Even doing only that has great effect, and if we continue and continue, our leg pain, our exhaustion, all melt away into that one, single breath.

Sutra: Should they fail to enlighten

themselves, they should ask the pious and learned Buddhists who understand the teaching of the highest school to show them the right way. It is an exalted position, the office of a pious and learned Buddhist who guides others to realize the essence of Mind.

That essence prior to the division—to continue to where you know that very place directly! If we can receive teaching from a true teacher, they can help. This is like going to a good doctor when you are sick. It says in the Lotus Sutra that all of the Bodhisattvas came to teach us to realize how to bring to full realization our potential, our Buddha seeds. We all have this equal potential for enlightenment. The Bodhisattvas have come to show us how to realize this potential.

In the *Dhammapada* it says, “How rare it is to be able to receive human birth; how rare it is to have life in this world of life and death. How rare it is to be able to encounter a true teacher, and how rare it is to be able to encounter the true teachings.” What is this true teaching, what is a true teacher? How can we know these? If we can meet a true teacher, it is our greatest blessing. Even if we make a lot of money, that is just one aspect of life. Our deluded mind’s clearest liberation is what is most important, for even if we have lots of knowledge and lots of money, we are still insecure.

Sutra: The wisdom of the past, the present and the future Buddhas as well as the teachings of the twelve sections of the Canon are immanent in our Mind, but in case we fail to enlighten ourselves, we have to seek the guidance of the pious and learned ones.

We all have this wisdom in us already. We don’t have to carry around external teachings and ideas, we only have to meet one who has the keys to open this clear Mind’s door. For doing this, we do sesshin and see that place where we truly hold on to nothing at all. We open the door to wisdom by knowing that

“from the origin, there is nothing at all.” If we are able to know this, then we have this key.

Sutra: On the other hand, those who enlighten themselves need no extraneous help. It is wrong to insist upon the idea that without the advice of the pious and learned we cannot obtain liberation. Why? Because it is by our innate wisdom that we enlighten ourselves, and even the extraneous help and instructions of a pious and learned friend would be of no use if we were deluded by false doctrines and erroneous views. Should we introspect our Mind with real prajna, all erroneous views would be vanquished in a moment, and as soon as we know the essence of Mind we arrive immediately at the Buddha stage.

For those who know the endless wisdom within, they can understand this and don’t need to ask further. If there is no teacher, there is nothing we can do about that, but that does not mean that even if we meet a true teacher, we can just receive what we need from them merely by following them around and being near them. We can’t say that we should go here and there for this excellent teacher and teaching. To just find joy in someone else’s teaching is not the point. Rather to know the treasure house within ourselves—that place of holding onto nothing at all. We have to work and realize this Mind deeply, because in fact, it is in our own Mind that that most true teacher is found—that place of not one speck remaining. This is what teaches us, and to know this place we do zazen.

That refuge of that truth with which we are all endowed from the origin, that Mind of no dualism whatsoever, we call to it with this repeating and that place from where there is from the origin not a single thing. “Where could dust alight?” Saying *mu* or saying *namu amida butsu*, it is not from just saying those words that we are able to break through, but we use the saying of them to call to that within us which has been asleep. And we

have to continue until we are awakened from that sleep. Doing this in everything we do, then we become it completely. No longer separated from that “mu” we become it totally, we become one with it. Even if we are sleeping or waking or walking or standing, we continue. And as we continue, we lose track of the feeling of our body, all of our thoughts and ideas. These fall away, but this is still not sufficient. The shadow is still present, there is still no joy and great wonder of new birth there. It is said that people of old could die completely rather easily but could not know that rebirth. People today cannot even do that dying completely. People of old of course struggled, but to be reborn was difficult for them; they would hear and see and it was all sliding around on the top. But today people pulling along all the dualistic ideas and thoughts couldn't even do that.

It is not a something in particular which we are reborn as, but that awareness which is fresh and new to everything we encounter. And what will it be that will touch off this awakening suddenly? For the Buddha, it was the sight of the morning star. For Hakuin, it was hearing the morning bell. For Kyogen, it was the sound of the tile hitting the green bamboo. For Ryuun, it was the seeing of the peach blossom suddenly blooming. For Badabada Bosatsu, it was in the bath, and there are even those who prostrate to each other and in doing this become enlightened.

It doesn't matter what someone might give us, what a wonderful thing we're offered, or what an excellent book. It has no comparison to this actualization of the true source. But we have to do it to that final point, continuing it onward still in the deepest dark. We have to go through this deepest dark. From there, we have to solidly continue until the natural arrival of the light like the dawn comes. Our tools for doing this we continue to carry, yet they are only necessary for the time we need them, and then we don't need them any more and put them away. We no longer have any need to plan, and expect. To know this place is *kensho*, and it can't be done with halfway efforts, either. This is what the Sixth Patriarch is teaching us; he wants us to know this

greatest of all joys—so much more joy than anything else we can know—this joy which brings that further joy and understanding to others. This joy is so much greater than that which will bring us joy only while being alive in this short life. Our knowledge and possessions may bring us joy, but we can't share them with everyone. They are limited. But the joy of this we can share and bring to all beings.

Everyone thinks that they probably can't do this no matter what. But after all, it is your own original Mind we're talking about. Only because you don't focus sharply and you won't let go of those engaging thoughts and you keep staying murky in a leaky mind do you not realize it. We each know for ourselves whether we are really doing it in every single moment or not. It's our own true and original Mind. Will you hold realizing that as the most important thing? Or will you continue living in dualism as the most important thing. We have to choose, we have to focus; each person has to choose and then see that clearly without looking away. If we don't look aside at all, we will all realize true *kensho*. This is Eno's guarantee.

Please don't give yourself those burdens of your extraneous thinking for your whole life. Choose to live in clarity and brightness. And this has to be chosen continually, in each moment, and not mistaking where to put that energetic focus!

DAY SIX

Sutra: Should we introspect our Mind with real prajna, all erroneous views would be vanquished in a moment, and as soon as we know the essence of Mind we arrive immediately at the Buddha stage.

There are so many things that we don't receive simply; we complicate things with our emotional attachments, and bring suffering. Our true nature is nothing so complex; if we don't put ourselves, our small minds into it, it is easily clear. Our Mind's true source, if we realize this and see through all phenomena, we will know wisdom immediately. We sit to realize this, not to sit and suffer and be

saved because we endure suffering. To do zazen and suffer for a long time is not the goal. We sit to align our confusion, which is a long habituated conditioning which makes everything so complex. As Master Mumon Ekai has said, with all of the 360 smallest joints and 84,000 hair pores, to throw ourselves into it. It can't be done halfway; that is not honest, nor is it effective. "All 360 smallest joints and 84,000 hair pores"—this is a hint to help us realize the true nature by looking straight at it, to not avert our eyes, to not get caught on nihilism nor on having something. It is natural that we have thoughts, but not to divide things up—that is what makes us stagnate. Not to twist it, but to become it from the top of our heads to the bottoms of our feet and see it, experience it, **become it directly** without putting in our own personal interpretation. We become our eyes with our whole body, we become our ears with our whole body. We become our nose with everything, we become our mouth with everything we are, using all of our capabilities simply and openly! Then we have nothing to find complicated and difficult. We only have to receive what comes, just as it is. At that moment, we are the very same Mind as that of the Buddha. It's like taking a photograph. We have to carefully focus before we take the photo, and then it is clearly, exactly photographed. That takes a lot of work, but when the focus is on, it is exactly the same as what is taken. We struggle because our focus is unskillful.

Sutra: Learned Audience, when we use prajna for introspection we are illumined within and without, and in a position to know our own Mind. To know our Mind is to obtain liberation.

When our focus is on, it is because our lens is very clear and transparent. And the previous film is already rolled back and we are not making a double exposure—we are not holding on to what has just passed. If our focus is clarified and taken off the world of gain and loss, for example, our wisdom arises naturally. When the Buddha saw the morning star, he had been working on that focus for six years. On the 8th of December, he had a

perfectly clear lens, with no preconditioned notions at all. Not the slightest separation of any kind. No observation of it being a star, or of a person seeing a star. This was his first direct perception.

Our true awareness is prior to any self-conscious awareness. To not have anything within us whatever—one direct contact! This is not a question of explanation, but of experience. To where does this *Mu* reach? What is the true body of *Mu*? There is no need to search in our heads for an answer to these questions. The direct, immediate perception! Divide the *muji* into two?—it's obvious if we know that *Mu* directly. For the Buddha, there was nothing held onto whatsoever—a direct touch with no mental grasping. The shining of the morning star and the perception of it were one and the same.

Sutra: To obtain liberation is to attain samadhi of prajna, which is thoughtlessness.

It is not that I am there and I am also seeing a star. It is that everything **is** me—the direct perception of that. To love everything directly, and not just because we think we should but because there is no way to divide it! This world is indivisible, the world of what sees and what is seeing. It is the same essence, with no observer or self-conscious awareness; in that, there is spontaneously deep love for all beings. That very energy which moves this whole universe and embraces all people is this great love. When what is seen and what is seeing are one, that is *prajna* wisdom. Like when the whole world is bathed in bright, clarifying light when the sun shines, we see and recognize the whole world in the same way. That is wisdom, and love is born from there. This is the way our Mind works, and we don't create this; it is already our true nature. But if we stop and hesitate and question, we stop the flow of our true nature. Rather, to flow along with it. If our caught state of mind is let go of, we know *prajna* naturally. That is our actual source.

If we hold onto a small self we get confused. To jump into it totally, with no small self remaining behind! One might think it takes

huge courage to be born as a baby into this complex world. but to be born is not so difficult; it gets difficult when we stray from our true nature with which we are endowed from birth. The true nature is simple, and we have to wonder why does it get so confusing? Because we divide the worlds of birth and death and living and dying, we get confused. Yet if we live completely, then who can possibly ever say, *"I have just died"*? And so the founder of Myoshin-ji said, *"There is no birth and death here."*

There aren't precepts only for those undeveloped lower classes of people, as some think. Everyone wants to be free and do whatever they want to, thinking they can graduate from these precepts, training for a while and then feeling free to do whatever they want to do. But once we know what it is like to live in an unfocused way, we know the precepts' importance. And this is why the precepts come at the end of our koan curriculum, not at the beginning—because we have to be clear to understand this. For one who is clear and one who is not clear, the observation of the precepts are two very different things. If we know the truth, doing the precepts is natural and obvious. For one who is not yet clear, they can feel fear in thinking they have to do something like this, like they must observe the precepts. Look at how the sun moves and continues and never breaks its laws! It continues always in the same way, and this is the same for our practice of continuous, clear, mind moments—and of shikantaza, which is also a very challenging and advanced practice. It's not about shutting down our senses and our whole perception, but in the middle of our daily life to do everything we always do, deepening our practice by sustaining our clear, mind moments. But we have to know its essence to understand why it is done this way. In this way Eno says it.

In doing zazen at the beginning we feel like we're having to do it, that we're told to do it. We feel that we have to follow so many rules. In our daily lives as well, there are red lights when we cross the street, and better ways to be with our neighbors in relationships. There

are all kinds of rules. But as we continue and take responsibility, we see that even another's car accident is also our responsibility, and we observe these rules not because we feel like we're told to, but for everyone's sake. We learn the difference between made to observe the rules and observing the rules. From our own responsibility, to be clear in our own Mind and not just do whatever we feel like doing because we want to.

To live in that state of mind where we are at one with whatever we are doing, but not to try to always not think. It is natural to think. If we try to stop that, we just get exhausted. We do zazen and those thoughts come on like a monkey's mind. So we align our breath and focus on it. We are not attempting to make each thought stop. When the thoughts naturally decrease, then we only have to do what is really necessary, and we don't get so exhausted. In a natural way, we become able to know what needs doing most. It is like being in the middle of a busy street: We can still pass right through all the people who are swarming around us, and go straight through to our destination. This is the samadhi of *prajna*.

The Sixth Patriarch says in this way in his teaching that the person who is the true master is responsible for all things. To use that thoroughly is our responsibility. This is our true nature and our actual functioning. We have received so much grace since our birth, but without realizing that, we forget that gratitude. Just for an example, if we hold our mouth and nose shut tight for some minutes to where we can't breathe, then we know our gratitude for air. But we are always cared for by air, and we forget about it because it's so close to us. Yet we can't even live for one minute without it. And what about water? If we don't have water for three days, we will become dehydrated. It's so simple just to turn on a faucet. All of this is from the heavens' natural blessings. The same is true of our food—the vegetables, the people who prepared it for us. And this gratitude is so deep for the life energy of those who have brought us to life up to this very day, and the things that people brought with them, their

cultures, and for the teachings of the Buddha, of the ancients. We look at it this way and feel this deep gratitude and realize we can't cause pain for others or go around asking God to please punish people that we don't like. We can't continue this childish way of living. This is what the Sixth Patriarch is teaching us.

No matter what, we have to realize this state of mind which is not attached to thinking. Later, the Sixth Patriarch will teach in more detail about how this place of no attachment to thinking is our true religion—not a narrow religious sense such as Zen or Buddhism, but about how the true body is that of not being attached to any form of a small "I" or the forms of various things—to be free of any such attachment. And then there is not being attached to any location; always flowing like clear water, never located in a certain place or stagnant. These three are later taught about very carefully and in detail. In this way, he teaches how people should be; this is the Sixth Patriarch's basic teaching.

What about our responsibility to society? Today's world is so complex, with so many challenges! We can't turn our backs on that and be greedy for our own quiet, free-from-thinking space. We are attached to that fixed idea of a limited, individual self, of who we think we are, and that is why our flow gets stagnant. To be empty of extra thinking means to see, hear, smell, and taste, but not to be caught and think further about that which we perceive; rather, to receive what comes next no matter what it is. Whether it is with any of our senses, to receive it completely, as we do here at Tahoma. In the morning we do sutras, zazen, sanzen—each thing coming. There's no free time to be concerned with all of that extra thinking. To live in accordance appropriately to whatever comes along in each and every moment is what it's about.

Sutra: What is thoughtlessness?

Thoughtlessness is to see and to know all dharmas [things] with a mind free from attachment.

When we see things we don't get caught on them; our essence keeps going but we don't get stuck on some preconceived

notion of a small self. We sit to learn to do this, to experience that state of mind so full and taut that we can't get pushed and pulled around by things. We feel our parental responsibility for everything in the whole world—everything that exists. In the doing and feeling of that we are not pulled around by our attachments. Not only to know this conceptually but to **live this**, not residing in the world of profit and loss, but living with a sturdy, responsible parental mind that could not deprive anyone of anything.

Sutra: When in use, it pervades

everywhere, and yet it sticks nowhere.

And this functioning has no limit such as from here to just over there. We extend throughout the whole world, throughout the whole universe, for Asia, for Europe! We know the circumstances everywhere, and not just from knowledge about them, but knowing their actual essence. We do zazen and of course it's all resolved in our deep awakening. But without being full and taut and knowing that essence, there will be no true functioning and expression of that awakening. It is our responsibility to actually know and experience this deep flavor, and then not only your neighbor's and your home and where you stand, but everywhere you go, everyone you know are all touched by this, as if you are extending throughout the heavens and earth—a firm and unmoved essence.

We do zazen and we think we are sitting at the One Drop Zendo, but we are truly drinking up the whole world in our zazen. It can't be only for our own satisfaction, or we lose our zazen's essence. Our legs hurt, our body is in complete pain and we get so sleepy, but we can't blame it and take it out on others. Rather, to realize we have this pain in order to take away others' pain, and not be crushed by our limited thoughts of what we prefer. How many others would also like to be sitting here and can't get to be here? Be thankful for this. Thinking of this we realize they have no such refuge and we want to share this and tell them as well—this way of being, how all people could find resolution in this. All peoples' resolution lies here. To see

this clearly.

In this way, our Mind goes to all corners of the earth. Zazen is what cultivates this *prajna* wisdom, and this way of not being attached to thoughts is a manifestation of that. To use our Mind for the most important thing: for the liberation of all beings in the whole world! When we care for sick people, even though we want to, when we see their pain we can't trade places and take on their pain for them. And so we have to drink down that pain completely. And that is the essence of zazen and also the way of liberating others. While sitting right here, to vow for all people's liberation from pain and for taking away all of their difficulties.

Sutra: What we have to do is to purify our Mind so that the six vijñanas [aspects of consciousness], in passing through the six gates [sense organs], will neither be defiled by nor attached to the six sense objects. When our Mind works freely without any hindrance, and is at liberty to come or to go, we attain samadhi of *prajna*, or liberation. Such a state is called the function of thoughtlessness. But to refrain from thinking of anything, so that all thoughts are suppressed, is to be dharma-ridden, and this is an erroneous view.

To be free from attachment to thinking does not mean to not think; it means we should see and hear and feel and think, but to not be caught on these, to not be stuck on these. As Rinzai has put it, to not add on second thoughts to all of these. If we sit and hold on to a small self, we will turn into a great heaviness. We can't sit with our senses all covered over, blocking out all perceptions; we have a big responsibility. And yet, we also can't get attached to what we perceive. To see and hear and feel, but to not stop and get caught on what we perceive. Because we are not focusing on our small self, but giving to all beings, we don't get caught on our small, individual pain and heaviness and get pushed around by it; rather to get huge and let go of being attached to things. When

there is a world to be seen, there I am born. Because the flower is there to be seen, I am born. We are existing because the six roots of the senses and the perceived objects match perfectly, and so we only need to see a flower and hear the bird; only the birds chirping, the dogs barking. We flow smoothly when we see; when we are seeing the flowers and birds there is no need to stop that; only to keep going, and not to take on a side job doing something else with our mind. No need to bring in noisy, analyzing thoughts; that is knowledge, not our true nature, and we walk around with this "I", this ego going first. Seeing the mountain, the flower and the tree, hearing the bird's chirping, hearing the sound of the clappers or the bell, we fill the whole zendo with radiance—and there is no reason to carry around a small self into that. But because we do, the flow stops. Because of this, we get to the number three and our counting goes out the window. We continue the counting to correctly align our confused perceptions. This is practicing in our inner way. The wisdom of *prajna*. And then one after the next, the breaths are born of themselves, vividly, freshly. And when this state of mind ripens, things enter right into us. The bark of the dog is right inside of us. The moon is not shining far away, and the flower is not blooming far away, but right inside of us. It might be fine to put things that are past into an album, that is fun to look at later. But, we can't use our mind for that. Somewhere we may taste a terrible experience which we feel so damaged by, but without fail, our new fresh Mind comes forth again. In the winter the grasses are burnt down, but in the spring the new grass comes up again. This is our fresh life energy, and zazen is what cultivates this. It is because we hold onto things and stagnate that our mind becomes unhealthy.

DAY SEVEN

Sutra: Learned Audience, I have a formless stanza for you all to recite. Both laity and monks should put its teaching into practice, without which it would be useless to remember my words alone. Listen to this stanza:

Chapter Two "on *Prajna*" finishes with a

poem. This whole work in total is called *The Sixth Patriarch's Platform Sutra*, and a sutra always has in it a *gatha*—a poem—at the end, where there is an expression of the Buddha's truth. Here, the Sixth Patriarch writes of our original Mind and true wisdom in a summary and a conclusion. Up until the stanza, he has been teaching of that freedom from attached mind thoughts. As he has said in another place, being free from attachment to our thinking is emptiness of Mind. If we are hanging onto things, the more they increase, the less we are able to see clearly. And if we can't see clearly we don't trust each other; then in society there becomes an even greater amount of conflict and confusion. Our religion is the true religion, where there is no attachment to thinking—to forget ourselves completely and to be in society is our truth. And what is best for doing this is what this stanza teaches.

Not just to repeat it, but for both lay and ordained people who find their training is something which is very important to them, on hearing this stanza to put it into practice. Not putting it into use is of no meaning because we won't directly perceive and experience what the sutra is talking about. There are many words in this world—infinite amounts of words—and when they clearly express the Buddha's way of teaching they are called a Dharma teaching. But without the same understanding as the Buddha's experience, there is no truth in speaking in this way.

Sutra: *A master of the Buddhist canon as well as of the teaching of the Dhyana school
May be likened unto the blazing sun sitting high in his meridian tower.
Such a man would teach nothing but the Dharma for realizing the essence of Mind,
And his object in coming to this world would be to vanquish the heretical sects.*

When the Buddha Mind is well-expressed without any speck of misunderstanding at all, it is like the sun in the sky—not like a sun coming in and out of the clouds, but a bright sun shining wholly from the sky. It has to be bright and revealed, coming forth

from essence—our words coming from that true source—or it won't reach another's true source. We can see this clearly when we hear these words. They must be bright and revealed; so says the Sixth Patriarch.

Sutra: *We can hardly classify the Dharmas into "sudden" and "gradual,"
But some men will attain enlightenment much quicker than others.
For example, this system for realizing the essence of Mind
Is above the comprehension of the ignorant.
We may explain it in ten thousand ways,
But all those explanations may be traced back to one principle.*

There are many varieties of teachings that are not the Dharma truth. If we say, "I think it is like this," then that is not the truth. Saying that such-and-such a truth is real or that God is best—that is not this one truth, of which there can only be one.

The Dharma is bright and clear with nothing to hide. To realize that essence, sometimes it takes a long Path, sometimes it is sudden. Some realize this quickly, and for some it takes a longer time because there may be many things cluttering their understanding. There is nothing to help in this; the Buddha's words say there is only kensho. This was not created from the Buddha's head and his ideas about it, but from his experience of awakening to this true Mind directly and becoming Buddha. When we let go of all words we contact that true source, that place which the Buddha also realized in his awakening. Then even if we were told to kill someone, we couldn't do it. Even if we were told to steal, we couldn't do it. Even if we were told by someone to be unclear in our relationships between men and women, we couldn't do it. Even if we were told by someone to lie, we couldn't do it, or told to get intoxicated, we couldn't do it. Our prostration is not our goal, but we can't not do it either. We do this from our deep, inner essence. The sutras are many, but they are all telling us to realize kensho. We don't need all those words; just that one message wraps it all up: If we are not awakened, we are always confused by appearances. Even

if it is the words that all people use, those things which all cultures and religions use, it all comes from and returns to that one thing if it is the truth.

Sutra: *To illumine our gloomy tabernacle,
which is stained by defilement,
We should constantly set up
the light of wisdom.
Erroneous views keep us in defilement
While right views remove us from it.
But when we are in a position
to discard both of them
We are then absolutely pure.
Bodhi is immanent in our essence of Mind,
An attempt to look for it
elsewhere is erroneous.
Within our impure mind the
pure one is to be found,
And once our mind is set right, we are
free from the three kinds of beclouding
[hatred, lust, and illusion].
If we are treading the Path of enlightenment
We need not be worried by stumbling blocks.
Provided we keep a constant
eye on our own faults
We cannot go astray from the right path.*

People are always in a state of various desires, and that makes us confused and unclear. Even if we repent and know we are foolish and should help each other after all and even make that effort, it won't resolve everything. The clear bright essence of Mind has to be awakened to. In the midst of the darkness, to light a light—our true nature is like that. But we have added on so much decoration and clutter it appears dark. While we are all alive we have to eat and drink, and so we need certain desires. There is also atonement. But for all people to believe in the same thing; if we touch our true nature, we realize the deep faith of this in that all-embracing true Mind. Then we of course naturally will go to work for society. Then our desires are used for that, and we are not used by them in confusion.

Once, the Buddha was walking with his disciple Ananda, and as they walked, he picked up some sand that was on the ground nearby, put it on his thumbnail, and said to

his disciple, "Tell me, which is greater, the amount of sand on my fingernail, or the amount of sand on the whole earth?" This was a question even a grade school student could answer. Ananda said that it was obvious there was much more sand on the whole earth than on your fingernail, to which the Buddha said, "That's right." The various kimonos people add on are as many as the world's grains of sand. We have to see this clearly, and know the essence which is within that.

After the birth of the world, about a million years later life was given birth to, and now it's fifteen million years later than that. It took such a long time to reach today after that first life was born, and it has continued since then. But even though our own life is so short, we can't repeat that life. It's only once; we can't repeat it and it goes so fast. That is true for others as well. In this one life—the only one we have now—fulfill it and don't waste it. Many others will also realize the true goal from the way we live, and it will be born from there. It's not about being praised and complimented, but for people to realize how joyful they can be that we also have been born.

At the same time, although we are not only here as the same form as everyone else, we are endowed with the same Mind as the Buddha. At the beginning there are so many extraneous thoughts, but we aren't born with those extraneous thoughts. Rather, to let go of our small self and know we are the life energy of all people, not a small isolated piece of living matter. We illuminate the whole globe, as does everything that is alive! If we let go of being caught on a fixed idea of who I am and don't twist it in that way, we realize everything is our own life energy and is infinite wisdom. Everything is born forth from that. The Buddha always said the most important precept was giving, to humbly offer and to humbly share. This is our truth as well. This he taught us carefully. To see how all people can then live in ease, and see how to provide what people really need—because we know they are our own self—infinite love is born from this. But this is not something

we understand or know from our practice; we have it from the very beginning. We only have to awaken to it.

As for the Buddha, when he entered *parinirvana*, if you see the traditional painting of it, all the animals around are crying in deep grief. But if we look at the size of heart of this man, we see that it was not only about love for humans but also contained love for the animals. He would use a staff with jingling rings on it as he walked, to keep bugs and animals off his path so that he might not mistakenly step on them. When he was drinking water, he would always filter it through a piece of cloth, in case there were any small insects there that he would have swallowed. For us, too, to keep that love going as the Buddha always did. While saying that our true religion is empty-mindedness—no clinging to thoughts and being attached to them—he lived also very carefully for all people. In order to let go of our many thoughts we sit so then we are also able to live in this way.

Our Mind is bright and clear; we can't darken it with too many thoughts. Rather, to be its clarity, not its unskillful ideas about things. "We are what we think, having become what we thought, like the wheel that follows the cart-pulling ox. Sorrow follows an evil thought." To not be caught on our small-mindedness but to know this true brightness of the real sunshine. There is nothing to hold onto at all. We realize our own original freedom when we bring forth that state of mind, but not if we bring forth extra thoughts to see that. We have to quickly align our Mind when our mind becomes overly active, to let it be that clarity which we are originally endowed with, which is called in Rinzaï Zen, the continuing clear mind moments, and in Soto, *shikantaza*.

If even one unnecessary thought arises, we become unclear. And from being unclear our thoughts become a burden. It's not that it's bad to think, but to not stop on those thoughts when they are, after all, only scenery. To let go of them, all of them, as they pass by. To not hold onto a dualistic, analytical state of mind, but to see things clearly and directly with our deeply revealed true Mind, and know our true nature. If within our true nature we think

we have a true nature, then that is already extra. From the origin we are empty. But we can't hesitate. We have to see it, but not see it too casually or too simply, either.

The Buddha himself taught so strongly to not kill, and yet, in the *Dhammapada*, in stanza number 294, he said: "To kill our mother, to kill our father, to kill the kings and the high officers." We can hardly believe our ears when we hear this. In this world, there are things that are coming out regularly in the newspaper about children killing parents, parents killing children, husbands killing wives, wives killing husbands; these things are coming out as if they are a matter of course these days. But there was nothing like this in the days of the Buddha in India. However, it is also said that the king mentioned here is not about an actual king, as Rinzaï has said as well. It is not about our actual mother and father, but about our state of mind. Everyone wants to be free and live from our center, but we are always feeling oppressed and pushed down. To get rid of this dualistic state of mind is what is called "killing the father, the mother and the king." Here the Buddha brings in the top level of person of his time, called a *barabon [Brahman]*—the equivalent of today's true and free person—who could in those days do whatever they wanted to, always free to do whatever they chose. Yet that still doesn't clarify our true Mind. We are still attached, still deluded, always a slave to our attachments and desires, and because of that we don't know our true self.

When the Buddha says to kill our father, it means to kill our original ignorance, the anger, the desire—the states in which we don't know our clear, true Mind and our attachments keep getting deeper and deeper. The Sixth Patriarch calls this true clarity; that is when one can even drink down that original dark ignorance. It can't be gotten rid of while we are still alive, but we can swallow it down and become like that big blue sky, unclouded, nothing to be offended by, nothing to be obstructed by. If we are not attached to our deep ignorance, we melt into each moment—and we have to hold this most important. So no matter what we

encounter, to not be obstructed. To see that clear place, higher than even the clouds, but not waiting for the clouds to go away before we can see it. If we go above the clouds we can know that place where the clear bright moon is always shining. All species of life, every single one in existence, all humans in the world and all beings everywhere are born from true nature. We don't have original nature somewhere else, separated. To kill our father is to kill all of those extra thoughts which obstruct this.

The Buddha says to kill our mother, that mother who is our greed, our emotional attachment. To be able to be fine if we have something and fine if we don't—that is much more peaceful. We say it this way because we so easily become attached to that which is most intimate. It is not about loving only that which is closest to us, but also to love all things. To kill that small-minded attachment.

The Buddha also says to kill the two kings of the various ideas of attachment—that of having an eternal soul, or that of not having an eternal soul and then when we die everything disappears into the mountains and rivers. To say that we don't continue is against one side, against our becoming clear in our true Mind. We have to live humbly with our true vow and not to think that we have an eternal future either, or we will also not value this very moment sincerely and we become indulgent. Both of these put our individual self in the middle of everything, and that brings confusion and misunderstanding. The Buddha says not to be attached to either of them. If we don't awaken now, then when will we awaken? It isn't to be put off into the future.

He then says to kill all of the sense attachments, six senses, because they will only show us the differences between things and then we miss so easily that which connects us all: that one, true, Buddha-nature which we must not chop into pieces—not picking and choosing just what we like and prefer. There is something which you cannot fool yourself about. If you twist this basic thing, then you twist all of the essence. To not be attached to things, nor even to our descendents, nor to

our realization. That will not be done so easily, to not be attached to these, and so his words are sharp and strong. If we truly want to see the world brought to awareness we have to have a burning determination or it will not be possible. But if we leave our own path and seek some other way of salvation, we shall not find it. We can't deceive ourselves on this point.

*Sutra: If you wish to find the true way,
Right action will lead you to it directly;
But if you do not strive for Buddhahood,
You will grope in the dark and never find it.*

To always live without attachment and free yourself from unnecessary thinking is what he says here.

*Sutra: He who treads the Path in earnest
Sees not the mistakes of the world;
If we find fault with others
We ourselves are also in the wrong.
When other people are in the
wrong, we should ignore it,
For it is wrong for us to find fault.
By getting rid of the habit of faultfinding
We cut off a source of defilement.*

To not always point out others faults, but to take responsibility for all of our own unskillful actions; to see our own challenges instead of pointing out others faults; to not waste time on others' faults for that is what we have to take responsibility for, or who will take responsibility? Always seeing this clearly.

*Sutra: When neither hatred nor
love disturbs our mind
Serenely we sleep.
Those who intend to be the
teachers of others
Should themselves be skilled in the
various expedients which lead
others to enlightenment.*

It says in the sutra, Believing in Mind, "the great Mind knows no difficulties, always avoiding picking and choosing." If we make efforts to realize this, then we can always sleep easily. If we want to guide others, we have to see very, very clearly and precisely what the other person is bothered by, what is obstructing them on their path. Everyone has

different difficulties. To seriously and clearly see what that is in each person.

Sutra: *When the disciple is free from all doubts
It indicates that his essence of Mind has been found.*

To always to be able to let go of our doubts and see the bigger picture. To see this clear Mind which is within each of us, like that bodhisattva Jofukyoho who would say to everyone he met: *“I see the splendid Buddha in you. I have no criticism for or insulting of you.”*

Sutra: *The kingdom of Buddha is in this world,
Within which enlightenment is to be sought.
To seek enlightenment by separating from this world*

Is as absurd as to search for a rabbit’s horn.

To be in the world—but not saying that you can’t sit because of that. The form of zazen is not the only Zen; zazen is not for running away from society but to clarify in society with our opened eye. In this very mind of society is the Buddha Dharma. What is a Mind beyond any doubt? If we can even see this and know this, then we can begin to know how to be in the world. Within the world as it is right now, so confused and so chaotic, this is the place to find true Buddhism.

Sutra: *Right views are called transcendental;
Erroneous views are called worldly.
When all views, right or erroneous are discarded
Then the essence of bodhi appears.*

Kensho is not something we invent in our heads; it is to not be moved around, no matter what comes along. Even if we do zazen in the zendo, if we pull along all of our many thoughts, then we are still in the world—that is the world of delusion and dualism. Rather, to be in the middle of dualism and yet be unmoved by anything that comes along—this is *kensho*.

Sutra: This stanza is for the Sudden School.

It is also called the Great Ship of Dharma [for sailing across

the ocean of existence].

This stanza tells how to be in clear Mind and is not saying we have to train first and then be in clear Mind. See this directly, at this very moment, and it will give peace and calm to many people. This is why it is called the Great Ship.

Sutra: Kalpa after kalpa a person may be under delusion,

But once enlightened it takes only a moment to attain Buddhahood.

No matter how much you may hear his words, if you just hear them verbally it will go on for kalpas. But if once you really get it and you see clearly what he is saying, at that moment, that is the realization of true understanding.

Sutra: Before the conclusion, the Patriarch added, “Now, in this Ta-fan temple, I have addressed you on the teaching of the Sudden School. May all sentient beings of the dharmadhatu instantly understand the law and attain Buddhahood.”

“I am teaching right now at this Ta-fan temple, but may all of the virtue of teaching go to everyone here, so that they may realize their Buddha nature immediately.”

Sutra: After hearing what the patriarch said, the Prefect Wei, government officials, Taoists, and laymen were all enlightened. They made obeisance in a body and exclaimed unanimously, “Well done! Well done! Who would have expected that a Buddha was born in Kwangtung?”

For the purpose of hearing this teaching, the Prefect Wei had invited the Sixth Patriarch, and everyone who was there was enlightened on hearing what he taught. They were full of joy and gratitude and said that now they would know how to live in clarity—and who would expect that a Buddha was born in Kwangtung?

Goso Gunín guides Eno across the Yangtze river

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