

Precept & Jukai Study Workbook:

**ZEN CENTER OF LOS ANGELES  
BUDDHA ESSENCE TEMPLE**

**PRECEPTS & JUKAI  
STUDY WORKBOOK  
2020**



**ZEN CENTER OF LOS ANGELES  
Great Dragon Mountain  
Buddha Essence Temple**

**Precept & Jukai Series Workbook**

The study of the Zen Bodhisattva precepts is an integral part of Zen practice. Traditionally, the Zen Precepts are studied formally at the end of long years of training. We have found that, due to a lack of grounding in Zen as part of our Western cultural upbringing, it is important and useful for us to study the precepts at the beginning, middle and end of training, so that the precepts anchor themselves within the functioning of our daily lives.

The ZCLA Precept & Jukai Series is offered to anyone who wishes to study the Zen Bodhisattva precepts and may consider whether to receive Jukai. Practitioners are encouraged to study the precepts regardless of whether one decides to receive Jukai. The decision to receive Jukai is a personal choice and not a requirement for ZCLA membership.

Course participants are asked to fulfill all the requirements of the course.

The first Jukai Seminar workbook was produced by the Center in 1991 for the purposes of study only. This is an updated and expanded edition and is a work in progress. Not for publication. Permissions from authors have not been obtained.

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## PRECEPTS & JUKAI SERIES WORKBOOK

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# SECTION 1

## THE SIXTEEN BODHISATTVA PRECEPTS (KAI)

### Statement of the Precepts

The Sixteen Bodhisattva Precepts (Kai) that are given and received during Jukai are divided into three components: the Three Treasures, the Three Pure Precepts, and the Ten Grave Precepts.

- **The Three Treasures (Refuges, Jewels)** correspond to the “container” or “substance.” These are the essence of our true nature. The refuges are:
  1. Buddha, or the aspect of the oneness of life (equality); the unconditioned or unhindered state. (There are no precepts.)
  2. Dharma, or the aspect of the diversity of life (differences, multiplicity) as seen from oneness. (There are precepts, or a natural way in which life functions.)
  3. Sangha, or the aspect of the natural harmonious relationship of oneness and differences. (The precepts come alive through our actions and our relationship with self and other.)
- **The Three Pure Precepts** correspond to the order in which we function as the Three Treasures. These are:
  4. Do No Evil. (The Three Tenets: Not-Knowing)
  5. Do Good. (The Three Tenets: Bearing Witness)
  6. Do Good for Others. (The Three Tenets: Taking action that arises from Not-Knowing and Bearing Witness)
- **The Ten Grave Precepts** correspond to the more specific “functioning” of the Three Treasures in daily life. These aspects of life are:
  7. Non-Killing
  8. Non-Stealing
  9. Not Being Greedy
  10. Not Telling Lies
  11. Not Being Ignorant

12. Not Talking about Others' Errors and Faults
13. Not Elevating Oneself and Blaming Others
14. Not Being Stingy
15. Not Being Angry
16. Not Speaking Ill of the Three Treasures □

## Bodhidharma's One Mind Precepts

from *The Mind of Clover* by Roshi Robert Aitken

1. Bodhidharma said, "Self-nature is subtle and mysterious. In the realm of the everlasting dharma, not giving rise to concepts of killing is called the Precept of Not Killing."
2. Bodhidharma said, "Self-nature is subtle and mysterious. In the realm of the unattainable dharma, not having thoughts of gaining is called the Precept of Not Stealing."
3. Bodhidharma said, "Self-nature is subtle and mysterious. In the realm of the ungilded dharma, not creating a veneer of attachment is called the Precept of Not Misusing Sex."
4. Bodhidharma said, "Self-nature is subtle and mysterious. In the realm of the inexplicable dharma, not preaching a single word is called the Precept of Not Lying."
5. Bodhidharma said, "Self-nature is subtle and mysterious. In the realm of the intrinsically pure dharma, not giving rise to delusions is called the Precept of Not Giving or Taking Drugs."
6. Bodhidharma said, "Self-nature is subtle and mysterious. In the realm of the flawless dharma, not expounding upon error is called the Precept of Not Speaking of Faults of Others."
7. Bodhidharma said, "Self-nature is subtle and mysterious. In the realm of the equitable dharma, not dwelling on *I* against *you* is called the Precept of Not Praising Yourself While Abusing Others."
8. Bodhidharma said, "Self-nature is subtle and mysterious. In the genuine, all-pervading dharma, not being stingy about a single thing is called the Precept of Not Sparing the Dharma Assets."
9. Bodhidharma said, "Self-nature is subtle and mysterious. In the realm of the selfless dharma, not contriving reality for the self is called the Precept of Not Indulging in Anger."
10. Bodhidharma said, "Self-nature is subtle and mysterious. In the realm of the One, not holding dualistic concepts of ordinary beings and sages is called the Precept of Not Defaming the Three Treasures." □

## Instructions on the Precepts (Kyojukaimon) by Eihei Dōgen Zenji

The Great Precepts of the Buddha are maintained carefully by the Buddhas. Buddhas give them to Buddhas; teachers transmit them to teachers. Receiving the precepts goes beyond the three times; realization continues unceasingly from ancient times to the present. Our Great Master Shakyamuni Buddha transmitted the precepts to Mahakashyapa, and Mahakashyapa transmitted them to Ananda. Thus they have been transmitted generation after generation.

*Before continuing on to hear Dōgen Zenji's instructions on the Bodhisattva Precepts, let us recite the Gatha of Atonement:*

*All karma every committed by me since of old,  
Due to my beginningless greed, hatred, lust, envy and delusion,  
Born of my actions, speech, and thought,  
Now I atone for it all.*

The Three Treasures have three merits and virtues called the One Body Three Treasures, the Realized Three Treasures, and the Maintained Three Treasures. Anuttara Samyak Sambodhi is called the Buddha Treasure. Being pure and genuine apart from dust is the Dharma Treasure. The virtues and merits of harmony are the Sangha Treasure. These are the One Body Three Treasures.

To realize and actualize the Bodhi is called the Buddha Treasure of the Realized Three Treasures. The realization of the Buddha is the Dharma Treasure. To penetrate into the Buddha-Dharma is the Sangha Treasure. These are the Realized Three Treasures.

Guiding the heavens and guiding the people; sometimes appearing in the vast emptiness and sometimes appearing in the dust is the Buddha Treasure of the Maintained Three Treasures. Sometimes revolving in the leaves and sometimes revolving in the oceanic storage; guiding inanimate things and guiding animate beings is the Dharma Treasure. Freed from all suffering and liberated from the House of the Three Worlds is the Sangha Treasure.

When one takes refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, the Great Precepts of all Buddhas are obtained. Make Enlightenment and Compassion your teachers, and do not follow misleading ways.

### **The Three Pure Precepts**

First, Ceasing from Evil

This is the abiding place of laws and rules of all Buddhas; this is the very source of laws and rules of all Buddhas.

Second, Doing Good

This is the Dharma of Samyak Sambodhi; this is the Way of all beings.

Third, Doing Good for Others

This is to transcend the profane and to be beyond the holy; this is to liberate oneself and others.

These are called the Three Pure Precepts.

### **The Ten Grave Precepts**

#### First, Non-Killing

Life is non-killing. The seed of the Buddha grows continuously. Maintain the wisdom-life of the Buddha and do not kill life.

#### Second, Non-Stealing

The mind and the externals are just as thus. The gate of liberation has opened.

#### Third, Not Being Greedy

The Three Wheels – body, mouth, and consciousness (or body, speech, and mind) – are pure and clean. Nothing is desired; go the same way with the Buddhas.

#### Fourth, Not Telling Lies

The Dharma Wheel unceasingly turns, and there is neither excess nor lack. Sweet dews permeate; gain the essence and gain the truth.

#### Fifth, Not Being Ignorant

It has never been; don't be defiled. It is indeed the Great Clarity.

#### Sixth, Not Talking about Others' Errors and Faults

In the midst of the Buddha-dharma, we are the same Way, the same Dharma, the same realization, the same practice. Do not talk about others' errors and faults. Do not destroy the Way.

#### Seventh, Not Elevating Oneself by Blaming Others

Buddhas and teachers realized absolute emptiness and realized the great earth. When the great body is manifested, there is neither outside nor inside in emptiness. When the Dharma-body is manifested, there is not even a single square inch of soil on the earth.

#### Eighth, Not Being Stingy

One phrase, one verse, ten thousand forms, one hundred grasses; one Dharma, one realization, all Buddhas, all teachers. Since the beginning, there has never been being stingy.

#### Ninth, Not Being Angry

It is not regress, it is not advance; it is not real, it is not unreal. There is illumined cloud ocean; there is ornamented cloud ocean.

#### Tenth, Not Speaking Ill of the Three Treasures

Expounding the Dharma with the body is a harbor and a fish pool. The virtues return to the ocean of reality. You should not comment on them. Just hold them and serve them.

These are called the Ten Grave Precepts. □

## ZCLA's "A Day of Reflection"

*To begin the Day of Reflection, please join your palms together and recite the following with utmost sincerity:*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, now recite the Gatha of Atonement:

All karma ever committed by me since of old,  
Due to my beginningless greed, hatred, lust, envy and delusion.  
Born of my actions, speech, and thought.  
Now I atone for it all. (*Repeat 3x*)

Now being mindful of the purity of my body, speech, and mind, I commit myself to observing this Day of Reflection with the following practices:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, take refuge in the Buddha. I vow to embody Oneness, the awakened nature of all beings. I take refuge in the Dharma. I vow to embody Diversity, the ocean of wisdom and compassion. I take refuge in the Sangha. I vow to embody Harmony, the interdependence of all creations. (*Repeat 3x*)

I, \_\_\_\_\_, for the coming day commit myself to Not-knowing, the source of all manifestations, and seeing all manifestations as the teachings of Not-knowing. I commit myself to Bearing Witness, by encountering all creations with respect and dignity and by allowing myself to be touched by the joys and pain of the universe. I commit myself to Healing, by inviting all hungry spirits into the mandala of my practice and using my energy and love for healing myself, the earth, humanity, and all creations.

As peacemakers throughout all space and time have observed the following ten precepts, so will I, \_\_\_\_\_, being mindful of the interdependence of Oneness and Diversity, observe these practices:

1. I will recognize that I am not separate from all that is. This is the practice of Non-killing. I will refrain from leading a harmful life and from encouraging others to do so. I will live in harmony with all life and the environment that sustains it.
2. I will be satisfied with what I have. This is the practice of Non-stealing. I will refrain from taking anything not given and from encouraging others to steal. I will freely give, ask for, and accept what is needed.
3. I will encounter the diversity of life with respect and dignity. This is the practice of Chaste Conduct. I will refrain from unchastity and from creating the conditions for others to be unchaste. I will give and accept love and friendship without clinging.
4. I will listen and speak from the heart and deceive no one. This is the practice of Non-lying. I will refrain from lying and from creating the conditions for others to lie. I will see and act in accordance with what is.

5. I will cultivate a mind that sees clearly. This is the practice of Not Being Deluded. I will refrain from using intoxicants that delude the mind and from encouraging others to be deluded. I will embrace all experience directly.
6. I will accept what each moment has to offer. This is the practice of Not Talking About Others' Errors and Faults. I will refrain from talking about others' errors and faults and from encouraging others to do so. I will acknowledge responsibility for everything in my life.
7. I will speak what I perceive to be the truth without guilt or blame. This is the practice of Not Elevating Myself and Blaming Others. I will refrain from elevating myself and blaming others and from encouraging others to do so. I will give my best effort and accept the results.
8. I will use all of the ingredients of my life. This is the practice of Not Being Stingy. I will refrain from fostering a mind of poverty in myself and others and from encouraging others to do so.
9. I will refrain from harboring resentment, rage, or revenge. This is the practice of Not Being Angry. I will refrain from creating the conditions for others to be angry. I will accept negative experiences as part of my practice. I will recognize and express my emotions as part of my practice.
10. I will honor my life as a peacemaker. This is the practice of Not Speaking Ill of The Three Treasures. I will refrain from speaking ill of The Three Treasures and from creating conditions for others to do so. I will recognize myself and others as manifestations of the Oneness of Buddha, the Diversity of Dharma, and the Harmony of Sangha.



## **TRANSFER OF MERIT**

*To be recited at the end of the Day of Reflection:*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have committed myself to this Day of Reflection. May the merits of this practice be extended to all those who dedicate their lives to the practice of peace, and to all those who suffer from the oppression of my own greed, hatred, lust, envy, and delusion. I wish to transform the passions that afflict me, and to realize and actualize the Enlightened Way.

I have taken refuge in the Buddha.  
I have taken refuge in the Dharma.  
I have taken refuge in the Sangha. (*Repeat 3x*)

## The Precept Viewpoints

The precepts reveal the various aspects of our lives:

1. The *literal* aspect (Hinayana) or straight observance of the precepts.
2. The *relational* aspect (Mahayana) or being responsible for the consequences of cause and effect, taking into account time, place, person, and amount. This involves the use of *upaya* or Skillful Means.
3. The *intrinsic* aspect (Buddhayana) or buddha-nature, no separation from the beginning.

The precepts can also be looked at from the viewpoint of:

1. Body
2. Speech
3. Mind

And also from the ground of the Three Poisons:

1. Greed (coveting, grasping)
2. Anger (aggression)
3. Ignorance

And from the ground of the Three Virtues:

1. Aspiration (generosity: giving and receiving)
2. Determination (patience: forbearance, long view)
3. Wisdom (non-duality, oneness)

Question to ponder: When is it appropriate to uphold the precepts? When is it appropriate to defile them?

## The Three Perspectives

**For this class**, we will consider the Ten Grave Precepts from the Literal, Relational, and Intrinsic perspectives. As you work on each of the precepts for a week, please reflect on each from the following perspectives:

1. **The Literal/Fundamental Perspective.** This is the literal observance of the precepts. These are the rules of the Sangha that regulate the outward manifestations of one's behavior. Inner thoughts, unless expressed as external actions, are not a consideration here. The key is: Does the action of my physical body (hands, mouth, etc.) uphold this precept? The emphasis is on maintaining one's own purity, keeping the precepts for oneself. Strictly speaking, from this perspective there is no way not to violate the precepts.
2. **The Relational Perspective.** This is the subjective meaning or compassionate spirit of the precepts characterized by being responsible for cause and effect, the Four Considerations, and use of Skillful Means. The Four Considerations in coming to a choice of action are the time, the place, the people involved (who, what, where, why, when, or the facts of the situation), and the amount (how much action is necessary, appropriate).

The spirit of the Relational precept is the mind of compassion and reverence, which flows from the natural activity of Buddha-nature. Actions that express this mind uphold the precept. Actions that betray this mind violate the precepts. This perspective is also characterized by the "gray areas" of life, where choices are not clear-cut and the "do not" in some circumstances may be a "do" in others, and vice versa. We work with our ability to determine what is "right" and "wrong" in any given situation, understanding that, from the relational perspective, there is no hard-and-fast "right" or "wrong." The key is: Does my action free others from suffering? The emphasis is on keeping the precepts for the benefit of all beings (compassion and reverence).

3. **The Intrinsic Perspective.** This is the intrinsic meaning of the precept, or no-separation. These precepts are themselves the Buddha nature, our true self, the absolute, Oneness. It is the root-source of all the precepts. In the Buddha sphere, there is no duality, i.e., there is no stealing, no one who steals, nothing to be stolen; no subject, no object. The key is not being separate. The emphasis is on Buddha-nature freely functioning so that precepts are not necessary. We can freely use good and bad to help others. Strictly speaking, from this aspect there is no way to violate the precepts.

# **The Bodhisattvas and the Three Tenets**

## **by Roshi Wendy Egyoku Nakao**

A bodhisattva, literally an awake (bodhi) being (sattva), is an ideal in Mahayana Buddhism. Having intimately experienced the interconnection of all life, a bodhisattva vows to work for the awakening of all and not just for oneself alone.

Many years ago, I found a used copy of a book by Zen pioneer Nyogen Senzaki Sensei at the Bodhi Tree Bookstore. Senzaki Sensei had inscribed a dedication which read: “Your gladness is my gladness, I have no other gladness than this.” When you are not happy, I cannot be happy. We simply cannot ignore each other, because fundamentally we are all the same nature. In recognition of this fact, a bodhisattva works tirelessly for the welfare of all. This is not approached with a sense of an overbearing responsibility, but rather a sense of joy. In the midst of suffering, the bodhisattva connects with the profound joy of serving others.

In Buddhism, there are several major bodhisattvas: Great Wisdom Manjusri, Great Compassion Avalokitesvara, Great Activity Samantabhadra, and Great Vow Kshitigarbha. The bodhisattvas are not historical people, but archetypical energies common to each and everyone of us. As Zen ancestor Tenkei Denson Zenji would often say “Avalokitesvara is your name.” These are our names—we practice to awaken these energies and qualities within ourselves. We simply keep enlarging our capacity to embody these energies and unique characteristics of serving.

How can we work with these energies in a very practical way and embody them on the spot? To explore this question, let us look at the Three Tenets: not-knowing, bearing witness, and loving or healing action. These Three Tenets are a recasting of the Three Pure Precepts, which are part of the Sixteen Bodhisattva Precepts. The first Pure Precept, do not do evil, is recast as not-knowing; the second, do good, as bearing witness; and the third, do good for others, as loving action.

When practicing with the first Tenet, not-knowing, we awaken the wisdom energy of Manjusri Bodhisattva. Manjusri, the central figure of the zendo, is depicted holding a sword that cuts through delusion. So the practice of wielding Manjusri’s sword is to STOP—stop all knowing.

This is the first step. We release all our knowing, setting knowing aside, so that we remain open to all that is arising. The sword cuts through and we empty out completely. There is no hesitation here—it is simply a flash of openness; a moment of not fixing any person, any idea, any position. We simply stop. In doing so, we realign ourselves with the essential nature of life: no position, no self.

We practice this instantaneously, in the snap of our fingers or the blink of an eyelash.

What happens when we stop? From experience we know that when we stop, we become receptive. We have released everything and can actually take in whatever is happening. It only takes a moment to arouse Manjusri’s wisdom. Now we have a chance to understand each other, to connect with the joy and suffering of another and come into oneness or harmony with another person or situation.

Having stopped, the second tenet manifests: bearing witness. In bearing witness, Avalokitesvara's Great Compassion is awakened through the practice of deep listening. The bottom line here is caring—caring enough to listen completely to what is manifesting: pain, fear, despair, sadness, joy, confusion, serenity. This is full-body listening: we listen with our eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, mind. Bearing witness recognizes our intimate life-connectedness, and so we practice listening without judgment. The key quality here is non-judging—we do not evaluate or pick and choose or give in to our fixed positions, but rather we are open and learning. In each moment, we are actively stopping, and accepting without judgment, whatever is arising. We acknowledge and deeply accept the multitude of facets of any given situation. In this way, we are in intimate relationship to the joys and suffering of another.

The quality of bearing witness or non-judging has two important characteristics. These characteristics are embodied in Kanzeon and Kanjizai, the Japanese names for Avalokitesvara (Sanskrit). As Kanzeon, the “One who Hears the Cries of the World,” we practice connecting and staying close to the suffering of others. As Kanjizai, “One who settles in the Self,” we remain grounded in not-knowing.

In bearing witness, we identify completely with another. Your suffering is my suffering; my suffering is your suffering—in this way, little by little, we enlarge our capacity to attend to the needs of the world. Here we are not speaking of a self-centered concern, for it is obvious that one cannot fit something so vast into the small container of self-concern. Rather, here we have some experience of forgetting the self—something vast is being awakened in us. We are getting out of the way and settling into the situation.

Action naturally arises from not-knowing and bearing witness. This is the action of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva. We call it a loving or healing action because not-knowing and bearing witness without bias lead to love. We have identified with another. Bearing witness breaks the heart open to love, and when we love, we act. We simply must do something. We cannot know what this action will be by simply thinking about what to do in a given situation. We must plunge into the whole messy situation at hand.

Kshitigarbha Bodhisattva (J. Jizo) is the energy of never turning away. The practice here is to develop stability—don't wobble! When we practice the Three Tenets, our capacity to remain present in suffering expands. And in remaining present, the recognition grows that we are needed and are, in fact, indispensable to others. This is not a self-centered activity, but rather a giving over of oneself to the Great Vows of the bodhisattvas. The vows fulfill us; the vows awaken us; the vows save us.

# Settling into the Heart of Buddha

by Sensei Wendy Egyoku Nakao

*Water Wheel*, Mar/Apr, 1998

## Working with the Precepts

In our lineage, the Sixteen Precepts are one of the three pillars of practice, the other two pillars being Samadhi and Wisdom. These Precepts are the Buddha's Precepts, the natural expression of our life as the awakened nature that is our birthright.

We practice the Precepts from many different perspectives. Let's explore three of these perspectives from which to open up the Ten Grave Precepts. These perspectives are: 1) the fundamentalist aspect, 2) the compassionate aspect, and 3) the absolute aspect.

From the outset, let me emphasize that our practice is to raise an awareness of all three perspectives and of when we are ignoring one or another. In this way, we come to know our life from as broad a view as possible, thus transforming our limited, short-sighted attitudes. These perspectives can help us to become as all-seeing and all-sided as possible, moving us beyond positions of merely solidifying opinions and attitudes.

The Precepts are often stated as "do not's": do not lie, do not steal, etc. The Zen Peacemaker expression (see next page) takes a different turn. Regardless of how one chooses to state these Precepts, it is important to see that the Precepts are not chains, not a list of "do and do not" that results in self-righteous and rigid behavior.

The Precepts have their home in generosity, for they are life enhancing; in gratitude, for they illuminate the functioning of our life; and in respect, without which we are something less than human. The Precepts are a breath of freshness, inspiring us to live from truth and not as an imitation of what someone tells us we should or should not do. Precepts help us reflect deeply upon ourselves and examine how we live.

Now for the three perspectives. The first is the fundamentalist perspective. Sometimes it is called the literal or the Hinayana (Small Vehicle) aspect, but I prefer to call it fundamental because it is very basic, a black-and-white perspective, not characterized by the gray areas of interpretation. "Do not kill" means do not kill. "Do not lie" means do not lie. It is straightforward: simply don't do it. Another reminder is that this perspective engages the body: do not use one's body to lie, cheat, steal, etc.

The second perspective is of compassionate action. This is sometimes called the Mahayana (Bodhisattva or Great Vehicle) aspect. It is characterized by the so-called gray areas of life, where choices are not black and white, but where we confront the possibility that the "do not" may be a "do," and vice versa. Our partner begs us to help end their life due to unbearable pain. We find ourselves or our partner unexpectedly pregnant. We come into information that will hurt innocent people. We find ourselves in situations where the course of action is not clear-cut: how do we engage our compassion?

When considering compassionate action, there are several guidelines that we can apply to help us make decisions. For any given situation, we can consider the facts, appropriateness, and motivation. Facts are fairly straightforward: who, when, where, how. Appropriateness is subjective: we consider the appropriateness of our actions and how much action is necessary.

What is the right amount of caring? And third, we consider our motivation, paying particular attention to the inner whispers of self-protection.

We encounter many everyday life situations that are not grave but which push our buttons for some reason or another. When our buttons are pushed, we can raise our awareness. In doing so, we see how we project outwardly and can respond by softening the rigid boundaries of our self-protection. We have the opportunity to see tightly held beliefs and attitudes and open to the possibilities of life as it is.

Of course, no matter how well considered, our decisions have consequences. We cannot avoid cause and effect, and therefore the life of precept practice is revealed in how things unfold from moment to moment, year to year, lifetime to lifetime. In some sense, we never really know if we have acted sufficiently. Regardless, each of us is responsible for our life. We simply do the best we can at any given time.

The third perspective is the absolute. Sometimes it is called the essential or Buddhayana (Buddha Vehicle) aspect. This is the perspective of emptiness: no black, no white, no gray, no color. Here there is only the naked self, without the clothing of our conditioning. This perspective reveals to us that ultimately, there is no such thing as stealing: no one to steal, no one to steal from, nothing to steal. In other words, non-stealing. This is the undifferentiated state in which stealing is not even possible; we have stepped beyond “do” and “do not.”

Often when people hear of this absolute perspective, they say, “Well then, it doesn’t matter what I do.” This is wrong understanding. It matters very much what you do. Living life as emptiness is a life of decisive action based not on our personal issues, but on the impersonal nature of the Self. From this perspective, we begin to see that practice is not so much about making our life “work,” but about settling into the heart of Buddha. The heart of Buddha is simply our life as it is.

Once again, let me emphasize that all three perspectives - fundamental, compassionate, and absolute - are essential for wholeness. To only be fundamental would result in unbearable rigidity; to hold only an absolute position would be psychopathic. How we practice with these perspectives reveals the kind of person that we are.

In precept practice, we simply do the best that we can. Whatever we do, we raise our awareness. This is a practice of continuous awareness. In the midst of the ever-changing conditions of our life, do we have the awareness to respond to whatever is happening in a way that exposes our life as it is? This non-attachment leaves us open to the infinite possibilities of the heart of Buddha. Deeply examine this heart of Buddha and realize it as your own life.

# The Three Pure Precepts

## Dōgen Zenji's "Kyojukaimon"

First, Ceasing from Evil

This is the abiding place of laws and rules of all buddhas; this is the very source of laws and rules of all buddhas.

Second, Doing Good

This is the Dharma of *samyak sambodhi*; this is the Way of all beings.

Third, Doing Good for Others

This is to transcend the profane, and to be beyond the holy; this is to liberate oneself and others.

## ZCLA (old version)

Do not do evil.

Do good.

Do good for others.

## ZCLA (current version) and Zen Peacemaker Circle

I commit myself to Not-Knowing, the source of all manifestations, and seeing all manifestations as the teachings of Not-Knowing.

I commit myself to Bearing Witness, by encountering all creations with respect and dignity and by allowing myself to be touched by the joys and pains of the universe.

I commit myself to Healing, by inviting all hungry spirits into the mandala of my practice and using my energy and love for healing myself, the earth, humanity, and all creations.

## The Three Tenets (Revised Zen Peacemaker Order)

The Three Tenets: Not-Knowing, Bearing Witness, and Taking Action that arises from Not-Knowing and Bearing Witness.

Taking refuge in The Three Treasures, I vow to live a life of:

Not-Knowing, by giving up fixed ideas about ourselves and the universe; Bearing Witness to the joy and suffering of the world; Taking Action that arises from Not-Knowing and Bearing Witness.

## Version from the Everyday Zen Foundation (Roshi Norman Fischer)

I vow to avoid all action that creates suffering.

I vow to do all action that creates true happiness.

I vow to act with others always in mind.

# The Three Treasures: Buddha, Dharma and Sangha

## by Sensei Bernie Tetsugen Glassman

Dharma Talk given at ZCLA on December 3, 1977

There are sixteen precepts and the first three are the Three Treasures. In the actual Jukai Ceremony, before receiving the Three Treasures, we chant:

*Namo ji po Butsu*

*Namo ji po Ho*

*Namo ji po So*

*Namo honshi Shakyamuni Butsu*

The first three lines are literally: be Buddha, be Dharma, be Sangha. Then *namo Honshi Shakyamuni Butsu*, be the original teacher, Shakyamuni Buddha. I translate this *namo* as “be.” Be one with Buddha or be Buddha. At Fusatsu, we also chant *namo Past Seven Buddhas*, *namo Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva*, *namo Maitreya Buddha*. Normally that word is translated as “homage” - homage to Shakyamuni Buddha, homage to Dharma. We could translate it that way. It all depends on our understanding and what that word means. Definitely, if you have any feeling of dichotomy, that is the wrong translation. So paying homage to Buddha, if you’re separating yourself from Buddha, that’s wrong. Homage to Dharma, if you’re separating yourself from Dharma, that’s wrong. And homage to Sangha, if you think of Sangha as something to give homage to outside of yourself, that’s wrong. Seeing that and translating it as “be Buddha”, “be Dharma”, “be Sangha” is more specific.

What we are doing at the beginning of the Jukai Ceremony, and what we are doing in the Fusatsu Ceremony by chanting “*namo ji po Butsu / namo ji po Ho / namo ji po So*”, is inviting the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha to take part in this ceremony. How? By us becoming Buddha, Dharma, Sangha and being the ceremony. Fusatsu is the same thing: “*namo Past Seven Buddhas*.” We’re inviting the Past Seven Buddhas to take part in the Fusatsu. How? By being the Past Seven Buddhas.

That means when we chant, just fully be that. We’re not chanting to something else or to someone else. Just chant. Just be. If you are fully just chanting itself, right there Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha have joined. Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha are right there manifesting. So when we chant: *namo ji po Butsu / namo ji po Ho*, that should be the feeling or attitude. It is not just chanting, but being chanting itself. So doing the whole ceremony of Jukai or the whole ceremony of Fusatsu is completely different because Buddha, Dharma, Sangha are present, are manifested. If it isn’t manifested, then you’ve ruined the invitation.

What about the Three Treasures? In a way, this is the most important. The Sixteen Precepts that we receive are all an expansion of these three. Really, it’s only an expansion of one, which is buddha. Be buddha, the first. If we fully understand what that is, what it

means to be buddha, what is meant when Shakyamuni Buddha said: “How wonderful, how wonderful,” then we truly have Jukai. All sentient beings are nothing but Buddha. If we fully understand this, then we understand all the Precepts.

We start off with just this one and for convenience of discussion, we divide this one into three called the Three Treasures: Buddha, Dharma, Sangha. And for convenience of exposition, we divide that into the Three Pure Precepts. And then for further convenience, we divide those three into the next Ten Grave Precepts, so the remaining thirteen are nothing but aspects of these three or of this one. So in studying the Sixteen Precepts, essentially we’re studying sixteen different ways of appreciating Buddha, appreciating the fact that we are buddha.

It always boils down to just seeing the one fact itself. In our everyday lives, what is that one fact? It’s what’s happening right here, right now, this very moment. This very moment, it’s an absolute thing. It’s exactly what’s happening right here, right now, and it contains everything — the past, the present, the future — everything. It’s so obvious. Just as obvious, we can discuss this very moment in millions and millions of ways. Any way we wish to discuss it eliminates the other ways. So any way we wish to discuss it is partial, can’t be complete. There’s no way to discuss this very moment in any complete manner. Whatever word we choose to use, whatever concepts we choose to use, whatever references we choose to use to discuss this very moment automatically leaves out the other references. So again, to realize what Buddha is, or to realize the Sixteen Precepts, is to realize what this moment is, what here and now means, what it is.

How do you realize it? In a way, you just see it. It’s here and now. It’s this moment. Just accept it. That’s all there is. Anything else we want to say about it is not it. It can’t be. It’s a model, an image that’s partial. So just accept this very moment without anything thrown on top of it. That’s the very core. But because it’s so hard to do, we break it up and start talking about it. In fact, that’s what I’m going to do now. It seems silly. Why don’t we just stop at this place? But it would be too short. So we’ll confuse the issue by bringing up all this terminology.

**The Three Treasures.** *sambo.* “*Sam*” is “three” in Japanese and “*bo*” is “treasures.” We talk about Buddha, Dharma, Sangha in three different ways. What I’d like to do is briefly go through these three different ways. In koan study there are about a hundred koans on these Three Treasures, so about thirty-five koans on each of the three ways of looking at the Three Treasures. It is a very detailed study. And in a way, studying it in that kind of detail really summarizes what Buddhism is all about.

**One Body Three Treasures.** First: *itai sambo.* “*i*” is “one”, “*ta*” is “body,” like *tai ch’i.* “*Ch’i*” is “energy” and “*ta*” is “body” - “*itai.*” The Three Treasures of One Body. This is the usual way that we think about the Three Treasures. First, being Buddha; second, Dharma; third, Sangha. In this case, the implication of Buddha is Vairochana Buddha. It’s dharmakaya, the world of emptiness, the state of equality, the state of oneness. Buddha. There are two types of mandalas, and in one of them, the center is Vairochana Buddha, the manifestation of equality, of emptiness, representing the sphere of the dharmakaya.

But going beyond the representation, what is it? What is the state of oneness, the state of equality, the world of emptiness? If we relate it to our very life at this very moment, what is the state of oneness? It's this very moment without any discrimination, without any dichotomizing. It's the absolute fact of this very moment, the world of emptiness. These are no ideas, no concepts put upon it. This very moment is nothing but Vairochana Buddha. This very moment is nothing but mu, nothing but counting the breath, nothing but shikantaza. Any discriminating at all, any thinking at all, any ideas, any concepts that come up take you out of this world of emptiness, out of this state of equality. That's the Buddha of One Body.

Dharma of One Body, that's all the phenomena. This very moment exists and consists of everything: of me talking, people listening, stick in my hand, book on this table, microphone, children playing outside, the whole world of phenomena existing right now, happening right now. That's the dharma. Every single thing different, happening right now.

So the mandala expands: Vairochana Buddha in the center, but multitudes of things all around. That's the Dharma of One Body. The Sangha of One Body is harmony. That's the harmony that exists between Buddha and Dharma. Being one thing, this very moment, Buddha and Dharma can't be different. Vairochana Buddha and the multitudes of bodhisattvas and buddhas and sentient beings can't be different. The world of emptiness and the world of form can't be different. The world of equality and the world of differences can't be different. It's just this very moment itself. So harmony, the intertwining of the Buddha and Dharma, is the intertwining of equality and differences, of form and emptiness. That harmony is the most intimate kind of harmony that can exist because it's not the harmony of two different things. It's the harmony of one thing, being seen or looked at in two different ways. That's the Sangha of One Body.

**Manifested or Realized Three Treasures.** The next way of looking at these Three Treasures is as the “manifested” or “realized” Three Treasures. In this case Buddha is Shakyamuni Buddha. Who is Shakyamuni Buddha? We have to realize the state of equality, the state of phenomena. We have to realize what Buddha is, what Dharma is, what Sangha is, ourselves. We have to experience it. And if so, we become realized buddhas. Shakyamuni Buddha did exactly that. Not realizing it, we are still Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, but we aren't the Realized Buddha. We have to experience it ourselves and not take the word of anyone else. Then the manifested or realized dharma becomes the teaching of Shakyamuni Buddha — the sutras, discourses — the form of the Realized Buddha. The Sangha becomes those disciples of Buddha who realize the Way.

**Maintained or Abiding Three Treasures.** Last is the “maintained” Three Treasures. This very moment is nothing but the Three Treasures, yet we have to realize it and manifest it, and it has to be maintained. It has to be transmitted from generation to generation. In the Jukai Ceremony, Roshi will say: “These Precepts were handed down from Shakyamuni Buddha generation after generation, up to myself. And now I hand

them down to you.” This lineage is extremely important, the Maintained Three Treasures. The buddha is all the images, all the iconography that we have. The Dharma is the teachings and the texts of those who have realized the way from generation to generation. The Sangha is the students and disciples who have transmitted the Way from generation to generation.

All of these three ways of looking at the Three Treasures have to be there. One Body - that's this very moment itself. If we don't realize it, if we don't realize what this very moment is, we can't say that we are the Three Treasures even though we are the Three Treasures. Even saying it, we can't accept it. So we have to experience it, and this has happened from generation to generation. It becomes the most vital function of those who realize the way — to maintain it so that it continues from generation to generation even though from generation to generation, we are still nothing but the Three Treasures itself.

QUESTION: Why is it the dharma sometimes means phenomena and sometimes means teaching? Is there a way to kind of tie it together, a reason why one word means those two?

SENSEI: Well, again, there are these three ways of looking at it, of talking about the Three Treasures. First, the One Body; there it's the world of phenomena. It's all the things that are happening right now. This first way of looking at it, the Three Treasures of One Body — since we're talking about this very moment, it includes everything, whether you realize it or not. This is the state that Shakyamuni Buddha is talking about when he says: “How wonderful, how wonderful, all sentient beings are the Buddha!” Shakyamuni is realizing it, so he is in that second category - Realized Buddha - and he's talking about all sentient beings in this first category. Whether you realize it or not, you are Buddha. Whether you realize it or not, all phenomena are nothing but the Dharma.

When you realize it, then what you say becomes the teaching. It's still phenomena. But it's the actions and the speech and the written word of someone who has realized it, so it becomes the teaching. That's what this second category is talking about, the realized Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Not really seeing this has led to some confusion. So people say, “Well, everything is Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, and so everything I say, that's the same thing as the teachings of the Buddha.” You can say that if you want, but you're talking about the state in this first category of One Body. There's a difference between those kind of teachings and those of somebody who has realized what it is all about. That's the second phase. That's really important. While we're all the Buddha, we have to realize it, and, having realized it, there is a difference. The last one is appreciating what it means to maintain it. That's the meaning of all these images, of all these talks. It has a tremendous value so we can study and appreciate what it means to maintain it.

There is a difference between the teachings of Buddha and every phenomena being a teaching. In the second, the Dharma is the teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha, and in the third, it's the teachings of the whole lineage. What's being said here is that all three are different. A lot of times we combine everything into one. That's our usual way of doing

things. Everything's the teachings; everything is buddha. Okay, looking at it in these three ways, we should explore what are the differences. What are the differences between the teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha and the teachings of the Sixth Patriarch? What is the difference between the teachings of Maezumi Roshi and the teachings of anyone else? That's what is being asked here when we study it in these three ways. It's splitting it up. Of course, it all boils down to one, this very moment. And from there, we're dividing it so we can study the intricacies of the differences.

In all of these, if you want to really put yourself into it, take the Buddha the three ways. First, One Body, it's Vairochana Buddha, the world of emptiness or equality; second, Shakyamuni Buddha; third, the images, that's Manjusri Bodhisattva up there on the altar, that image. All three are ways of looking at Buddha, which means that they're all the same, and again that they all boil down to this very moment. Yet they're split up and studied in these three different ways, so what are the differences? By splitting it up, it means to see that there are differences, and what are those differences?

That's why in the beginning, I said it will make it a little bit more confusing because it's easier to just look at this very moment and say that it's all here now and this is what's happening. Then when we start studying the detailed differences, it tends to make it sound complicated, but when we grasp those complications, then our understanding of this very moment becomes clearer. And the same with the Sangha. There are three ways of looking at that: the harmony, the immediate disciples of Shakyamuni Buddha, and the students of the Way. Now what are the differences?

QUESTION: I was wondering if it's necessary to understand all three of those stages before you receive the Precepts.

SENSEI: No, it's impossible. Receiving the Precepts, having the Jukai Ceremony, is another form of maintaining the Three Treasures, whether we understand it or not. To really understand it implies the second category of these Three Treasures — realizing. To really realize it. So it's very rare that we take the Precepts after having this full realization. Usually it's the other way around. The Sixth Patriarch would be an example of somebody who realized the Way and then later on took the Precepts. Usually it works the other way around. Usually we have that feeling of strong commitment way before we're fully realizing what it's all about. In koan study, it's left for the very end of koan study to explore these Precepts. We deal with about a hundred koans, as I mentioned, on the Three Treasures, and then another hundred koans on the rest of the Precepts. But receiving the Precepts itself is a form of maintaining the Three Treasures. The last gatha in the Jukai Ceremony is saying essentially that having taken these Precepts, you now are nothing but buddha itself. ■

## The Benefits of the Three Treasures from *Jiun Sonja Hogoshu*

Translated by Taizan Maezumi with John Daishin Buksbazen

Reprinted from *On Zen Practice: Body, Breath, and Mind*  
by Taizan Maezumi and Bernie Glassman, Appendix III

If you don't receive the Three Treasures, you may fall into the three unfortunate realms of re-birth: the hells, the realms of hungry ghosts, and the realm of animals. Having received them, even if your faith in them is shallow, you will receive the benefits of the human realm. When your faith in them is deep, you will receive the benefits of heaven. Having true faith in them, you will receive the benefit of *sravakas* [of the Dharma] and *pratyekabuddhas* [realizers of truth]. Having complete, fully realized faith in the Three Treasures, you will attain bodhisattvahood and buddhahood. The distinction among these degrees of faith depends upon the shallowness or profundity of your faith in the Three Treasures.

When you have faith in the Buddha, casting away your body and mind, there is no mind aside from the Buddha, and no Buddha aside from the mind; there are no beings aside from Buddha, and no Buddha aside from beings; there is no land apart from Buddha, and no Buddha apart from land. This is what is meant by having faith in the Buddha. When you really penetrate this, you may attain great enlightenment even before you arise from your seat.

When you have faith in the Dharma, casting away your body and mind, there is no Dharma aside from your body, and aside from your body, no Dharma; there are no beings aside from Dharma and no Dharma aside from beings; there are no mountains, rivers, and the great earth aside from Dharma, and no Dharma aside from mountains, rivers, and the great earth. This is what is meant by having faith in the Dharma. When you really penetrate this, you may attain great enlightenment even before you arise from your seat.

When you have faith in the Sangha, casting away your body and mind, there is no Sangha aside from yourself, and no self aside from Sangha; there are no beings aside from Sangha, and no Sangha aside from beings; there are no phenomena aside from the Sangha, and no Sangha aside from phenomena. This is what is meant by having faith in the Sangha. When you really penetrate this, you may attain great enlightenment even before you arise from your seat.

# **The Ten Grave Precepts**

## **by Sensei Bernie Tetsugen Glassman**

Dharma Talk given at ZCLA on May 13, 1978

In the Gatha of Atonement, we chant: “All the evil karma ever committed by me since of old, born of my body, mouth, and thought.” These Ten Grave Precepts are broken up into those concerning the body, those concerning the mouth, and those concerning the mind.

The Ten Grave Precepts are not necessarily commandments for us to watch and obey. They are the aspects of life. They are describing the functioning of our life. The way they read really shouldn't be “Do Not Kill”, but “Non-killing”, which is describing our life. It is not a commandment, although we can also take it that way.

There are three ways of looking at these precepts. We call them the Hinayana way, the Mahayana way, and Buddha Nature way. For those who have studied Tantric Buddhism, you could say that Vajrayana is this buddha Nature. In looking at the three standpoints, we should see that each includes the others. One is not better or higher or purer in any sense than the others. We should appreciate these precepts from all three levels all at once, even though they sound contradictory to some extent. The point is, in appreciating these precepts, if we think about them from one aspect and leave out the other two, it will get us into problems. You have to appreciate them from all three aspects at once. Naturally, the tendency is not to do so. We will favor one of the three and then argue with other people because they are favoring one of the other two. It is very hard to be looking at them all at once.

The Hinayana approach puts emphasis on the physical side, or the literal interpretation. So in the case of something like Non-killing, it is just that, non-killing, not taking life of any form as much as possible. Don't absentmindedly just pick a flower and throw it away. Don't absentmindedly pull off a leaf from a tree and throw it away. Obviously when you are upset, don't just knife the person next to you. It is a very literal interpretation. We should look at all of these Precepts from this literal interpretation and look at our lives, look at our actions, in regard to them. How much life do we waste? What for?

The Mahayana way of appreciating these precepts is a relative one. We have to look at our actions always from the standpoint of two things, compassion and righteousness, or doing it in a right way. Compassion in our practice is defined to be the functioning of wisdom. It is not just patting somebody on the back. It might very well be that stabbing this person next to me is compassion. Compassion and wisdom. The functioning of the enlightened person is compassion; that is Kannon Bodhisattva. It is also the functioning of Manjusri Bodhisattva, wisdom.

Doing things in the right way is judged by using our four basic criteria. We have to look at the time, the place, the people or things involved, and the quantity. Pruning the tree actually gives it life, gives it strength. So sometimes cutting a flower and throwing it away is the right thing to do. Sometimes killing is the right thing to do. You can see how difficult that is; it puts all of the responsibility on ourselves. It is extremely subjective, completely subjective. At every moment, I have to take the responsibility for the act and base it on the time, the place, the people or things involved, and the quantity. That is the Mahayana way of appreciating these precepts. If I don't do that, I am violating them. So sometimes, not pulling the flower off and throwing it away is violating the Precepts. Sometimes, not killing is violating the Precept of Non-killing.

Then from the standpoint of Buddha Nature, there is no separation between myself and others, between yourself and others. Viewing these Precepts from the standpoint of Buddhayana or buddhanature, if we see any kind of separation at all, if we make any kind of discrimination at all, we are violating these Precepts. If I separate myself from you, that is killing. I'm killing buddha, I am killing buddha-nature. See how difficult it is? If I separate myself from the flower, I am killing that flower. If I separate myself from myself, I am killing myself. If I separate myself from time, I am killing time. Yet, if I don't separate myself from you, then from the Mahayana sense or Hinayana sense, I might be violating that Precept according to the situation. We are separate. I have to deal with you as you.

These Ten Grave Precepts have to be looked at from those three different perspectives. Then we have to realize that those three different perspectives, although seemingly leading to contradictions, actually contain each other. If we fully go with these Precepts, we are fully going with them according to each of these interpretations, and there is no contradiction.

This is the most important part of really looking at these Precepts, seeing this clearly. Then when you look at them, you'll see that those Ten Grave Precepts could be expanded to one hundred or one thousand precepts. If you really look at one Precept, any one, and really minutely examine it and appreciate it in relation to these three ways of looking at it, you will find out that you are looking at our life in its entirety. It doesn't matter which Precept you take — you will be seeing the functioning of our life.

# On the Precepts

## by Sensei Jan Chozen Bays

Dharma Talk given at ZCLA on August 20, 1983

The Precepts are the heart of Jukai. Jukai means “to receive the Precepts.” Another meaning of “ju,” if it has a different Chinese character, is “to give.” Who is giving, and who is receiving? What does that mean, to give or receive these Precepts? What it really means is taking them as our life and putting our rakusu on as the Buddha’s teaching. We chant the Verse of the Kesa when we first put on the rakusu in the morning. “Vast is the robe of liberation, a formless field of benefaction; I wear the Tathagata’s teaching, saving all sentient beings.” The word “wear” has the connotation of “to put on” and also “to absorb.” By having Jukai, we are taking the Precepts, we are really taking them in and absorbing them and expressing them as our life. We are giving them to other people as our life. Revealing our life as the life of the Buddha, which is the Precepts.

The Precepts that we are given at our Jukai consist of the Three Treasures, the Three Pure Precepts, and then the Ten Grave Precepts — sixteen altogether. The first thing that we do after chanting the Gatha of Atonement in the Jukai Ceremony is to take the Three Treasures. The Three Treasures in the Jukai Ceremony are expressed in this way: “Being one with the Buddha, being one with the Dharma, being one with the Sangha.”

The Precepts begin with the Three Treasures as the real focus of what the Precepts are about. The Three Treasures are a little hard for us to penetrate in terms of our everyday life because they are a little bit abstract. Then we go on to the Three Pure Precepts, which say: “Do not commit evil, do good, and do good for others.” That’s a little bit easier to grasp. Then we go on to the Ten Grave Precepts: do not kill, do not steal, do not be greedy, do not tell a lie, do not be ignorant or do not be drunk or do not become intoxicated, do not talk about others’ faults, do not elevate yourself by criticizing others, do not be stingy, do not get angry, do not speak ill of the Three Treasures.”

Each one of those is a little easier to get hold of and try to work with in our everyday life. If you take one Precept, like don’t put yourself up by putting others down, and try to do it for even a few hours or even a day, it’s appalling at first to see how difficult it is. Then you quit adding blame on top of blame, quit judging yourself or other people, and then you just notice what you’re doing. The key is to notice it. If you notice it, then it isn’t controlling or running your life anymore. Eventually it will go away, but we have to keep noticing that we keep forgetting. We have to periodically keep noticing, and that’s what practice is about, to notice what is going on.

Some students do the practice of labeling their thoughts. As they are counting or following their breath, if a thought comes through, they step back from it for a second and label it. Really, all the labels come down to three labels. One is the future, planning for the future, or fantasies about the future. The second label is the past, which is reminiscing over the past, running the tapes, and trying to change what already happened. The third is judging — comparing or judging. Sometimes, there is anger in there, but usually the anger is judging. It’s so amazing how simple this mind is; it’s doing the same thing over and over and over and over again, with many different good disguises, but it really comes down to those three things. Just notice: that’s all we need to do, just keep on noticing and noticing. So you can see as we go through the Three Treasures — be one with the Buddha, be one with the Dharma, be one with the Sangha; then the Three Pure Precepts — do not commit evil, do good, do good for others; and then the Ten Grave Precepts that are very specific, that it’s an unfolding of who we are, in more and more specific detail, so that it’s unfolded from the Three Treasures into the Three Pure Precepts, and then unfolded in finer and finer detail, into the Ten Grave Precepts.

We ask, “How do I do this in my life?” Well, don’t do evil. “Well, how do I do that?” Well, that means don’t kill, don’t be ignorant, so it gets more and more specific about how to do it every moment in our life. Then it all can be folded back up into the Three Treasures or the Three Pure Precepts. If we can just keep any one of these Precepts, we keep them all. They all contain the other; any one of them can be unfolded or folded back down into itself. If we really keep the Precept “Do not kill,” we keep all the other Precepts. How by keeping one Precept, do you keep all the Precepts? It’s easier to see for things like to do good. If you really do good all the time, then obviously we keep all the Precepts.

The Three Treasures — be one with the Buddha, be one with the Dharma, be one with the Sangha. What does that mean? There are many different ways to think about it. It has that sort of opaque quality of many religious terms. You have no real experience of what it is; it’s just a term, the Three Treasures. So let’s unfold these terms just for a minute and get a little better idea of what they do mean. Be one with the Buddha, be one with the Dharma, be one with the Sangha — you can think of that in the historical sense, in the very literal sense. Be one with the Buddha, the historical Buddha, the person who lived 2,500 years ago, who became enlightened, who lived the enlightened life, and who taught us the Way that has been handed down to us to the present. If we were literally to become as much one with the historical Buddha as we could, we would keep all the Precepts. If we really became enlightened, the way he became enlightened, automatically we live the enlightened life and we keep all the Precepts. So when our vision is clear, as the Buddha’s was, then there is no problem.

Be one with the Dharma, in the literal sense of the Dharma, was the Buddha’s teachings, the teachings of the enlightened person. If we really are one with those teachings, and take them on and live them, there is no problem; we keep all the Precepts. Be one with the Sangha. In the literal historical sense, the Sangha was the group of people who came to practice around the Buddha: monks, nuns, laywomen, and laymen. Those were people who took refuge literally in the Buddha, and said, “Here’s my teacher, I see that he is a very special person, and an enlightened person leading a very special life, and I want to become one with him. I want to live that kind of life, to study and learn, and be able to live that kind of life.” So in the very plain historical truth, to be one with the Sangha is to become one with that group of people. Although they are removed from us by 2,500 years, it’s still the same body, or community, that wants to practice in this way and live in this way.

We can think of the Three Treasures in that way, be one with Shakyamuni Buddha, the person who really did it and became enlightened. Be one with his teachings, the Dharma, and be one with the community, the Sangha, who wish to study under his guidance and live the way he lived.

Then we can think of it in a slightly more abstract way. The Buddha is the enlightened one. So be one with enlightenment, be one with enlightened understanding. Again, automatically we keep the precepts. The Dharma, in the more abstract sense, is any teaching. Any teaching that brings someone to enlightenment is the Dharma. It doesn’t even have to be an actual “teaching.” It can be the sight of a flower or a sound, like a pebble striking bamboo. Anything can enlighten us, anything is a direct teaching, always sitting in front of us if we can see it. To become one with any teaching, we will be enlightened, and we will keep the precepts. To become one with the Sangha, in the more abstract sense of sangha, is to be in harmony. Here sangha is the community that keeps harmony, that lives harmoniously, that lives according to the Buddha’s teaching. These are people who have committed themselves to this path, not just the historical group but the present-day group, too. Be one with enlightenment, be one with enlightened teachings, and be one with the group that lives together in harmony according to these teachings.

In an even more abstract way, we can think of it as the buddha being oneness, or what we call the Absolute. There is only one thing, and if we live that way as one thing, automatically we keep the Precepts. How could we step outside and kill something that is us? It's impossible. How could we steal from ourselves if there is only one thing? Impossible. If we really realize and actualize that oneness — there is no hate, no jealousy, no anger, no putting ourselves up and putting others down — it's literally one body, functioning together, harmoniously. We get a little touch of that feeling toward the end of sesshin, when people's minds have quieted down and people just move automatically out the door, without bumping into each other, just going out like rice grains going down a funnel. When our minds quiet down, we begin to function as one. So we begin to be one with oneness and keep all the Precepts.

To be one with the Dharma; in this sense, the Dharma is everything that is. So this allness, everythingness, thusness, is the Dharma; everything that exists is the Dharma. If we really are one with everything, in that it exists, there is no problem. That one side is the buddha, the oneness, and the other side of it is the manyness, the everythingness, and if we really open ourselves up and are one with everything, we keep all the Precepts. Just like we brush our teeth in the morning, we clean up the sidewalk if there is a mess on the sidewalk, because it's our body. Everything is our body.

Be one with the Sangha. This literally is the harmony, just the pure quality of harmony. So there is the oneness and the manyness, and the harmony between the oneness and the manyness. You can see many different ways to think of being one with the Three Treasures, many different ways to think of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha and what the Three Treasures imply. It doesn't matter how we think of it, it all comes down to this same thing, that we would automatically keep the Precepts if we really were one with any of these: the Buddha, the Dharma, or Sangha.

Next, the Three Pure Precepts. They are a little bit more literal and a little easier to grasp. Do not commit evil. If you did that all the time, no problem, all the Precepts are kept. Evil is a kind of funny word for us because we have a lot of moralistic connotations attached to the word evil. We do these as koans at the end of koan study, and we spend a lot of time on them. We would take that one - do not commit evil - and work on it for a long time and try to see all its different aspects. It's a very wonderful koan to work on. If we don't commit evil, we don't kill, we don't steal, we don't gossip, we don't lie — it all just doesn't happen. The real understanding of this is not "do not" so much in the pejorative sense, but just, how can you? You can't if you are all one. If your understanding is right, there is no committing of evil, it just can't be done. It's more the feeling of when my understanding is correct, I just don't do evil, it's just impossible to harm someone else, or steal from someone else — it just can't happen.

Roshi likes to translate this as non-commitment of evil, or not committing evil. It's the feeling of one whole thing, not as a separation of this person will not commit evil against that person. The whole thing can't commit evil against itself — it's impossible. "Do good": this has a little bit more of the coming out quality. In a way you could say, "Do not commit evil" as being one with the buddha; it's the oneness. Then to do good, it's more active; to do good for others is a very active thing that has the implication of the sangha; really coming out of ourselves and taking what we've learned and using it with other people. We need to be very aware of the limitations of these translations into English, because there are more implications to it in the Japanese or Chinese characters. Also, we put our Judeo-Christian filters on some of the words, so it's very easy to misunderstand. If we make the translation a certain way, it's easy for people to slide over it and say, "Well, it's all one, so we can't commit evil anyway, so we'll just do what we are doing anyway." In a way, it's better to err on the side of making it a little bit more literal, than it is to err on the other side, that everything is buddha nature anyway, so why worry?

To do good for others, which we talked about, means to come out of ourselves and our own understanding, and help others to reach the same understanding. That is really sliding over it fast, and it deserves a lot more time, but it's something that we can keep looking at and unfolding through our life. As we mentioned at the beginning, we just have to start somewhere; so to go ahead and take Jukai, take these Precepts on and try to live by them and their implications, will keep unfolding and unfolding in our own life.

Let me first say that there are three ways to appreciate these Ten Grave Precepts, the more specific Precepts. There is the Hinayana way of appreciating the Precepts, so that there are monks in Southeast Asia who try to observe these Precepts very specifically, literally. For do not kill, they wear a mask over their face for fear of breathing something in and killing a little insect. They sweep the path in front of them as they walk for fear of treading on an insect or worm and killing it, and they filter their drinking water before they drink it, again out of the same respect for life. Practicing more in the Mahayana spirit, as we do, sometimes we tend to put that down a little bit and say, "Well, of course they are killing all the time because they are eating vegetables, and vegetables are alive, so it's not different from killing an animal to eat it. Of course, they are killing germs all the time when they breathe. Rationally we could say what they are trying to do is ridiculous, but we can have the same respect and literally keep the Precepts as much as we can. Just to have that unbelievable awareness of all of life, and to try not to kill, except when it's absolutely necessary, is a very profound way of keeping the Precepts. So that would be the Hinayana aspect of "Do not kill"; literally do not kill. That would lead you to be very aware of where your life comes from.

We were talking one day about the fact that Yasutani Roshi, one of Roshi's teachers, was a vegetarian because he was raised near a chicken farm and he knew how cruelly chickens were treated on farms. He didn't eat eggs either because even the chickens that were kept for laying eggs were kept under very cruel conditions. Roshi, who has tremendous respect for Yasutani Roshi, was saying that for himself eating sprouts was harder than eating chickens. He pointed to his plate which had a big heap of green glistening sprouts on it that had just come out of the sprouter and then to a piece of fried chicken. He said, "Which looks more alive to you?" He was right. I had never thought of it, but the sprouts looked so alive. He said it was almost more than he could do to eat them. So the main point is awareness; always be aware and try not to be stuck.

The Mahayana aspect of "Do not kill" would be more like: sometimes it's necessary to kill and sometimes not. So do it when you have to do it and don't do it when you don't have to. If we have to kill sprouts to live, we have to do it. But don't judge it or put all of our garbage on top of it. If you have to kill them, just kill them and eat them. Then you've got your life, which came from them. If you don't have to kill, don't kill. If you can avoid mosquitoes, or bugs, or worms, take them out of the way and put them down. To have that kind of awareness - when is it appropriate and when is it not appropriate - is the Mahayana aspect.

The third, the Buddhayana aspect of this, is to see it from the point of view of oneness, of one whole body, nothing outside that body. There's no way to kill, it's impossible to kill. It's one body and there is no way to step outside of it and kill any part of it, because there aren't parts; it's one thing. We need to have that awareness, too. It's impossible to kill. We can't even think of the idea of killing, because we literally are one. Now, most of us don't have that kind of awareness yet — to stretch that far, to really see ourselves as one, and then to see it's impossible to kill. It is beyond the stretch of our mind, but we try to stretch that far, and stretch a little further, and stretch a little further. From this point of view, if you maintain one Precept, you maintain them all, so if you maintain the Precept "Do not kill", then you couldn't steal from someone either, because that is killing their true nature. Taking something from them is taking who they are from them. You can't

do it if you are literally one with them. Or to speak ill of someone is to kill them, is to separate from them, is to kill that oneness, is to kill that awareness that you are one with them. To gossip about them or to talk about them in a nasty way is to kill them, to kill their buddha nature.

Do not be ignorant or do not be intoxicated, from the literal point of view, means do not take anything in that alters your mind. We are already so confused anyway about what reality is, why take alcohol or drugs? That makes it even more confused; it just creates more confusion on top of confusion. We are trying so very hard to get our minds to be clear and to see what is really there, so if we put anything else on top of it, we are just making a further mess. That would be a literal Hinayana interpretation of that Precept. Do not take anything that confuses your state of mind. Do not be drunk. Do not be intoxicated. There are all kinds of things that can be included in the category of things that intoxicate you. If we make the category wide enough, we begin to get into the Mahayana aspect of that precept — do not be ignorant, do not be intoxicated.

The worst thing that we are intoxicated by is ourselves, or our notion of ourselves. In a way, alcohol or marijuana or drugs are minor compared to what we really intoxicate ourselves with, which is our notion of who we are and how the world should be. The Mahayana is more the interpretation that if you want to get drunk, get drunk; if you don't, don't. If you have to use some kind of drug to anesthetize people for surgery, you can call that a form of intoxication. If it's necessary, use it; if it's not necessary, don't use it. Lastly, the widest point of view is that it's impossible to be intoxicated; it's impossible because everything that we do is the life of the Buddha. There's nothing outside; everything is total, clear, absolute wisdom. Even when we are drunk, we are totally wise.

You can begin to see what richness there is in these Precepts when you really begin to work with them and try to understand all of their aspects, and then to try and maintain all of the aspects, or whatever is appropriate for a given situation. Now, the danger of that Buddhayana aspect is, "It's all one, so nothing can be killed, because we can't step outside and kill anything." We don't talk about that aspect very much because it's so easy for that aspect to be pushed over into saying, "Well, it's all buddha nature and everything I do is the enlightened way, so I'll just act however I want."

We really can't appreciate that last aspect until we've thoroughly appreciated the other aspects of maintaining the Precepts literally as much as we can. For example, literally trying not to put someone down in speech or in thoughts. We have to thoroughly practice in that way, and then thoroughly practice in the Mahayana way, which is when it's appropriate to criticize somebody, criticize them; when it's not appropriate, don't. That would be the Mahayana aspect of the Precept of "Don't put others down". To me, that's the key with that Precept, to play with it for a while, just to notice how much we put other people down, and how many ways we do it. Then to try to have that more delicate awareness of when is it appropriate to criticize and when is it not. To catch when there is something extra there, when there is "me" in there.

We can catch it in our voice often, or the words that we choose, or how we hold our body — so many subtle ways we can be aware of when some act or word is appropriate or when it is not appropriate. That would be more the Mahayana aspect of knowing when we have to criticize a situation and change it, and also to know when there is that something extra there. This is a most wonderful practice, to unfold these Precepts as our life. Sharing this practice as it unfolds for each of us will help others support us. If you want to stop smoking, tell everybody around you not to give you cigarettes and help you break it. That's a wonderful thing to do. It has that aspect of taking the Precepts and giving the Precepts, too, because it makes others more mindful. Then the whole atmosphere changes.

“Do not get angry” is somehow the hardest one, or it seems harder than the others. Burying anger makes it worse; pushing it down makes it worse. It should be acknowledged, but it doesn't have to be acted on: to be seen but not to be acted on. The key thing is to notice. At first, we notice after we are angry — “Oh, no, I got angry again.” Then after a while we'll notice as it's happening, “Look what's happening, I'm really getting mad, I'm really working it up here.” Then once in a while, after years of noticing, just noticing, we'll be able to catch it at the beginning - “Oh, I feel myself beginning to get angry.” So catch yourself at the very beginning of it, and then stop thinking. It comes down to not thinking. You cannot be angry if you're not thinking. There is some bodily reaction going on, but there's no real anger. When we think, we keep it going, we keep playing the tape, and we give the anger substance — we make it have a life of its own.

We can feel what our physical reaction is, take a few breaths, or count our breaths, and then draw back into a bigger perspective. Maybe we can have that bigger perspective of “Oh, here's somebody who has sounds coming out of their mouth, isn't that interesting.” And pretend the sounds are in a different language. If you really have that perspective of sound waves coming out and hitting an eardrum, then some electrical impulses set off in the brain — where is the anger in that? If you really take it apart, like under a microscope, and dissect it — there is this person over here, and his vocal chords are vibrating, and it makes the air come over to me and vibrates my eardrum, then some neurons fire up into my brain, and then my stomach starts to get tight, and then — that's all it is. If we don't think, it doesn't go any further than that. So if we catch it at that stage and stop, we break the chain.

It doesn't mean that sometimes it's not appropriate to get angry. Sometimes it is appropriate, but knowing that comes out of practice. It's just anger, and then it's totally gone, no residue at all, no traces at all. As a parent, if your child runs out into the street, you get angry. You know you've told him not to do that, it's dangerous. You grab him and spank him and say, “Don't do that again - I'm really angry with your behavior,” and then it's gone. Because you love the child and it's coming out of love, it's not anger, because anger has no substance of its own. It's coming out of fear and love for that child. So the anger goes, and you love the child again. It's just pure and gone and on with life. I know it's easy to say, and very hard to do. All of this is easy to say, but it's more than one lifetime of practice. We just have to keep practicing and practicing with it. Then see where the anger comes from. Later on, after you've dealt with the situation, in a moment of cool recollection, use that anger as a koan: what hook was there that got me? What did that person see in my idea of myself that made me angry? Then work with it in that way.

Also, when you're working with the Precepts, something that's very much emphasized is, if you've broken them, do something about it. Apologize — that's the good way to wipe it clean, and start again. We talked about zazen as a way to wipe it clean, but an even more practical way to wipe it clean, is if you realize you've broken a precept, try to fix it. Try to do something about it.

Also difficult is not speaking ill of others, gossiping. What you could do, maybe, is to say, “I'm really trying not to gossip, I really don't like so-and-so...” and to enlist the aid of others rather than looking like you're trying to be superior to them, or trying to be better than they are. Come from eliciting aid from them and say, “I'm really trying to do this as part of my spiritual practice, and I really need help because I'm really desperate, and I need help from all quarters, so if you could help and not gossip...” and see what happens. Then if that doesn't work, I think you have to sit there and be quiet, or say something nice about the person. Roshi does that a lot. When the conversation is beginning to get into gossip, he will say something about that person's best qualities. And everybody just goes, “Aha.” He does it in a very nonjudgmental way, but it turns everything around.

## **Bodhisattva's Precepts and the Capacity for Bodhisattva's Precepts (from "Jiun Sonja Hogoshu")**

Translated by Taizan Maezumi with John Daishin Buksbazen

from *On Zen Practice: Body, Breath, & Mind*, pp.165-167

*Jiun Sonja (1718-1804) was the founder of the Vinaya subsect of Shingon Buddhism. He also studied Zen under Soto Master Daibai at Shoanji Temple in Shin-Shu province. He was an outstanding Sanskrit scholar and was also well versed in Confucianism, Shinto, and other fields of learning and literature. As an artist, he is especially well-known for his dry-brush style of calligraphy. This selection is from the book Jiun Sonja Hogoshu (A Collection of Jiun Sonja's Dharma Words). These are Jiun Sonja's opening remarks at a Jukai Ceremony [ceremony in which one receives the precepts], in Bosatsukai Dojo, November 11, 1761.*

The Precepts are the precepts in one's own mind. That is to say, [they are] the precepts of buddha nature. Samadhi and wisdom are the same samadhi and wisdom within one's mind. That is to say, [they are] the samadhi and wisdom of Buddha nature.

Only the Buddha, the World-honored One, has attained supreme enlightenment. Seeing that the precepts-dharma is already inherent in the minds of all sentient beings, he expounded upon it. That is the precepts-dharma that I will give you. Realizing this samadhi and wisdom originally in the mind of each sentient being—that is the sutras.

As for the capacity of sentient beings, this precepts-dharma can be described as great or small. If you receive this precepts-dharma, still attached to the body and mind of the five *skandhas*, and wishing to liberate this body and mind, all the precepts you receive will become the *shravaka* precepts.

If you understand that from the beginning, the form-dharma of the five skandhas is like a cloud in the sky, and that the mind-dharma is like the reflection of the moon in the water, and realize that all sentient beings and yourself are originally equal and can be said neither to be one nor many, and if you raise the Four Great Vows to receive these precepts, then the precepts you receive become the Bodhisattva's Precepts.

Due to having received the precepts while still attached to body and mind, the very body of the precepts will decline in accord with the destruction of body and mind.

While the Bodhisattva's Precepts are apart from attachment to the five skandhas, and [one] receives them with an equal and vast mind, the precepts-body flows into the ocean of the future kalpa.

Buddha expounded the Five Different Natures. Although he talks about five natures, they are one Dharma nature. But although it is one dharma-nature, it doesn't hurt to talk about it as five natures. These days people are attached to worldly fame and

profit, greedy and filled with the Five Desires, unable to raise aspiration toward the right Dharma for even a short while.

Attached on top of attachment, and greedy on top of greed—moreover, raising all sorts of worldly cleverness, sophistry, deluded views, and evil states of mind—they embellish their errors and accumulate misdeeds without realizing their own shamefulness.

Occasionally, they have a chance to hear the right Dharma and to see the Buddha's sutras, but they do not raise the faith. People of this sort are called "animate beings of no nature." It could be said that temporarily [their] Buddha nature has disappeared. These days there are many people of this kind in the world. Even if perchance they have had Jukai, still this amounts to only a tenuous [karmic] connection. Indeed, such a person does not have the capacity for the Bodhisattva's Precepts.

Again, there is a group of sentient beings who realize the impermanence of worldly desires and know the awfulness of life and death, who, understanding the necessity of practicing the precepts, samadhi, and wisdom, willingly seek for the Dharma of tranquil nirvana. If we compare these people to the previous group, there is the difference between heaven and earth; and yet, due to not raising the Vast Mind, to not realizing that they're originally equal to all sentient beings, and just wanting partial liberation for themselves—neither do they have the capacity for the Bodhisattva's Precepts.

This is called the *shravaka*-seed nature.

Again, among these, some brilliant individuals, without waiting for others to expound the Dharma, practice and enlighten, [themselves] profoundly contemplating on the karmic causations of birth and death. These people are superior to the former group, and yet due to not raising the true bodhi-mind, to being attached to their own mind, they also lack the capacity for the Bodhisattva's Precepts.

This is called *pratyeka*-seed nature.

Again, if there are persons who realize that the body and mind of the five skandhas are like a cloud in the sky, like the moon in the water, and that all beings and their lands in the ten spheres are nothing but the manifestation of their own mind, and who raise the equal, unconditioned, compassionate mind toward all sentient beings, such persons—all of whose deeds are dedicated to the animate beings in the dharma worlds, and who offer their own lives in order to seek the Supreme Way—these are the ones who have the true [right] capacity to receive the Bodhisattva's Precepts.

Contemplating and considering like this, with sincere devoted heart [mind], receive the Dharma of the Precepts.

## SECTION 2: WORKSHEETS FOR THE PRECEPTS

### Points for Discussion: Guidelines for Practicing the Ten Grave Precepts

1. The precepts are the buddha's *kai*, the buddha-nature *kai*, or Awakened-nature *kai*. Through these *kai* we can learn to recognize and know the wonder of our true nature. Although translated as “precepts,” we define the word *kai* as “aspects of life.”
2. Have a clear intention in aligning yourself with the precepts. To “break” (put an end to) a precept is to no longer have the intention of upholding it. To “defile” (make dirty) the precepts is to know that we are always not quite in alignment.
3. The precepts are not rigid rules, but depend on the context of life.
4. We are always upholding the precepts from one perspective and violating them from another.
5. Non-harming is a primary guideline. Is how I function harmful to others and/or myself?
6. Be in the present moment. Precept practice is a practice of the present moment.
7. Precepts are life affirming. Cultivate a basic attitude of gratitude.
8. Apply these precepts to yourself, not to others. Stick to examining and reflecting upon your own experiences.
9. Cultivate awareness. Keep your intention clearly in front of you: does my action benefit others? Myself? When are these in conflict?
10. Practice with body, speech, and mind.

**The following points should be kept in mind when working with the precepts:**

PRECEPTS are ASPECTS OF LIFE. Examine and discuss these statements.

1. Precepts reveal the complexity of life. There are no simple answers.
2. Precepts are not rigid rules of conduct.

3. Precept practice is not about coming to conclusions.
4. Precept practice is a matter of how we function in any given situation:
  - a. Can we ground ourselves in Not-knowing? Do we immediately jump to conclusions, or are we able to open to the situation at hand?
  - b. Can we listen deeply with our entire being (body and mind) to all the views at hand? Can we be one with all perspectives? Can we bear witness?
  - c. Does our action arise from oneness with the situation at hand? Do we function dependent on conceptualization and thinking or can we function no longer dependent on thinking?

**POINTERS ON THE THREE PERSPECTIVES  
(Literal, Relational, and Intrinsic)**

1. See all perspectives: do not choose one over the other.
2. The key is to minimize suffering AND to increase gratitude for the infinite system of support that makes your life possible.
3. Since we live in the relative world, we must function and take action. All action has consequences (cause and effect).

# The First Grave Precept: Do Not Kill

## STATEMENT OF THE PRECEPT:

Non-killing.

Do not kill.

Recognizing that I am not separate from all that is. This is the Precept of Non-Killing. (Zen Peacemaker)

I will recognize that I am not separate from all that is. This is the practice of Non-killing. I will not lead a harmful life, nor encourage others to do so. I will live in harmony with all life and the environment that sustains it. (Day of Reflection)

Refrain from taking life. (Yasutani)

Affirm life. Do not kill. (Loori)

Not killing: Don't kill; encourage life. There is no thought of killing. (Aitken)

Knowing how deeply our lives intertwine, we vow not to kill. (Kaza)

Not to kill but to nurture life. (Norman Fischer)

I undertake the item of training which consists in abstention from killing living beings. With deeds of loving-kindness, I purify my body. (Sangharakshita)

Aware of the suffering caused by the destruction of life, I vow to cultivate compassion and learn ways to protect the lives of people, animals, and plants. I am determined not to kill, not to let others kill, and not to condone any act of killing in the world, in my thinking and in my way of life. (Thich Nhat Hanh)

On Killing. A disciple of the Buddha shall not himself kill, encourage others to kill, kill by expedient means, praise killing, rejoice at witnessing killing, or kill through incantation or deviant mantras. He must not create the causes, conditions, methods, or karma of killing, and shall not intentionally kill any living creature.

As a Buddha's disciple, he ought to nurture a mind of compassion and filial piety, always devising expedient means to rescue and protect all beings. If, instead, he fails to restrain himself and kills sentient beings without mercy, he commits a Parajika (major) offense. (The Brahma Net Sutra)

Non-killing: Life is non-killing. The seed of buddha grows continuously. Maintain the wisdom-life of buddha and do not kill life. (Dōgen Zenji)

Self-nature is inconceivably wondrous. In the everlasting Dharma,

Not giving rise to the notion of extinction Is called the precept of refraining from taking life.  
(Bodhidharma)

**GROUND:** In the ground of being, there is no separate self. Realize One Body. Realize, or at least intellectually explore, the One Body, the total and complete interfusion (interconnection) of all life. In this way, we open to life as is and move away from our habitually narrow viewpoint of an isolated self.

### **PERSPECTIVES:**

- 1) **Literal (Fundamental):** Do not kill! Simply, do not kill anything. a) Practice not killing anything. Is this possible?  
b) We are always killing.  
c) What kind of mind should we cultivate when we take life?
- 2) **Relational (Spirit of Compassion and Reverence):** Two views to consider:
  - a) Intuitive sense of rightness: Consider the time, place, quantity or amount, and persons or things and conditions involved in any given situation. Consider appropriate response to everchanging circumstances.  
How can I respond in a way that causes the least harm or that minimizes killing? What is our response, given that continuous killing is taking place?  
Is not responding an act of killing?
  - b) Compassion: Consider how one can nurture and encourage life. Do you see the paradox that this act may also involve killing?
- 3) **Intrinsic:** Killing is not possible. This is the view of the One Body: nothing is being born and nothing is dying; just continual change. There is no one to kill, no one to be killed, and no such thing as killing.
  - a) Practice: there is nothing separate from you; you are not separate from anything. What are you excluding or regarding as “not me”? Become aware of these separations and how they affect your life. How would your life be different if you included them from the view of the One Body?
  - b) Practice: note and appreciate all that is required to sustain your life now.
- 4) Consider the conflict between the literal (we are always killing) and intrinsic (killing is not possible) perspectives.

### **PRACTICE-SLOGANS:**

1. Refrain from killing.
2. Extend love or loving-kindness.
3. Express gratitude.
4. Live in harmony with all life and the environment that sustains it.
5. Do not destroy any form of life.
6. Do not kill the mind of compassion and reverence.
7. Do not compare life forms.
8. Do not give rise to the idea of birth and death.
9. Do not underestimate the truth. Recognize the capacity of others to live the truth.□

## The Second Grave Precept: Do Not Steal

### STATEMENT OF THE PRECEPT:

Do not steal.

Being satisfied with what I have. This is the Precept of Non-stealing. (Zen Peacemaker)

I will be satisfied with what I have. This is the practice of Non-stealing. I will refrain from taking anything not given and from encouraging others to steal. I will freely give, ask for, and accept what is needed. (Day of Reflection)

Refrain from stealing. (Yasutani)

Be giving. Do not steal. (Loori)

Not Stealing. (Aitken)

Knowing how deeply our lives intertwine, we vow not to take what is not given. (Kaza)

Not to steal what is not given, but to receive what is offered as a gift. (Norman Fischer)

I undertake the item of training, which consists of abstention from taking the not-given. With open-handed generosity, I purify my body. (Sangharakshita)

Aware of the suffering caused by exploitation, social injustice, stealing and oppression, I vow to cultivate loving kindness and learn ways to work for the well-being of people, animals, and plants. I vow to practice generosity by sharing my time, energy, and material resources with those who are in real need. I am determined not to steal and not to possess anything that should belong to others. I will respect the property of others, but I will prevent others from profiting from human suffering or the suffering of other species on Earth. (Thich Nhat Hanh)

On Stealing. A disciple of the Buddha must not himself steal nor encourage others to steal, steal by expedient means, steal by means of incantation or deviant mantras. He should not create the causes, conditions, methods, or karma of stealing. No valuables or possessions, even those belonging to ghosts and spirits or thieves and robbers, be they as small as a needle or blade of grass, may be stolen.

As a Buddha's disciple, he ought to have a mind of mercy, compassion, and filial piety – always helping people earn merits and achieve happiness. If, instead, he steals the possessions of others, he commits a Parajika offense. (The Brahma Net Sutra)

Non-stealing. The mind and externals are just as thus. The gate of liberation has opened. (Dōgen Zenji)

Self-nature is inconceivably wondrous.  
In the Dharma in which nothing can be obtained,  
Not giving rise to a thought of obtaining  
Is called the precept of refraining from stealing. (Bodhidharma)

**GROUND:** In the ground of being, there is nothing that is lacking. In the ground of being, there is nothing to gain and nothing to lose—life is complete, whole, total as it exists right here, now. There is no scarcity of resources; everything exists in abundance. There is nothing to obtain or possess.

**PERSPECTIVES:**

1. **Literal (Fundamental):** Do not take what is not offered or given.
2. **Relational (Spirit of Compassion and Reverence):** Consider the time, place, quantity or amount, and persons or things and conditions involved. In what circumstances would stealing benefit others? With what intention would one commit such an act? At what point does one become a thief?
3. **Intrinsic:** There is nothing to steal. Do not give rise to the thought of obtaining.

**PRACTICE-SLOGANS:**

1. Always ask permission.
2. Do not take what is not given.
3. Do not give rise to the thought of obtaining.
4. Do not focus on what you don't have.
5. Self and Dharmas are one.
6. Constantly give thanks.
7. Practice generosity.
8. Practice being content with what you have.
9. Freely give what is needed.
10. Freely ask for what is needed.
11. Freely accept what is needed. □

# The Third Grave Precept: Do Not Be Greedy

## STATEMENT OF THE PRECEPT:

Do not be greedy.

Meeting the diversity of life with respect and dignity. This is the precept of Chaste Conduct. (Zen Peacemaker)

I will encounter the diversity of life with respect and dignity. This is the practice of Chaste Conduct. I will refrain from unchastity and from creating the conditions for others to be unchaste. I will give and accept love and friendship without clinging. (Day of Reflection)

Refrain from impure sexuality. (Yasutani)

Honor the body. Do not misuse sexuality. (Loori)

Not misusing sex. (Aitken)

Knowing how deeply our lives intertwine, we vow to not engage in abusive relationships. (Kaza) Not to misuse sexuality but to be caring and faithful in intimate relationships. (Norman Fischer)

I undertake the item of training which consists in abstention from sexual misconduct. With stillness, simplicity, and contentment, I purify my body. (Sangharakshita)

Aware of the suffering caused by sexual misconduct, I vow to cultivate responsibility and learn ways to protect the safety and integrity of individuals, couples, families, and society. I am determined not to engage in sexual relations without love and a long-term commitment. To preserve the happiness of myself and others, I am determined to respect my commitments and the commitments of others. I will do everything in my power to protect children from sexual abuse and to prevent couples and families from being broken by sexual misconduct. (Thich Nhat Hanh)

On Sexual Misconduct. A disciple of the Buddha must not engage in licentious acts or encourage others to do so. [As a monk] he should not have sexual relations with any female – be she a human, animal, deity, or spirit – nor create the causes, conditions, methods, or karma of such misconduct. Indeed, he must not engage in improper sexual conduct with anyone.

A Buddha's disciple ought to have a mind of filial piety – rescuing all sentient beings and instructing them in the Dharma of purity and chastity. If, instead, he lacks compassion and encourages others to engage in sexual relations promiscuously, including with animals and even their mothers, daughters, sisters, or other close relatives, he commits a Parajika offense. (The Brahma Net Sutra)

Not Being Greedy. The Three Wheels (body, mouth, and mind; also, greed, anger, and ignorance) are pure and clean. Nothing is desired for; go the same way with the buddhas. (Dōgen Zenji)

Self-nature is inconceivably wondrous.  
In the Dharma in which there is nothing to grasp,  
Not giving rise to attachment,

Is called the precept of refraining from impure sexuality. (Bodhidharma)

**GROUND:** There is no scarcity of love and friendship. In the ground of being, everything is fully manifesting itself; there is no separation between self and other and things. Therefore, there is nothing to acquire, desire, or grasp.

**PERSPECTIVES:**

1. **Literal (Fundamental):** No sexual misconduct. For monks, celibacy. For laypersons, no adultery, no sex outside of committed relationships, no “unlawful” sexual activity, etc.
2. **Relational (Spirit of Compassion and Reverence):** Consider the time, place, quantity or amount, and persons or things and conditions involved. This precept is not limited to sexual behavior but extended to include greed in all its manifestations, including our tendency toward attachment and giving or taking love and friendship from self-centered desires.
3. **Intrinsic:** There is no separation between self and others. What is the practice of non-clinging in the midst of no separation?

**PRACTICE-SLOGANS:**

1. Do not mistreat the body.
2. Do not give rise to grasping or attachment. There is nothing to grasp.
3. The three vehicles of body, speech, and mind are pure and clean. Examine purity as our fundamental nature of being without a self. How do our views obscure this purity?
4. Go the way of the buddhas. Desires are also the functioning of buddha nature: how do we sow right cause and right results? How do you appreciate interdependence and not pretend that you are separate?
5. Be moderate.
6. Practice friendship.
7. Practice right sexual conduct; i.e. non-harming.
8. Give and accept love and friendship without clinging.
9. Examine how greed functions in your life.
10. Examine your sexual attitudes and practices. □

# The Fourth Grave Precept: Do Not Tell Lies

## STATEMENT OF THE PRECEPT:

Do not tell lies.

Listening and speaking from the heart. This is the Precept of Non-Lying. (Zen Peacemaker)

I will listen and speak from the heart and deceive no one. This is the practice of Non-lying. I will refrain from lying and from creating the conditions for others to lie. I will see and act in accordance with what is. (Day of Reflection)

Refrain from telling lies. (Yasutani)

Manifest truth. Do not lie. (Loori)

Not lying. (Aitken)

Knowing how deeply our lives intertwine, we vow to not speak falsely or deceptively. (Kaza) Not to lie but to be truthful. (Norman Fischer)

I undertake the item of training which consists of abstention from false speech. With truthful communication, I purify my speech. (Sangarakshita)

Aware of the suffering caused by unmindful speech and the inability to listen to others, I vow to cultivate loving speech and deep listening in order to bring joy and happiness to others and relieve others of their suffering. Knowing that words can create happiness or suffering, I vow to learn to speak truthfully, with words that inspire self-confidence, joy, and hope. I am determined not to spread news that I do not know to be certain and not to criticize or condemn things of which I am not sure. I will refrain from uttering words that can cause division or discord, or that can cause the family or the community to break. I will make all efforts to reconcile and resolve all conflicts, however small. (Thich Nhat Hanh)

On Lying and False Speech. A disciple of the Buddha must not himself use false words and speech, or encourage others to lie, or lie by expedient means. He should not involve himself in the causes, conditions, methods, or karma of lying, saying that he has seen what he has not seen or vice-versa, or lying implicitly through physical or mental means.

As a Buddha's disciple, he ought to maintain Right Speech and Right Views always, and lead all others to maintain them as well. If, instead, he causes wrong speech, wrong views or evil karma in others, he commits a Parajika (major) offense. (The Brahma Net Sutra)

Not telling lies. The dharma wheel unceasingly turns and there is neither excess nor lack. Sweet dews permeate; gain the essence and gain the truth. (Dōgen Zenji)

Self-nature is inconceivably wondrous.  
In the Dharma that is beyond all expression,  
Not speaking even a single (dead) word

Is called the precept of refraining from telling lies. (Bodhidharma)

**GROUND:** In the ground of being, there is nothing that is hidden. Everything is fully manifesting itself just as is.

**PERSPECTIVES:**

1. **Literal (Fundamental):** Do not lie.
2. **Relational (Spirit of Compassion and Reverence):** We must speak: how do we listen and speak from the heart? What is honesty? In what ways is our speech self-serving? Does our speech serve others? Do we mislead others?
3. **Intrinsic:** There are no mistakes. Each and every thing is nothing but the truth.

**PRACTICE-SLOGANS:**

1. In each moment, there is nothing that is not the truth.
2. There is no need to hide the truth.
3. Be a light unto yourself.
4. Do not speak even a single dead word.
5. The Dharma is beyond all expression.
6. Honesty.
7. Do not tell lies.
8. See and act in accordance with what is.
9. Listen and speak from the heart.
10. Examine the areas in your life where you lie and/or encourage others to lie.
11. What do you conceal about your life?

# The Fifth Grave Precept: Do Not Be Ignorant

## STATEMENT OF PRECEPT:

Do not be ignorant. *Also stated as:* Refrain from using intoxicants.

Cultivating a mind that sees clearly. This is the Precept of Not Being Ignorant. (Zen Peacemaker)

I will cultivate a mind that sees clearly. This is the practice of Not Being Deluded. I will refrain from using intoxicants that delude the mind and from encouraging others to be deluded. I will embrace all experience directly. (Day of Reflection)

Refrain from using intoxicants. (Yasutani)

Proceed clearly. Do not cloud the mind. (Loori)

Not giving or taking drugs. (Aitken)

Knowing how deeply our lives intertwine, we vow to not harm self or others through poisonous thought or substance. (Kaza)

Not to intoxicate with substances and doctrines but to promote clarity and awareness. (Norman Fischer)

I undertake the item of training which consists of abstention from harsh speech. With words kindly and gracious, I purify my speech. (Sangharakshita)

Aware of the suffering caused by unmindful consumption, I vow to cultivate good health, both physical and mental, for myself, my family, and my society by practicing mindful eating, drinking, and consuming. I vow to ingest only items that preserve peace, well-being, and joy in my body, in my consciousness, and in the collective body and consciousness of my family and society. I am determined not to use alcohol or any other intoxicant or to ingest foods or other items that contain toxins, such as certain TV programs, magazines, books, films, and conversations. I am aware that to damage my body or my consciousness with these poisons is to betray my ancestors, my parents, my society, and future generations. I will work to transform violence, fear, anger, and confusion in myself and in society by practicing a diet for myself and for society. I understand that a proper diet is crucial for self-transformation and for the transformation of society. (Thich Nhat Hanh)

On Selling Alcoholic Beverages: A disciple of the Buddha must not trade in alcoholic beverages or encourage others to do so. He should not create the causes, conditions, methods, or karma of selling any intoxicant whatsoever, for intoxicants are the causes and conditions of all kinds of offenses.

As a Buddha's disciple, he ought to help all sentient beings achieve clear wisdom. If instead, he causes them to have upside down, topsy-turvy thinking, he commits a Parajika (major) offense.

Not Being Ignorant. It has never been: don't be defiled. It is indeed the great clarity. (Dōgen Zenji)

Self-nature is inconceivably wondrous.

In the intrinsically pure Dharma,  
Not allowing the mind to become dark (through ignorance)  
Is called the precept of refraining from using intoxicants. (Bodhidharma)

**GROUND:** In the ground of being, the One Body is beyond delusion and duality. Everything is fully manifesting itself just as it is. Realize the great clarity (clear wisdom).

### **PERSPECTIVES:**

1. **Literal (Fundamental):** Do not take intoxicants: alcohol, drugs, narcotics, or anything that clouds the mind.
2. **Spirit of Compassion and Reverence:** Examine delusion. How do we cloud or intoxicate or numb the mind with notions of duality, beliefs, ideas, opinions, television, addiction to self, sleep, sugar, etc.? In what ways are these harmful or beneficial to others? What are we ignoring? In what ways do we mislead others with false views, harsh speech, etc.?
3. **Intrinsic:** There is not even one drop of intoxicant that can defile the Dharma.

### **PRACTICE-SLOGANS:**

1. Know when enough is enough.
2. Make a commitment to being present.
3. Do not raise delusion in others.
4. Do not get drunk on the liquor of dualism.
5. Do not be hung over with Oneness.
6. Learn from your body.
7. Do not ignore buddha nature.
8. Cultivate awareness.
9. Do not cloud the mind.
10. Embrace all experience directly.
11. What substances, thoughts, or actions do you imbibe to keep from your present experience?
12. Examine your intentions around intoxicants: does using an intoxicant lead toward awareness or away from it? Does it lead to suffering or away from it?
13. Examine what thoughts and/or feelings may lead you to take intoxicants and/or repeat particular behavioral (including thought) patterns that are harmful to you.
14. Examine ways in which you encourage drunkenness (ideas or beliefs that are harmful) in others.



## **The Sixth Grave Precept: Do Not Talk About Others' Errors and Faults**

### **STATEMENT OF THE PRECEPT:**

Do not talk about others' errors and faults.

Bearing witness to the offering of each moment. This is the Precept of Not Talking about Others' Errors and Faults. (Zen Peacemaker)

I will accept what each moment has to offer. This is the practice of Not Talking About Others' Errors and Faults. I will refrain from talking about others' errors and faults and from encouraging others to do so. I will acknowledge responsibility for everything in my life. (Day of Reflection)

Refrain from speaking of the shortcomings of others. (Yasutani)

See the perfection. Do not speak of others' errors and faults. (Loori)

Not discussing faults of others. (Aitken)

Knowing how deeply our lives intertwine, we vow not to dwell on past errors. (Kaza)

Not to speak of others' faults but to speak out of loving-kindness. (Norman Fischer)

I will undertake the item of training which consists in abstention from frivolous speech. With utterance helpful and harmonious, I purify my speech. (Sangarakshita)

On Broadcasting the Faults of the Assembly: A disciple of the Buddha must not himself broadcast the misdeeds or infractions of Bodhisattva-clerics or Bodhisattva-laypersons, or of [ordinary] monks and nuns—nor encourage others to do so. He must not create the causes, conditions, methods, or karma of discussing the offenses of the assembly.

As a Buddha's disciple, whenever he hears evil persons, externalists, or followers of the Two Vehicles speak of practices contrary to the Dharma or contrary to the precepts within the Buddhist community, he should instruct them with a compassionate mind and lead them to develop wholesome faith in the Mahayana. If, instead, he discusses the faults and misdeeds that occur within the assembly, he commits a Parajika (major) offense. (The Brahma Net Sutra)

Not Talking about Others' Errors and Faults. In the midst of the buddha dharma, we are the same way, the same Dharma, the same realization, and the same practice. Do not [let them] talk about others' errors and faults. Do not destroy the way. (Dōgen Zenji)

Self-nature is inconceivably wondrous.

In the faultless Dharma,

Not speaking of others' faults,

Is called the precept of refraining from speaking of others' shortcomings. (Bodhidharma)

**GROUND:** In the ground of being, there is nothing that can be called a mistake. Everything is perfection, fully manifesting itself just as it is. There is no blame as there is no separation between self and other and things.

**PERSPECTIVES:**

1. **Literal (Fundamental):** Don't talk about others in the sangha.
2. **Spirit of Compassion and Reverence:** Examine situations in which it is appropriate to point out another's faults and/or to speak up when something seems or is wrong in any given situation. How do you speak in these situations? How do we personally and organizationally address the harmful actions of ourselves and others?
3. **Intrinsic:** Do not hold onto or fix another's so-called faults or errors.

**PRACTICE-SLOGANS:**

1. Do not hesitate to apologize.
2. Honor the bond of those practicing the Way (sangha).
3. Accept others unconditionally.
4. Don't make comparisons.
5. Raise the mind that sees clearly.
6. There is no need to fix anyone.
7. Cultivate kindness.
8. Do not blame or criticize others.
9. Accept what each moment has to offer.
10. Accept responsibility for everyone in your life.
11. Charge yourself a quarter for every remark about another's errors and faults.
12. Examine your motivation(s) when you talk about others.
13. Examine the harm caused by talking about sangha members to non-practitioners. □

# The Seventh Grave Precept: Do Not Elevate Yourself and Blame Others

## STATEMENT OF THE PRECEPT:

Do not elevate yourself to put down others (or blame others).

Speaking what I perceive to be the truth. This is the Precept of Not Elevating Oneself and Blaming Others. (Zen Peacemaker)

I will speak what I perceive to be the truth without guilt or blame. This is the practice of Not Elevating Myself and Blaming Others. I will refrain from elevating myself and blaming others and from encouraging others to do so. I will give my best effort and accept the results. (Day of Reflection)

Refrain from praising yourself and downgrading others. (Yasutani)

Realize self and other as one. Do not elevate the self and blame others. (Loori)

Not praising yourself while abusing others. (Aitken)

Knowing how deeply our lives intertwine, we vow to not speak of self separately from others. (Kaza)

Not to praise self at the expense of others but to be modest. (Norman Fischer)

I undertake the item of training which consists in abstention from slanderous speech. With utterance helpful and harmonious, I purify my speech. (Sangharakshita)

On Praising Oneself and Disparaging Others: A disciple of the Buddha shall not praise himself and speak ill of others, or encourage others to do so. He must not create the causes, conditions, methods, or karma of praising himself and disparaging others.

As a disciple of the Buddha, he should be willing to stand in for all sentient beings and endure humiliation and slander—accepting blame and letting sentient beings have all the glory. If, instead, he displays his own virtues and conceals the good points of others, thus causing them to suffer slander, he commits a Parajika (major) offense. (The Brahma Net Sutra)

Not Elevating Oneself and Blaming Others. Buddhas and Patriarchs realized the absolute emptiness and realized the great earth. When the great body is manifested, there is neither outside nor inside in the emptiness. When the Dharma body is manifested, there is not even a single square inch of soil on the ground [earth]. (Dōgen Zenji)

Self-nature is inconceivably wondrous.

In the undifferentiated Dharma,

Not speaking of self and other

Is called the precept of refraining from praising yourself and downgrading others. (Bodhidharma)

**GROUND:** In the ground of being, the whole universe has no inside or outside. Others are ourselves; we ourselves are others. Everything is fully manifesting itself just as is; therefore, we must see others as ourselves and see ourselves as others.

## **PERSPECTIVES:**

1. **Literal (Fundamental):** Don't elevate yourself.
2. **Relational (Spirit of Compassion and Reverence):** Examine situations in which you blame yourself and elevate others as the starting point for working on this precept. How do we truly appreciate ourselves? How do we truly appreciate others?
3. **Intrinsic:** Penetrate no separation of "I" and "you."

## **PRACTICE-SLOGANS:**

1. Do not speak of self and other.
2. Don't make comparisons.
3. See everyone as a mirror.
4. Self and other are not two.
5. There are no winners and losers.
6. Manifest as the Great Body. (Speaks to realization of oneself as whole universe, without an inside or outside.)
7. Examine the ways in which you elevate yourself, including self-blaming.
8. Examine your motivation in your speech with others.
9. Identify a quality you dislike in others and work with it as a quality you disown in yourself.
10. Examine the nature of guilt.
11. Practice appreciating and enjoying others as they are.
12. Humility.
13. Do not elevate yourself, compete, or covet.
14. Give your best effort and accept the results.

# The Eighth Grave Precept: Do Not Be Stingy

## STATEMENT OF THE PRECEPT:

Do not be stingy.

Using all the ingredients of my life. This is the Precept of Not Being Stingy. (Zen Peacemaker)

I will use all of the ingredients of my life. This is the practice of Not Being Stingy. I will refrain from fostering a mind of poverty in myself and others and from encouraging others to do so. (Day of Reflection)

Refrain from begrudging the Dharma treasure. (Yasutani)

Give generously. Do not be withholding. (Loori)

Not sparing the Dharma assets. (Aitken)

Knowing how deeply our lives intertwine, we vow to not possess any thing or form of life selfishly. (Kaza)

Not to be possessive of anything but to be generous.

I undertake the item of training which consists of abstention from covetousness. Abandoning covetousness for tranquility, I purify my mind. (Sangarakshita)

On Stinginess and Abuse: A disciple of the Buddha must not be stingy or encourage others to be stingy. He should not create the causes, conditions, methods, or karma of stinginess. As a Bodhisattva, whenever a destitute person comes for help, he should give that person what he needs. If, instead, out of anger and resentment, he denies all assistance—refusing to help with even a penny, a needle, a blade of grass, even a single sentence or verse or a phrase of Dharma, but instead scolds and abuses that person—he commits a Parajika (major) offense. (The Brahma Net Sutra)

Not being stingy. One phrase, one verse, ten thousand forms, one hundred grasses; one Dharma, one realization, all Buddhas, all Ancestors. Since the beginning, there has never been being stingy. (Dōgen Zenji)

Self-nature is inconceivably wondrous.

In the all-pervading true Dharma,

Not clinging to one form

Is called the precept of refraining from begrudging the Dharma treasure. (Bodhidharma)

**GROUND:** In the ground of being, nothing is withheld. There is no gain and no loss—everything is fully manifesting right here, now. From the very beginning, there is no need to be stingy.

## PERSPECTIVES:

1. **Literal (Fundamental):** Don't withhold.
2. **Relational (Spirit of Compassion and Reverence):** Examine your practice of generosity in thought, word, and deed.
3. **Intrinsic:** Look at what you exclude as not you.

#### **PRACTICE-SLOGANS:**

1. There is no need to exclude anything.
2. Drive all blames into one.
3. Do not cling to one form (do not be seized by acquisitiveness).
4. Roll all experiences into your practice.
5. Give your unique gift(s).
6. Honor yourself.
7. Practice generosity all of the time.
8. Do not be stingy with the Dharma assets.
9. Do not foster a mind of poverty in others and yourself.
10. Live an openly spiritual life.
11. There is nothing in my life that is not part of my spiritual training.
12. Study the Dharma assets: energy, money, time, the teachings, etc. How generous are you with these assets?
13. Say hello to people.
14. Examine how and under what circumstances you may deny spiritual responsibility.

# The Ninth Grave Precept: Do Not Be Angry

## STATEMENT OF THE PRECEPT:

Do not be angry.

Bearing witness to emotions that arise. This is the precept of Not Holding On To Anger (Zen Peacemaker)

I will refrain from harboring resentment, rage, or revenge. This is the practice of Not Being Angry. I will refrain from creating the conditions for others to be angry. I will accept negative experiences as part of my practice. I will recognize and express my emotions as part of my practice. (Day of Reflection)

Refrain from anger. (Yasutani)

Actualize harmony. Do not be angry. (Loori)

Not indulging in anger. (Aitken)

Knowing how deeply our lives intertwine, we vow to not harbor ill will toward any plant, animal, or human being. (Kaza)

Not to harbor anger but to forgive. (Norman Fischer)

I undertake the item of training which consists in abstention from hatred. Changing hatred into compassion, I purify my mind. (Sangarakshita)

On Anger and Resentment: A disciple of the Buddha shall not harbor anger or encourage others to be angry. He should not create the causes, conditions, methods, or karma of anger.

As a disciple of the Buddha, he ought to be compassionate and filial, helping all sentient beings develop the good roots of non-contention. If, instead, he insults and abuses sentient beings, or even transformation beings [such as deities and spirits], with harsh words, hitting them with his fists or feet, or attacking them with a knife or club—or harbors grudges even when the victim confesses his mistakes and humbly seeks forgiveness in a soft, conciliatory voice—the disciple commits a Parajika [major] offense. (The Brahma Net Sutra)

Not being angry. It is not regress, it is not advance; it is not real, it is not unreal. There is illumined cloud-ocean; there is ornamented cloud-ocean. (Dōgen Zenji)

Self-nature is inconceivably wondrous.

In the Dharma of no-self,

Not postulating a self

Is called the precept of refraining from anger. (Bodhidharma)

**GROUND:** In the ground of being, the mind is pure and goes beyond. There is no self and no need to create a self. There is no need to be angry.

## PERSPECTIVES:

1. **Literal (Fundamental):** Do not act out your anger. Clean up your own act first.
2. **Relational (Spirit of Compassion and Reverence):** Anger transformed is discriminating wisdom: how do I respond with this wisdom? See that anger is also a natural arising of buddha nature. Is anger a surface emotion? If so, what underlies your anger? Distinguish between natural arising of anger and harboring and perpetuating anger.
3. **Intrinsic:** See clearly all things as they are as being free of a self.

## PRACTICE-SLOGANS:

1. Do not create a self.  
In the *Identity of Relative and Absolute*, we chant, “Impose no standards.” In other words, do not set up any criteria for right and wrong, good and bad, any pair of duality. Also examine the difference between coming from a place of anger as opposed to coming from a place of seeing wrongdoing and expressing your disapproval, e.g., such as when preventing a child from running out into traffic.
2. Do not create your own storyline (reality).  
When we look at just our own point of view, we create our own soap opera, our own story that excludes all other points of view. What are we excluding? The wisdom side of anger is “discriminating wisdom”. What reality do you create around your anger?
3. Look deeply at the seeds of anger.  
This slogan points to clearly seeing how anger arises in the mind; clearly seeing what choices we make when anger arises. How do we understand dependent co-arising?
4. Drive all blames into one.  
No blame. The finger always points at us. See the difference between anger and determination. Anger is self-oriented; determination is self-less.
5. Do not reject apologies.  
Simply accept apologies that are offered. Be aware of making excuses as to why apologies cannot be accepted.
6. Do not make excuses for your behavior.
7. Practice acceptance of what is.
8. Not harboring resentment, rage, or revenge. Not harboring is key.
9. See everything as an opportunity
10. Explore anger by allowing yourself to *feel* it, not repressing and not expressing.
11. Penetrate your anger and uncover the issues that lie beneath it.
12. Examine cause and effect.
13. Accept responsibility for action and reaction.
14. Examine your criteria for, and the standards you set up for, right and wrong.
15. There are no mistakes.

# The Tenth Grave Precept: Do Not Speak Ill of the Three Treasures

## STATEMENT OF THE PRECEPT:

Do not speak ill of the Three Treasures.

Honoring my life as a Peacemaker. This is the Precept of Not Disparaging the Three Treasures. (Zen Peacemaker)

I will honor my life as a peacemaker. This is the practice of Not Speaking Ill of The Three Treasures. I will refrain from speaking ill of The Three Treasures and from creating conditions for others to do so. I will recognize myself and others as manifestations of the Oneness of Buddha, the Diversity of Dharma, and the Harmony of Sangha. (Day of Reflection)

Refrain from reviling the Three Treasures. (Yasutani)

Not defaming the Three Treasures. (Aitken)

Experience the intimacy of things. Do not defile the Three Treasures. (Loori)

Knowing how deeply our lives intertwine, we vow to not abuse the great truth of the Three Treasures. (Kaza)

Not to do anything to diminish the Triple Treasure but to support and nurture it. (Norman Fischer)

I undertake the item of training which consists in abstention from false views. Transforming ignorance into wisdom, I purify my mind. (Sangharakshita)

On Slandering the Triple Jewel. A Buddha's disciple shall not himself speak ill of the Triple Jewel nor encourage others to do so. He must not create the causes, conditions, methods, or karma of slander. If a disciple hears but a single word of slander against the Buddha from externalists or evil beings, he experiences a pain similar to that of three hundred spears piercing his heart. How then could he possibly slander the Triple Jewel himself?

Hence, if a disciple lacks faith and filial piety towards the Triple Jewel, and even assists evil persons or those of aberrant views to slander the Triple Jewel, he commits a Parajika [major] offense. (The Brahma Net Sutra)

Not Speaking Ill of the Three Treasures. Expounding the dharma with the body is a harbor and a fish pool [the most important thing]. The virtues return to the ocean of reality. You should not comment on them. Just hold them and serve them. (Dōgen Zenji)

Self-nature is inconceivably wondrous.

In the One-Dharma,

Not giving rise to the dualistic view of sentient beings and buddhas

Is called the precept of refraining from reviling the Three Treasures. (Bodhidharma)

**GROUND:** In the ground of being, the whole universe has no inside or outside. Others are ourselves; we ourselves are others. Everything is fully manifesting itself just as is; therefore, we must see others as ourselves and see ourselves as others.

**PERSPECTIVES:**

1. **Literal (Fundamental):** Do not speak against the Buddha, Dharma, or Sangha.
2. **Relational (Spirit of Compassion and Reverence):** Examine yourself as being the Three Treasures: to speak or think ill of oneself (low esteem) is to revile these treasures; this also applies to how you regard others.
3. **Intrinsic:** Make no distinctions between buddhas and sentient beings.

**PRACTICE-SLOGANS:**

1. Do not give rise to dualistic views of sentient beings and buddhas.
2. The Three Treasures are without fault.
3. Know the one who expounds the Dharma.
4. Wholeheartedly revere and serve the Three Treasures.
5. Use all the ingredients of your life.
6. Compassion.
7. Acceptance.
8. Not persecuting others.
9. Encouraging others to lead a spiritual life in their own way.
10. There is nothing in anyone else's life that is not appropriate to their spiritual training.
11. Meet someone from another religion and explore their spiritual practices.
12. Consider what it means to take refuge in Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.
13. What ingredients of your life are you not using well or not at all? How can you use them?
14. What does it mean to use your life as a vehicle for peacemaking?

# **SECTION 3: THE LINEAGE OF ZEN CENTER OF LOS ANGELES BUDDHA ESSENCE TEMPLE**

## **The Kechimyaku**

During the Jukai ceremony, you receive a “kechimyaku” (Dharma blood lineage chart; “kechi” = blood, “myaku” = vein, pulse, hope). The “kechimyaku” delineates the transmission of the dharma from Shakyamuni Buddha down to yourself and back to Shakyamuni Buddha. This is a complete circle that is your very life. If your desire leads you in this direction, guard it well and pass it on.

The diagram of the “kechimyaku” starts with an empty circle and returns there. This is our life, which is no fixed self or substance. The circle manifests as Shakyamuni Buddha and then each of us.

The line of transmission starts with the Past Seven Buddhas before Shakyamuni. Enlightenment was not invented by Shakyamuni Buddha; it has always been our nature.

# **Buddhas and Bodhisattvas**

## **by Sensei Bernie Tetsugen Glassman**

Dharma Talk given at ZCLA on January 14, 1978

In the Jukai ceremony, after chanting “Be one with the Three Treasures,” we chant, “Be one with the different buddhas and bodhisattvas.” First, after the Three Treasures we chant, “Namu honshi Shakyamuni Buddha.” “Be one with our main teacher, Shakyamuni Buddha.” In the Zen sect, Shakyamuni Buddha is generally the main image. Usually in a Zen monastery, there is a hall called the Buddha Hall. The image of Shakyamuni Buddha is placed in that hall and services are held there. In terms that we use here, the zendo is the meditation hall. The Dharma Hall is generally the place where talks are given, and the Buddha Hall is where the main image of the monastery or temple is placed and services are held.

In Buddhism, it's not every sect that has Shakyamuni Buddha as the main image. The Zen sect does, the Nichiren sect does, but in Shingon (Japanese Tantric Buddhism) and in Tibetan Buddhism, Vairochana Buddha is the main image. Jodo Shu Shinshu has Amida Buddha as the main image. This has various implications. One is that Zen, probably more than any of the other sects, places more emphasis on the historical side versus the metaphysical. That is, Vairochana Buddha and Amitabha Buddha are not historical, they are manifestations. Vairochana Buddha is a manifestation of the dharmakaya. Dharmakaya is the Absolute. It's a manifestation of pure equality of shunyata or emptiness. When you see mandalas, the central figure is usually Vairochana Buddha. There are two types of mandalas, but Vairochana Buddha generally is the center. It represents the world of the dharmakaya, the absolute state. Generally there are four other manifestations or sides of the mandala — east, west, north, south. Amitabha is one of those manifestations, residing in the western heavens as a non-historical manifestation of boundless light. Shakyamuni Buddha has two aspects, and one definitely is historical.

In Zen, the emphasis is on mind-to-mind transmission. Dōgen Zenji said that the most important thing is the transmission from teacher to student. The first transmission that we have in our tradition is that of Shakyamuni Buddha to Mahakashyapa. Reinforcing the importance of this transmission is one of the reasons for Shakyamuni Buddha to be our main image. To remember that, to remind us - and more than that, being one with Shakyamuni Buddha means transmission. If we can do that, if we can just fully chant, “Namu ji po Butsu, Namu ji po Ho, Namu ji po So” - right there is transmission, mind-to-mind. That's the essence of our practice, that's Shakyamuni Buddha holding up the flower; it's the flower and Mahakashyapa's smile.

By the way, placing the image of Shakyamuni Buddha on the altar is the same as placing Shakyamuni on the altar and being Shakyamuni yourself. Where are you? Where are you placed? See the separation between yourself and the altar, and if that separation exists, can you become Shakyamuni Buddha?

After Shakyamuni Buddha, we chant, “Namu dai zu dai hi kyu ku Kanzeon bo sa.” “Kanzeon” is Avalokitesvara, “Bo sa” is bodhisattva. “Dai zu” and “Dai hi” both mean ‘compassion’. There are two different characters. “Dai” means great, so there is “dai zu” and “dai hi”. In “Dai hi,” the character “hi” means ‘feeling others’ pain as your own’. That's the state of being, when a mother just gives birth, and the child is in pain, and you just feel that

pain, it's your own pain, separation hasn't crept in yet. Or somebody you are really close to is in pain. It's not that you are feeling sorry about their pain, you are just feeling their pain; that's the character "hi," "dai hi." The character "zu" is removing pain. It's the removal of others' suffering. It's an automatic response of trying to remove the suffering, and then the two words "kyu ku" is to save others from suffering, so it's a compassionate Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva who is trying to save, and to remove suffering.

This bodhisattva, Avalokitesvara, is nothing but the functioning of enlightenment. This is the functioning of Buddha, of Shakyamuni Buddha. It's not a concept or an idea of compassion. We have lots of ideas of what compassion would be, and hitting somebody with a stick in a zendo isn't necessarily compassion in our world of ideas. But this compassion, this "Kanzeon bo sa," is the functioning of the enlightened state. Being one means being in that enlightened state, and then our functioning is this compassion. If we are in the enlightened state, we are nothing but compassion. Our very acts are compassion. Vice versa, not being in that state is having separation, and what we do can't be compassion. So whatever acts you do that look like you are really helping somebody or feeling compassionate for them, if there is separation, then it's not compassion. You are doing it for yourself. You are not just doing it. Be one.

When the image of Shakyamuni is placed on the altar, many times it's placed with two others, one is usually Manjusri and one is Samantabhadra. In our chanting, we chant "Fugen Busa". "Fugen" is the Japanese word for *Samantabhadra*. *Samantabhadra* is Sanskrit, "Fugen" is the Japanese translation of that word. When we translate it into English, we use the Sanskrit, *Samantabhadra*. But then we chant, "Namu dai shin Manjusri". "*Manjusri*" is the Sanskrit. I think in Japanese, you would say "Monju." Anyway, Manjusri and Samantabhadra are the two bodhisattvas placed on either side of Shakyamuni Buddha.

Sometimes, Mahakashyapa and Ananda are placed on either side of Shakyamuni. Mahakashyapa is the second patriarch and Ananda is the third patriarch, after Shakyamuni Buddha, depending on where you start counting from. Shakyamuni Buddha transmitted to Mahakashyapa. Mahakashyapa transmitted to Ananda. Either one of these pairs, whether it's the bodhisattvas Manjusri and Samantabhadra, or the patriarchs Mahakashyapa and Ananda, represent the two aspects of our practice, experiential and intrinsic, or the experiential and the philosophical, the learning part.

Ananda, the Buddha's nephew, was the most brilliant disciple. He's the one who knew everything that Shakyamuni Buddha ever said by heart. He was with Shakyamuni Buddha for twenty years. When Shakyamuni died, Ananda studied under Mahakashyapa for another twenty years before transmitting the dharma. When Shakyamuni Buddha died, Ananda was the one who verbalized all of the sutras, all of the teachings that Shakyamuni had done. He repeated them so they could be copied down into all of the sutras that we have. Mahakashyapa is the one who transmits, who represents experience; he's the one who smiles when Shakyamuni lifts the flower and twirls it. And in the middle is Shakyamuni Buddha.

"Namu daijin Fugen Busa." "Jin" means "wise". Be one with the great wise Samantabhadra Bodhisattva. Be the holy Manjusri Bodhisattva. Manjusri and Samantabhadra are the chief bodhisattvas. There is a whole realm of bodhisattvas, manifestations of just about everything you can think of. And more than that. But they are the chief bodhisattvas in the Avatamsaka Sutra.

The Avatamsaka Sutra is essentially the philosophy of Zen. But there is another sect of Buddhism called Kegon (Japanese pronunciation). The Kegon sect is based on the Avatamsaka Sutra, a sort of philosophical treatise, or a science text in modern physics. It talks about the interplay of “all is one” and “one is all”. The two chief bodhisattvas that appear in this sutra are Manjusri and Samantabhadra.

Manjusri sits on a lion holding a sword. The Manjusri on the ZCLA zendo altar has a sword in one hand, and in the other hand, something that looks like an arrow, but is actually a representation of the sutras. He sits on the left of Shakyamuni Buddha. In the Zen temple, Manjusri is always found in the zendo or meditation hall. The lion represents vigor. Our sitting should have vigor. The sword is the kyosaku. That sword cuts off all dichotomies, cuts off all ideas, concepts, and what’s left - prajna wisdom; that’s Manjusri, prajna wisdom, emptiness, shunyata, equality, everything cut off. Whatever you bring up, cut it off.

On the other side of Shakyamuni Buddha sits Samantabhadra on an elephant. The elephant represents patience, continuous effort, and Samantabhadra represents our practice. It’s a continuous thing. We cut off something - that’s Manjusri, and right there, we see what it is. Those are sudden things, the dynamic side. But Samantabhadra is our practice and our vows.

An example of the bodhisattva is one who takes a spoonful of snow and walks down the mountain to a well, drops the spoon of snow into the well, walks back up the mountain, takes a spoonful of snow, walks down, puts it in the well, goes back up the mountain. I know somebody who had a recurrent dream where they were at a bridge, taking a spoonful of oatmeal, carrying it to the other side of the bridge, carrying it down and going back over the bridge, getting a spoonful of oatmeal and carrying it back. And the mountain of oatmeal never got smaller. That’s a description of a bodhisattva. There’s no idea of filling the well, it will never happen. The well is immense. I forgot my figures for the diameter of the earth, but this well goes down to the center, four thousand miles, past the crust. You start getting into funny things if you go too far. But it goes down very far. And the mountain of snow, luckily, is big enough that we won’t run out of snow, and that’s Samantabhadra.

So Manjusri represents this equality, the oneness, shunyata, the emptiness. Samantabhadra represents the other side, the forms, the difference, manyness, and in the Heart Sutra, it says that it’s the same thing, emptiness is form. Or we could translate it, Manjusri is Samantabhadra, Samantabhadra is Manjusri. But you have to remember it is two different statements. And again at the heart of it, it’s nothing but Buddha. Another way of saying it is, be one, that is, just being what is happening right now. That’s the state of living in all things, with no self-consciousness and with no traces of enlightenment or of anything — just living in all things, right here, right now. That’s buddha. And those actions are the actions of Samantabhadra; those are the actions of Manjusri.

When we look at it this way, as a trinity, Shakyamuni Buddha is the unifying principle. He is both experiential and intrinsic, experiential and learning. Manjusri is prajna wisdom and Samantabhadra is love, compassion. Shakyamuni is both. What is the unifying principle? He just is. As soon as we strip what is and start to describe it or talk about it, we wind up with lots of bodhisattvas, lots of representations, but none of them can be the fact itself. Prajna wisdom is prajna wisdom; it’s not the fact itself. Compassion is compassion, not the fact itself. The fact - what is the fact?

This points to the difference between buddhas and bodhisattvas. If we can see what the difference is between buddhas and bodhisattvas, then whatever we pick up, we can point out the difference. There is a difference. This whole list of buddhas and bodhisattvas is all different people, different things. There is a world of equality, a world of oneness, and we have to see that first. Then in seeing that, we have to see the world of difference. Everything is different, but we have to see those differences, based on the threshold or on the foundation of the unity or the oneness of things. That is sort of a subtle point, but you have to see it. In the Heart Sutra we chant that form is emptiness, emptiness is form — two different things. Definitely there are forms, and definitely there is emptiness. Emptiness is equality, the oneness. So we have to see both sides clearly, and we have to see the equality of both sides. We are chanting, “Be buddha, be Manjusri Bodhisattva, be Samantabhadra Bodhisattva”. That means that Manjusri Bodhisattva is nothing but me, Shakyamuni Buddha is nothing but me, Samantabhadra Bodhisattva is nothing but me. Yet, each of those is different.

In this very moment, right here right now, I am everything. In the very functioning of that everything, that is just as it is, without putting anything, without talking about it as prajna wisdom or as compassion or as anything, without trying to do anything special - that's us. Vowing to save all sentient beings – that's bodhisattvas. A buddha wouldn't do that. That's ridiculous. There are no sentient beings, there is just this. Vowing to put an end to all desires, absurd. Vowing to master all the dharmas, how can you? Vowing to realize the Buddha Way; see we are the Buddha Way, so for a buddha, it's just this.

Still we vow to save all sentient beings: we are bodhisattvas. We make life miserable for our spouse. We are bodhisattvas. We try to improve, we are bodhisattvas. We are wisdom, compassion, love, bodhisattvas. So the very fact of the horse running, that's buddha. The very fact itself is buddha. The very fact of raising the whip, that's buddha. But raising the whip is the act of the bodhisattva. That's buddhas and bodhisattvas.

“Namu Koso Joyo Daishi, Namu Taiso Josai Daishi”. “Koso Joyo Daishi” means “great teacher.” “Koso Joyo” is the title that Dōgen Zenji received posthumously. And “Taiso Josai Daishi” is the title that Keizan Zenji received. Dōgen Zenji and Keizan Zenji are the founders of the Japanese Soto sect. We have gakkō (memorial services) on the twenty-ninth of every month, Founders' Day, for Keizan Zenji and Dōgen Zenji. There's another trinity of Shakyamuni in the middle and Keizan Zenji and Dōgen Zenji on either side, representing our Soto sect. Dōgen Zenji is regarded as the father of the sect, and Keizan Zenji is the mother; Shakyamuni is in the middle, unifying. Always Buddha is the unifying principle, and the unifying principle is always just the very fact itself. Every kind of description has to be breaking it apart. Any idea, any representation is breaking it apart. So the unifying principle in Buddhism is always just taking the fact as it is.

Most of you know about Dōgen Zenji. You may know a little less about Keizan Zenji. He's third from Dōgen Zenji in the lineage. He first trained at Eihei-ji. He entered Eihei-ji, which is Dōgen Zenji's monastery, when he was twelve. He studied under Kōun Ejo, the successor of Dōgen Zenji. Then later he studied under Tetsu Gikai. Although Dōgen Zenji is the founder of the Soto sect, at his time the Soto sect was very small in Japan. Keizan Zenji was a much more outgoing person and, in his time, the Soto sect became the largest Buddhist sect in Japan. Of course, Dōgen Zenji's efforts made it such a vital practice, but Keizan Zenji was also a tremendous teacher.

One of Keizan's famous books is called *Denkoroku* (*Transmission of the Light*). *Denkoroku* is the enlightenment experiences of the patriarchs, starting with Shakyamuni Buddha down through Keizan's teacher. Keizan Zenji added a poem after the account of each experience, giving his understanding of that experience, and he added a commentary giving some historical data about that patriarch. So there are about fifty-two chapters. We use it in koan study. We deal with the enlightenment experience as a koan, and with Keizan Zenji's poem as a koan. So there are 104 koans.

What's important about this *Denkoroku* is that it represents the continuity of our practice through the lineage. When we study it, or when we just read it, we are not reading about the past. We're reading about right now. Vice versa, being here right now, we should appreciate the fact that this moment contains the past, it contains the lineage.

This is one of the reasons we have "gakki". "Gakki" is a service for the teachers in our line. Not just our line, but the teachers that Maezumi Roshi felt karmically more involved with. There are lots of them. We could spend all our time appreciating them now. It's not appreciating Keizan Zenji as a person who lived in AD 1267 or 1300, but it's appreciating Keizan Zenji who lives right here, right now. That's me, that's you. This is nothing but the past, present, and future, and the *Denkoroku* is written like that.

We can see the thread that runs through each case, each enlightenment experience, each poem. It's like a necklace. That same thread has to be appreciated in our lineage. That means there is no beginning and no end. So, when the lineage comes down to me, it doesn't end there. Each of the successive masters is nothing but me, and for me, it completely goes right back to Shakyamuni, and that's just one circle starting anywhere, ending anywhere. But in reality, starting nowhere and ending nowhere - the necklace of our lineage, and we are one of those beads on it. In time, we may make room for another bead to come on this necklace. Or it may go nowhere. It's up to us. That's generation after generation of patriarchs.

Let me summarize. The efforts of buddhas, bodhisattvas, and patriarchs are shunyata or emptiness. The more we hold on, the harder it is to become emptiness, become buddhas and bodhisattvas. Or vice versa, all you have to do is just be Shakyamuni Buddha. By totally just chanting, by totally just being, by totally being empty. But in our daily life, instead of accepting things as they are, we are in two realms. Either we are trying to understand everything conceptually, or desiring something else. Whatever we hold onto prevents us from being buddhas, bodhisattvas, and patriarchs, because buddhas, bodhisattvas, and patriarchs are grounded in shunyata, are basically shunyata. So in letting everything go, right there, we manifest as buddhas, bodhisattvas, and patriarchs. □

# Lineage

## by Sensei Jan Chozen Bays

Dharma Talk given at ZCLA on September 10, 1983

When we have Jukai, our name is put at the end of the lineage. It's like putting a new bead on a string, on a necklace, and our name is put there. We talk about the transmission as coming from the Buddha and coming through the Indian patriarchs, the Chinese patriarchs, the Japanese patriarchs, and down to us. And then it will go on through America and Europe, and it will go on and on and on. But we draw the line as a continuous circle, meaning it's not one direction. The Seven Past Buddhas aren't necessarily something that has happened in the past and coming down toward us. It's beginningless and endless, and that means a complete circle. When you take the necklace of beads and you put another bead on, all the other beads are affected. All the other beads have to change position. They are all moved in some way, and that's true, too, when we join this lineage. When our name is put on this lineage, it affects all of the other ones. It's hard to imagine, but it's literally true. It's not just coming this way, through us, and on down through the future, but it also goes out in all directions.

We don't really realize the implications of having Jukai at the time we have Jukai. People say, "Well, I don't feel ready to have Jukai." In a way, we're never ready to have Jukai; we don't understand the implications of it all. We understand just a tiny little bit of it, but that tiny little bit of sanity is enough to get us on the cushion, sitting and practicing, and then having Jukai. So it's okay if we just go ahead and do it. As we look at this necklace, as we look at this line of transmission, certain ones of the beads kind of sparkle out at us at different times. It's nice to look through and look at some of them. I'll just review some of them briefly that have special meaning for me.

It was such a remarkable event for the historical Buddha to come to realization alone. How often do we get discouraged and want to give up practice. Imagine doing it totally on your own, leaving your family, going against society completely, going against all current knowledge and teaching, and going out and doing it on your own. It's astounding to think of.

Then there are Ananda and Mahakashyapa, who were contemporaries; they were both studying under the Buddha at the same time. Ananda was the Buddha's cousin, we think, and he had an amazing memory, what we today call a photographic memory. Nothing was written down at the time of the Buddha; it was all oral transmission begun by Ananda. He had a tape recorder kind of memory, so he memorized everything that the Buddha said. After the Buddha's death, when the elders met, it was Ananda who gave his recollections. When you hear, "Thus I have heard" at the beginning of the sutra, that is Ananda saying, "Thus I have heard (the Buddha say)" and then he recites what the Buddha said. He had a remarkable memory and was a remarkable man, but somehow he was unable to receive the Dharma from the Buddha. He actually received transmission from Mahakashyapa. He didn't receive it from the Buddha during the time of the Buddha's life. That very remarkable mind stood in his way. He was able to receive the teachings in a very academic kind of way and was able to preserve them for us, but he couldn't receive them with his whole being until later, after the Buddha died.

It was Mahakashyapa who actually received the Dharma from Shakyamuni Buddha. The story of that transmission took place on Mount Gridhrakūta [Vulture Peak Mountain] when the Buddha met the assembly and held up a Kompura flower, and Mahakashyapa smiled. And the

Buddha said, “I transmit the Dharma to Mahakashyapa.” That was instant recognition of no speech necessary. Mahakashyapa received the whole of the Dharma, and the Buddha recognized that his understanding was the same as his own, and so gave him transmission on the spot. Later, Ananda was able to receive the Dharma from Mahakashyapa.

The story of that transmission was that Ananda, although he had been with the Buddha throughout his teaching life, had been unable to receive the Dharma. Ananda was quite upset and quite jealous of Mahakashyapa, who was younger and had received transmission from Buddha. So Ananda went to Mahakashyapa and said, “The Buddha gave you his robe and his bowl (which are the symbols of transmission). Did he give you anything else?” Meaning, “Isn’t there something else to get?” It’s the same question we ask: “This is it? This is perfect? It can’t be!” So that was Ananda’s question: “He gave you the bowl and he gave you his robes, did he give you anything else?” And Mahakashyapa answered him, and Ananda became enlightened. We call those “turning words”, words that are able to somehow get a person out of a stuck spot and open the situation up for them.

Nagarjuna is known for his exposition on emptiness. In the lineage, he is the first patriarch who really expounded at length on what is emptiness, what do we mean by emptiness. It’s not our common conception of a great, flat void. It’s so easy for us to fall into thinking of just total nothingness—nothing happening, nothing moving, everything is gone, everything is wiped out — that’s a very simple way of thinking of emptiness. There are many implications and subtleties of what emptiness is.

Then going on through the Indian patriarchs to Hannyatara, who was the teacher of Bodhidharma. Bodhidharma, a very remarkable man, brought the teachings from India to China, walking all that distance. According to legend, he was very old when he did it, too, maybe in his eighties or nineties when he walked to China. After he walked there, he just sat in zazen — he didn’t go out and talk; he just sat and faced the wall. Sometimes we hold sesshins that we call Bodhidharma sesshins, which are sesshins with no teaching. Everyone turns and faces the wall, including teachers, to commemorate Bodhidharma’s years of wall gazing. Maezumi Roshi often says we talk too much. By talking about practice, we kind of walk all over it with muddy boots; our words just can’t do justice to it. What we really should do is close our mouths and quiet down our minds and turn and face the wall and let the truth reveal itself. It’s always in front of us. All that our words and ideas do is cover it up. Or we try to put in our own conceptual framework. So Bodhidharma sat for years facing the wall.

After him came the second patriarch, Eka, who came and earnestly said that he wanted to study with Bodhidharma. Bodhidharma turned him away, and Eka stood in the snow overnight to show his earnestness. He was turned away again, and he supposedly cut off his arm to show how much he wanted to learn from Bodhidharma. Many people disparage that legend and say it’s just a legend. That kind of argument is academic. It doesn’t matter. The legend shows that we have to be willing to cut off a lot. To be able to see the truth, we have to be willing to cut off our notion of ourselves. It’s easy to cut off an arm compared to cutting off our ideas of who we are and how things should be. We think about it as a very gruesome story — how could anyone hack off an arm to show an earnestness to study? But what we have to give up is much harder to give up. It is our idea of who we are that we must let go of. Not just once, but we have to be willing to cut it off again and again. Keep on saying, “Oh, I ran up against it again, okay.” And let it go. When you get that gut feeling of, “Oh, no, I’ve been caught at it again. There I am judging again. Oh, no”, and then just let it go. And go on. So it’s not just once cutting off an arm. That seems

horrible to us, but that's very easy compared to what we really have to do, which is constantly cut off and cut off and cut off. That's what the Manjusri figure on the altar reminds us of, carrying the sword to cut off delusion — constantly cutting it off, over and over again.

Daikan Eno is the Sixth Patriarch. Although he was illiterate, he had a spontaneous enlightenment experience. We say he had a spontaneous enlightenment experience, but that doesn't come out of nowhere. It came out of all the practice of all of these people before him, and everything else that we don't even have any idea of. According to the story, he was in the marketplace one day and heard someone chanting the Diamond Sutra, and he had a spontaneous enlightenment experience. He felt that he had to go and study, but his family was very poor, and he couldn't leave his widowed mother. Then an uncle died and left him a small inheritance, and he left that money with his mother and went off to study.

He went to a monastery, and since he was illiterate, there wasn't much he could do, so he was put in the kitchen washing rice. After several years of his being there, a contest was held to choose the next successor; a poem showing each monk's understanding was to be written by each of them. The very learned head monk, who everyone supposed to be the successor, entered the contest and his poem was written on the wall. Master Eno came out and asked someone to read the poem to him because he couldn't read. After hearing it, he composed a poem of his own, which someone else wrote out for him. It was submitted to the Roshi, who looked at it and realized that Eno was his next successor. So the Roshi goes at midnight to the kitchen, where Eno is washing rice and transmits the Dharma to him. Then he says, "Everybody is going to be furious about this because you're a total dark horse, and everyone is expecting the head monk to get the transmission, and nobody is going to like this, so you'd better leave. Take my robe and take my bowls and leave." Eno did as he was told, and they pursued him and tried to take the robe and bowls back, but were unable to.

We can take this story and put it into modern terms, and people we know. That is the key whenever you work with a koan, or read a koan or an enlightenment experience of the patriarch. Try to put it into modern terms. Change the names and change the circumstances so they fit here and now. Because they aren't old, moldy stories about people long dead; they are about our life right now and our circumstances right now. So you can imagine the reaction that would be created if an unknown person suddenly overnight succeeded your Roshi's dharma. Imagine how people would feel.

The most wonderful thing about it to me is that understanding what our life is about doesn't depend on book learning. In fact, if anything, book learning stands in the way, because it just gives us more ideas. We say the book *Three Pillars of Zen* is a very good introductory book, but the chapters on enlightenment experiences are very dangerous, because everybody reads them and then thinks, "Oh, I want that experience" and then sits on the cushion thinking, "Is it happening now? Is it happening to me now? Oh, no, that wasn't it, oh." The hardest thing is to let go of the ideas, and in a way, it's easier for somebody with no ideas. It's much easier for children, and it's amazing when you ask children about koans, they will tell you the answer. It's so amazing — their minds are so uncluttered with ideas. Adults come up with some weird theoretical ideas, but kids are literally right, they really know what is going on. In the book *Dropping Ashes on the Buddha*, written by the Korean Zen teacher Seung Sahn Nim, he says something about that. One of the adults there is working on the koan "What is the Way?" Seung Sahn Nim says, "Go and ask your child, 'What is the Way?'" So he goes and asks the child, "What is the Way?" The child says, "Normandie Avenue."

Sometimes we use the word “Daiosho.” “Daiosho” means “great teacher,” and one in our own lineage is called a patriarch. Usually there is a different lineage for each teacher. All of Maezumi Roshi’s successors will have the same lineage and all the people that have Jukai under him will have this lineage.

Further along, we come to Master Tozan, a very great master who founded the Soto School and who worked with koan study and developed the five ranks, the ways of looking at the relative and absolute. Then Tendo Nyojo Daiosho, who was Dōgen Zenji’s teacher in China. Dōgen Zenji left Japan and went to China and found this wonderful teacher that he studied with. He then came back and brought Soto Zen to Japan. So we say Tozan was one of the founders of Soto Zen in China, but then it was Dōgen Zenji who brought it to Japan. We think of Dōgen Zenji these days as a great teacher with a profound understanding, and we work with his writings over and over again.

In the first five or six years of my practice when I read something that Dōgen Zenji wrote, I just couldn’t understand it. The same with the Heart Sutra and the San Do Kai. I have the feeling that there is so much here, I just can’t get into it. It’s just opaque; it has that feeling of “How will I ever understand this?” That’s fine — just keep reading it and keep working with it, and periodically a tiny bit will just flash open for you. Suddenly, just one line or a few words will suddenly flash into meaning. Then let it go and just keep working with it, and it works in a very deep way with us and comes up to the surface. Dōgen Zenji is particularly like that, so rich that it’s very hard to understand, and he switches constantly from the point of view of the relative to the absolute, back and forth and back and forth. It was actually Keizan Zenji who later made Zen accessible and popular in Japan and made people able to understand it and begin to work with it.

Then there is a story about Tenkei Denson. One day he saw a monk sweeping ants off the path and he said, “Don’t do that. Don’t do that.” The monk stopped. A few days later, the monk saw Tenkei Denson chasing crows, and he said, “But teacher, a few days ago you told me not to sweep the ants away, and now you’re chasing the crows away.” And Tenkei Denson said, “I like ants, and I hate crows.” He was another interesting teacher in our lineage. In a way it all doesn’t matter; we all trace our origins back to Shakyamuni Buddha. We are doing the same practice that he did. It doesn’t matter whether these people actually transmitted to the next person or not. It doesn’t matter; it’s all the Dharma, and it’s flowing through all of us. After the Sixth Patriarch, it’s a pretty clear-cut lineage. At that time, we think it was written down for the first time and then filled in backwards. But that’s okay.

When Dōgen Zenji had the transmission from his teacher in China, he wrote a chart that included Rinzai’s lineage in it, too. He felt that the Soto and Rinzai lineages came together in himself, and that they both contributed to him, and that we shouldn’t think of this artificial division between Soto and Rinzai. You’ll hear Roshi say that from time to time. We are all doing the same practice. Our practice is non-duality, not to get caught up in duality. Now, the last two patriarchs — Ungan Guhaku Daiosho is Roshi’s father’s teacher, and Baian Hakuju Daiosho is Roshi’s father. Roshi had three teachers: the first was his father, and he often says he learned the most from his father just in terms of the practice and everyday life. His other two teachers were Yasutani Roshi and Koryu Roshi. Koryu Roshi is a lay teacher, not a monk. His teacher was Joko Roshi, who was a monk but felt that Buddhism had become so corrupt in Japan that he forbade Koryu Roshi from becoming a monk, because he felt that it would be joining this tremendous political machine which had lost sight of the Dharma.

So this is an outline of the lineage that we chant, and this is the blood lineage that will be on your “kechimyaku” when you have Jukai. There are so many ways to think of this. Before you have Jukai you might just sit with the idea of this blood lineage: why does it have a red line? What does it mean: “blood lineage”? And think of the implications of joining a family. You know, if you met a family of people that you really liked, if you liked their approach to life and you liked each one of them and saw each one as an amazing individual with clarity and vision and a way of looking at life and living life, then naturally you might want to join that family. That’s what we are doing. We are literally joining the family by taking Jukai and putting our name at the end of this lineage and connecting ourselves into this circle. So, in a way, there are three circles in this chart. The circle at the top, the empty red circle that represents our total unconditioned free nature that is constantly changing, no fixed substance, no fixed form, completely empty. Then this path that winds back and forth and you can see it winding through the room. It winds around through each of us; it winds through all these patriarchs, with each of their individual differences, and yet, the same thing. The same life, being lived by all even though it appears this way and that way, red shirt and black shirt, and dark hair and long hair, and light hair and short hair - so many different ways it appears, so many different countries, national characteristics that it acquires and then loses, and acquires again then loses again, and then on through us, and then again, a complete circle.

There is no beginning and no end to this practice. Once Tetsugen Sensei was asked, “How long do you have to sit or practice before you have Jukai?” He thought for a minute and said, “Maybe lifetimes.” I was so amazed by that, because I was a scientist and he was a scientist, and I thought, “He really believes that.” It was the most astounding thing to me that an aerospace mathematician could say something like that, and it obviously was like fact to him. When we look at the chart, we realize that it’s true. How much practice? Putting aside reincarnation and all of that, how much practice has had to come before us for us to begin to practice? How many lifetimes of practice has this lineage wound through before it came to us? And then how will it go on from here? Always it is true nature expressing itself. Each one of these is a circle. Really, the way to draw this is like beads on a necklace. The real way to draw this is many, many complete circles within the whole circle. This again is the Three Treasures. When we take Jukai, we join with and become the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Here is buddha nature, our true nature, and here is the historical Buddha, here is the whole of buddha nature. Here is the Dharma, each expression of that buddha nature as it appears as a different jewel, as a different manifestation, including us. Here is the harmony of all of those people practicing together in space and time, and that’s us.

The part at the bottom of the lineage chart is a piece that was written by Tendo Nyojo, when he gave the “kechimyaku” to Dōgen Zenji. In rough translation it says that, “This is True Dharma which I hand down to you, and it is the same Dharma which was transmitted at Mount Gudikutra from Shakyamuni Buddha to Mahakashyapa, and was transmitted at Mount Shoren to the Sixth Patriarch.” Then he mentioned several other instances of transmission, “And now I transmit it to you, please guard it well, and do not let it die. Do not let it pass away. Do not let it be lost.” This is kind of an admonition to us, that once we’ve joined this, not to let it pass away, not to let it be lost. Let the buddha-dharma keep on going and passing through life after life through us. So that this wonderful practice, this wonderful way of living life, will never be lost. Then there is the date, and your name, and your Preceptor’s name.

At the time of Jukai, when your Preceptor gives the lineage chart to you, you should receive instructions as to what to do with it. I'll mention it to you now, and then when you hear it again, you will remember it. When Roshi gives it to you, you are going to have to do bows. Since you can't bow with this in your hand, you will have to put it down. You will receive it in gassho with palms together and touch it to your forehead to honor it, just like bowing to raise it above your own self. There will be a place to put it down on the table. Treat it with that kind of reverence and do not put it down on the floor. Then do your bows, and later on, it will be given back to you. When you take it home, it is to be kept in a safe place, so you might want to get a nice cloth to wrap it in, and then keep it somewhere where it's safe. Even more important, it isn't like a calligraphy, and although it looks very beautiful and the temptation might be to display it on the wall, don't do that. In a way, it is a very private thing and should be put away.

I want to emphasize that if you feel you don't understand all the implications of joining the lineage, don't worry about it. In our Shiho (Transmission) training, we make a special study of the lineage, and we do bows for each name morning and night. We do one bow for each name of the lineage, so that there is a very intense absorption in the lineage. At the end of koan study, we study each of the patriarchs and their enlightenment experiences, but still I feel like I've just scratched the surface of understanding what it means to join this family, the family of the Buddha.

At the end of the Jukai ceremony, Roshi says something in Japanese and the translation in English is, "Now you are a child of the Buddha." So in a very literal sense, we are joining the family of the Buddha, we are joining this very rational, sane family that looks at life with very clear eyes, sees what it's about, and lives life fully and freely. We are joining as babies; we don't understand all of the implications. But a baby is a whole human being: a baby buddha is a buddha, a whole buddha. So we are literally becoming one of these patriarchs, even though we don't know it, we don't know all the implications, and we might not for a long, long time. We are becoming a baby buddha, which means to become the whole buddha, the whole seed, and the whole plant is in the seed. Don't worry that we don't understand it yet. It takes a long time to understand, maybe forever. It's nice that we can keep on letting it unfold, leaf by leaf, branch by branch, letting our true nature unfold. □

# Dōgen Zenji and Keizan Zenji

## by Professor Azuma Ryushin

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About 2,500 years ago, Buddhism began in the zazen-enlightenment of Sakyamuni Buddha in ancient India. After that, it passed through the periods of Early Buddhism, Abhidharma Buddhism etc., Buddhism was transmitted as North-transmitted Buddhism (it expanded to Central Asia, China, Korea, Japan, Tibet, Mongolia, Russia etc.) and as South-transmitted Buddhism (Theravada Buddhism - it expanded to Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia etc.). And now it spreads to countries outside Asia (USA, Europe etc.). The buddha-dharma of Maezumi Roshi has its origin in Japanese Soto Zen, which lineage is in the North-transmitted Great Vehicle (Mahayana) Buddhism.

Japanese Soto Zen regards Shakyamuni, who was enlightened through zazen, as the Great Teacher, the principal Buddha. So we offer our prayers to this one Buddha, Shakyamuni Buddha, and two patriarchs: Dōgen Zenji (the Koso-sama) and Keizan Zenji (the Taiso-sama). Since we consider that the zazen-enlightenment of Shakyamuni is the historical and religious origin of the Buddhism, it is quite natural that Soto Zen regards Shakyamuni as the principal teacher. It was Dōgen who clarified the essence of Buddhism. And it was Keizan who succeeded Dōgen's Dharma and developed it extensively. So today I would like to speak briefly about Dōgen Zenji and Keisan Zenji.

About 800 years ago (AD 1200), Dōgen was born in Kyoto, in the Kamakura period. Buddhism was first introduced into Japan in AD 538 (or AD 522) from Kudara (the ancient country of Korea). From that time on, a variety of foreign cultures were also introduced to Japan from China and Korea. In the Nara period (710-794), Japanese Buddhism had six schools, which were based on the *Tripitaka: Sutra-pitaka*, *Vinaya-pitaka* (Precepts), and *Abhidharma-pitaka* (Buddhist philosophy and psychology works). Those six schools are:

1. Kegon school (based on the *Buddhavatamsaka Sutra*),
2. Ritsu school (based on the precepts or *Vinaya*),
3. Hosso school (characteristics of dharmas, based on the *Yogachara*,
4. Jojitsu school (based on the *Satyasiddhi* or *Jojitsu-ron*),
5. Kusha school (based on the *Abhidharmakosā*),  
and
6. Sanron school (based on the three *Madhyamika* treatises).

In the following Heian period (794-1185), Japanese Buddhism had two major Buddhist schools:

1. Tendai (T'ien-t'ai) school (Chinese Founder: Chih-i),  
and
2. Shingon (Esoteric) school ("Shingon" literally means "True Word" or "True Mantra"). These were introduced by Saicho and Kukai, respectively, upon completing their studies in China.

These Nara-Heian Buddhist schools were scholarly, aristocratic, and nationalistic Buddhism and, furthermore, they were expected to answer people's prayers and deliver them merits. Approximately

660 years after Buddhism was first introduced into Japan, our Dōgen was born. He felt the sense of vanity or impermanence of life at his mother's death, and because of his mother's final wishes, became a priest at Mt. Hiei where the Tendai school had its head temple, called Enryakuji.

Dōgen's primary concern was, "What is true Buddhism and how has this true Buddhism been transmitted?" Dōgen raised questions and doubts on these two points, and we could say that his life was devoted to clarifying these two points.

Needless to say, the religious character of Dōgen was filled of the spirit of deep compassion, but in addition, we can say that he was persistent in the pursuit of the truth of Buddhism and that he had an extremely intellectual and philosophical character.

At this moment, I would like to introduce a few points and characteristics of Dōgen's teaching. Firstly, Dōgen always emphasized that the Principal Teacher of true Buddhism is Shakyamuni. He wrote, "Shakyamuni Tathagata Great Priest, The Great Teacher of this world" and "You must worship the only Shakyamuni Buddha" in the "Eihei-Koroku (Shingi)". In Japanese Buddhism, people worship many Tathagata-buddhas and many Bodhisattvas, such as:

Amida (Amitayus-buddha),  
Yakushi (Bhaisajya-guru-buddha; who can heal our illness),  
MahaVairocana (Samantabhadra; who is like a sun),  
Avalokitesvara (Great compassion; who hears the sound or outcries of the world and is one of the most important bodhisattvas of the Mahayana),  
Maitreya (the future-buddha; who is expected to appear in 30,000 years),  
Manjushri (Wisdom; who is noble and gentle),  
Ksitigarbha, and so on.

Dōgen didn't necessarily deny these Tathagata-buddhas and Bodhisattvas, but he emphasized that the true Principal Teacher should be Shakyamuni Buddha.

The Principal Teacher Shakyamuni that Dōgen emphasized is not the transcendent, absolute, and monotheistic existence. Although he lived in an historical place and time, today he is regarded as much more than just a human being but also as the mercy father, the great teacher, and the ideal existence. He is the Buddha who is realized every day through our faithful and diligent life.

Secondly, he emphasized that the essence of Buddhist practice should be zazen. This thought was articulated in the "Shobogenzo Bendowa" ("A Talk on Pursuing the Way"). In Nara Heian period Buddhism and in Kamakura period Buddhism, except for Dōgen, the practice of true buddha-dharma came to be not so clear. Then Dōgen wrote a chapter, "Shobogenzo Butsudo" ("Buddhist Practice" or "Way of Buddha"), and said that zazen was none other than Buddhism and Buddhism was none other than zazen. Moreover, he rejected sectarianism in Buddhism and rejected names of the Buddhist sect, for example Zen-shu (Zen Buddhism), Jodo-shu (Pure Land

Buddhism), etc. He was not confined in the frame of Hinayana (Lesser Vehicle) Buddhism and Mahayana (Greater Vehicle) Buddhism, and he thought that we need to understand Buddhism beyond these frames. Likewise he stressed strongly the zazen which had direct connection to the essence of Shakyamuni Buddha - who had enlightenment in the seat of the Vajra (Diamond) under the bodhi-tree (linden tree) - rather than a zazen of the Zen-shu or Zen Buddhism.

Dōgen called this zazen “Jijuyu-zanmai” (Self-susceptible or Self-joyous Samadhi). The appearance of this “jijuyu-zanmai” must be the “kekka-fuza” (zazen in full lotus position). This word contains both the “kekka-fuza” of the body and the “kekka-fuza” of the mind. Its benefit is the “Shinjin-datsuraku” (“Dropping away Body and Mind”).

Dōgen called this “Shikantaza” (just sitting). “Shikantaza” has four meanings:

1. Dedicate one’s self to zazen practice solely,
2. Practice zazen earnestly,
3. Just do zazen,
4. Live everyday life in the spirit of zazen – the Zazen which Surpasses Zazen.

Thirdly, Dōgen confirmed the tradition of the true buddha-dharma. He elaborated this in the “Shobogenzo Busso” (Buddha and Ancestors) and “Shobogenzo Gyoji” (Continuous Practice). He explained the lineage (from the Past Seven Buddhas, Shakyamuni Buddha, Venerable Mahakashyapa (the first ancestor in India), Venerable Bodhidharma (the first ancestor in China), Daikan Eno Zenji (Huineng, the sixth ancestor in China), Tozan Ryokai Zenji (Dongshan Liangjie), Ungo Doyo Zensji (Yunju Daoying), Tendo Nyojo Zenji (Tiantong Rujing), and Nyojo Zenji to Dōgen), and explained the lives and words of the typical teachers. He confirmed that the essence of buddha-dharma succeeded purely in the frame of historical Zen tradition. Though there are many other facets of Dōgen’s characteristics I should, and want, to further discuss, I would like to leave that for another time.

Keizan Jokin Zenji is the fourth patriarch of Dōgen’s lineage. He was born in Echizen (Fukui Prefecture) fifteen years after Dōgen’s death. In those days, among Dōgen’s followers, there was a major schism (so-called “Sendai Soron” – Disharmony Among the Third Generation). When Keizan encountered this rather sad situation, he accepted it as a crucial lesson of history. Then he reconfirmed Dōgen’s teachings, transmitted his teachings in a very practical way and successfully propagated them to many more people. I would like to introduce exactly this point to you.

I will introduce Keizan’s understandings on the three points I have already touched on in the case of Dōgen. First, Keizan also named Shakyamuni Buddha as the great teacher, as in Dōgen’s teachings. If I have to point out differences between Dōgen and Keizan, Dōgen’s emphasis is on only one Shakyamuni Buddha; on the other hand, Keizan felt closer to Mount Hakusan, which is considered as a regional guardian deity and had deep faith in Avalokitesvara bodhisatva, which tradition has been handed down from his grandmother’s generation to his mother’s and to his own. After Keizan, temples and monasteries of Soto Zen did not necessarily exclude these buddhas and bodhisattvas.

Though Keizan did not intend to guide his disciples to worship these bodhisattvas and deities, we may say that his capacity to relate to the other buddhas, bodhisattvas, and deities indirectly influenced his disciples.

Second, Keizan studied Dōgen's teachings and taught then to his disciples. He exerted himself to encourage and propagate the teaching of zazen to all people regardless their religious capacities. His "Sankon Zazen Setsu" (Three Kinds of Zen Practitioners) shows how to practice zazen, not only for those who have the best capacity, but also or those who have ordinary or poor capacities. He also shows that anybody can equally attain the enlightenment through zazen. His another publication, "The Zazen-yojinki" (The Manual of Zazen), suggests that one may try counting one's breath when the mind is easily distracted and may try concentrating on a koan if distraction gets worse during zazen. That is to say, he taught breath counting and koan as the means to reinforce the practice of 'Shikantaza' as taught by Dōgen.

The point here is, Dōgen stood at the standing point of teaching the true zazen, while Keizan stood, if anything, at the standing point of practicing or studying the true zazen. I consider this viewpoint of Keizan to be one of the very important reasons for Japanese Soto Zen spreading to the common people and gaining popularity among them.

Then I want to point out the followings: the zazen taught by Dōgen was expressed by the words of "Jijuyo-zanmai", "Shinjin-datsuraku", "Shikantaza", and so on. These words are, as it were, zazen-centric expressions.

On the other hand, Keizan's standpoint is characterized by the phrase "Byojoshin-ze-do" (Everyday-mind is the Way), which was crucial to Keizan attaining his enlightenment. This phrase (Everyday-mind is the way) was first said in the dialogue between Nansen and Joshu (both of them are Chinese monks), and from that time on, it has been used rather frequently because it became a famous Zen phrase. Keizan assimilated profound meaning of this phrase based on his religious experiences and established his spirit of Zen on a basis of these experiences. "Byojoshin-ze-do" means "living one's ordinary life sincerely". When living sincerely, at any time, at any place, anyone can attain this "Byojoshin" (Usual Essential Mind or Every-day Mind).

In this way, we can say the characteristics of Keizan's teaching are "zen beyond zazen" (not limited to the form of zazen) or the zen to practice easily in our ordinary life.

Third, as I already said, Dōgen sought the true Dharma and clarified the correct (Zen) Buddhism tradition. But none of Dōgen's works touched upon either the lives of Shakyamuni and the patriarchs nor how these patriarchs transmitted their enlightenment and its contexts to their disciples in any detail. To supplement this aspect, "Denko-roku" (The Record of Transmitting the Light) was written by Keizan. In this book, Keizan entirely examined and clarified how the ray of light (enlightenment) was transmitted from Shakyamuni to Keizan's teacher, Koun Ejo (through 53 teachers) without a single omission. To those who study Buddhism, the tradition and authority exhibited in "Denko-roku" provide much pride, confidence, and security to us.

Furthermore, Keizan built many more temples than Dōgen and trained many disciples. Especially Keizan carried into practice Dōgen's teaching of the equality between men and women by appointing his female disciple a successor and appointing her abbot of a temple. Unfortunately, due to his early death, Dōgen had been unable to do this. There is much more to say, which I would like to save for another opportunity.

As my final comment on this subject, I may say, with much gratitude toward these patriarchs, that Dōgen lived in "reason or rationality" while Keizan lived in "dream" ("yume").

## ZCLA Buddha Essence Temple Lineage

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ Vipashyin Buddha</li> <li>▲ Shikhin Buddha</li> <li>▲ Vishvabhu Buddha</li> <li>▲ Krakuchchanda Buddha</li> <li>▲ Kanakamuni Buddha</li> <li>▲ Kashyapa Buddha</li> <li>▲ Shakyamuni ▲ Buddha</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mahakashyapa</li> <li>2. Ananda <i>Ananda</i></li> <li>3. Shanavasa</li> <li>4. Upagupta</li> <li>5. Dhritaka</li> <li>6. Michaka</li> <li>7. Vasumitra</li> <li>8. Buddhanandi</li> <li>9. Buddhamitra</li> <li>10. Parshva</li> <li>11. Punyashas</li> <li>12. Ashvaghosha</li> <li>13. Kapimala</li> <li>14. Nagarjuna<br/><i>Na-GAR-juna</i></li> <li>15. Kanadeva</li> <li>16. Rahulata</li> <li>17. Sanghanandi</li> <li>18. Gayashata</li> <li>19. Kumarata</li> <li>20. Jayata</li> <li>21. Vasubandhu</li> <li>22. Manorhita</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>23. Haklenayashas</li> <li>24. Aryasimha</li> <li>25. Basiasita</li> <li>26. Punyamitra</li> <li>27. Prajnatara</li> <li>28. Bodhidharma</li> <li>29. Daizu Huike<br/><i>Dai-zu Hway-kuh</i></li> <li>30. Jianzhi Sengcan<br/><i>Jien-jer Sung-tsan</i></li> <li>31. Dayi Daoxin<br/><i>Da-ee Dow-shin</i></li> <li>32. Daman Hongren<br/><i>Da-man Hong-run</i></li> <li>33. Dajian Huineng<br/><i>Da-jien Hway-nung</i></li> <li>34. Qingyuan Xingsi<br/><i>Ching-yuu-en Shing-suh</i></li> <li>35. Shitou Xiqian<br/><i>Sher-tow Shi-chi-en</i></li> <li>36. Yaoshan Weiyan<br/><i>Yow-shan Way-yen</i></li> <li>37. Yuntan Tansheng<br/><i>Yun-taan Taan-shung</i></li> <li>38. Dongshan Liangjie<br/><i>Dung-shan Li-ang ji-eh</i></li> <li>39. Yunju Daoying<br/><i>Yun-juu Dow-ying</i></li> <li>40. Tongan Daopi<br/><i>Tung-aan Dow-pee</i></li> </ol> |
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## Zen Ancestors

Some of the major figures in our lineage are listed below. (Please refer to Francis Dojun Cook's translation of Keizan Zenji's *Denkoroku* and to Andrew Ferguson's *Zen's Chinese Heritage* for more information about the Zen ancestors.)

SHAKYAMUNI BUDDHA (Sakyamuni) — The enlightened one of the Shakya clan. He is the founder and exemplar of Buddhism.

MAKAKASYAPA (Mahakashyapa) — May have been older than Shakyamuni Buddha. He was already a great teacher before he met the Buddha. He was the first to succeed the Dharma from Shakyamuni Buddha.

ANANDA (Ananda) — Buddha's cousin. He had a photographic memory and was able to perfectly remember the teachings of the Buddha.

NAGARJUNA (Nagarjuna) — Revitalized Buddhist practice with his work on emptiness.

BODHIDHARMA — Brought Buddhism from India to China. He is the first Zen patriarch.

Famous

for “vast emptiness, no holiness”, nine years facing the wall, and “beyond words and letters, directly pointing to the mind”.

MASTER EKA (Daizu Huike) — According to legend, cut off his arm as an expression of his sincerity and desire to practice with Bodhidharma. He is the second Chinese patriarch.

SOSHIN (Jianzhi Sengcan) — Wrote the *Hsin Hsin Ming (Faith in Mind)*. “The great Way is not difficult. It simply avoids picking and choosing.” He is the third Chinese patriarch.

DAIKAN ENO (Dajian Huineng) — Spread the Dharma in China. He had four major successors of which Seigen Gyoshi Daiosho and Nangaku Ejo Daiosho were the forerunners of the five schools of Zen, including Soto and Rinzai.

TOZAN (Dongshan Liangjie) and SOZAN — Teacher and student, founders of the Soto lineage. Sozan's lineage eventually died out. Our lineage comes through Ungan who was another of Tozan's successors. Tozan was the originator of the five ranks and the propagator of subtle, meticulous practice.

TENDŌ NYŌJŌ (Tiantong Rujing) — Dōgen Zenji's teacher in China. He said to Dōgen Zenji, “This is the true Dharma which I hand down to you. It is the same Dharma which was transmitted at Mount Gridhrakūta to Mahakashyapa and at Mt. Shorin to the Sixth Patriarch. Now I give it to you. Guard it well. Do not let it die. Do not let it pass away. Do not let it be lost.”

DŌGEN ZENJI (Eihei Dōgen) — Founder of the Soto School in Japan. He brought Buddhism from China to Japan. He has had a deep effect on people through his writings and practice down to this day. He succeeded the Dharma in both the Rinzai and Soto lineages and is the author of the *Shobogenzo* and *Fukanzaŕengi*.

KEIZAN ZENJI — Spread Zen Buddhism in Japan. He is the dharma grandson of Dōgen Zenji, and the author of the *Denkoroku* (*Transmission of the Light*).

TENKEI DENSON — Commentator on the *Shobogenzo*. He revitalized practice in Japan.

HAKUIN ZENJI — Is not in our lineage but deserves special mention for formalizing modern koan study.

BAIAN HAKUJUN — Maezumi Roshi's father and teacher, and the founder of the ZCLA city center. He emphasized sangha and community.

KORYU ROSHI and YASUTANI ROSHI — Also teachers of Maezumi Roshi. Koryu Roshi was a Rinzai lay teacher. Yasutani Roshi was a Soto priest who studied the Rinzai Koan system with Harada Sogaku Roshi. The Dharma has been transmitted to Maezumi Roshi in three different lineages.

Now, being baby buddhas, how do we grow up and encourage the awareness of the Dharma? The rest of the book is written by you. □

## Chronology of Hakuyu Taizan Maezumi Roshi

- 1931 February 24. Born at his family temple, Koshinji, in Otawara, Japan. Named Hirotaka Kuroda, he was the third of seven sons born to Baiun Hakujun Kuroda, a Soto priest and the founder of the White Plum Asanga. All seven brothers were ordained as monks, and four of them became temple priests.
- 1942 Received ordination (tokudo) at age 11 from Sozen Haiakawa Roshi of Kokokuji in Nagano Prefecture, Japan, and given the name *Taizan*, meaning “Great Mountain”.
- Upon the death of all male heirs of his mother’s family, he was adopted by his maternal grandparents to carry on the Maezumi family name. He later adopted the formal Chinese pronunciation, Hakuyu, of his birth name Hirotaka (Japanese pronunciation).
- 1947 Graduated from Otawara High School and moved to Tokyo to attend Komazawa University.
- Began koan study with Musa Koryu Roshi at the suggestion of his father. Kory Roshi was a Rinzai master of the Inzan school.
- 1952 Graduated from Komazawa University with degrees in Oriental literature and philosophy.
- 1952 Trained as apprentice priest at Koshinji, his family temple, for two years.
- 1954 Trained at Sojiji Monastery until 1956.
- 1955 In April, he received Dharma transmission from his father, Baiun Hakujun. In the same year he did Zuisse (Ceremony of Recognition by the Soto Sect) at Sojiji and Eiheiiji.
- 1956 Sent to Los Angeles by the Soto School to assist Bishop Yamada Reirin with the Zenshuji Mission. Studied English at San Francisco State College 1958 - 60.
- 1962 Served as Yasutani Roshi’s translator during his first visit to the United States and began to do koan study with him. Both Yasutani Roshi and Koryu Roshi visited the United States a number of times to lead sesshins for the now growing number of American practitioners, providing Maezumi Roshi with the opportunity to continue koan study under their guidance.
- 1967 ZCLA incorporated. Completed koan study with Yasutani Roshi.
- 1968 Moved into the house at 967 South Normandie Avenue with a small group of students, beginning what would soon become the Zen Center of Los Angeles.
- 1970 ZCLA became Busshinji, a temple of the Soto school. Received Inka from Yasutani Roshi in Kamakura, Japan.
- 1970’s During this time, ZCLA grew rapidly, at one point housing almost two hundred residents.
- 1973 Received Inka from Koryu Roshi at ZCLA, becoming one of the few teachers to receive Inka from both the Inzan and Takuju Rinzai lineages, as well as Dharma transmission in the Soto School.
- 1976 Founded the Kuroda Institute for the Study of Buddhism and Human Values, a nonprofit educational organization formed to promote scholarship on Buddhism in its historical, philosophical, and cultural ramifications. The Kuroda Institute has provided a forum for scholars to meet in conferences and colloquia. It has translated and published many East

Asian Buddhist texts, as well as scholarly studies in conjunction with the University of Hawaii Press. Maezumi Roshi was editor of the Zen Writing series and also founded the Dharma Institute in Mexico City.

- 1977 Gave Dharma transmission to his first successor, Bernie Tetsugen Glassman. Transmitted to Dennis Genpo Merzel in September, 1980, to Charlotte Joko Beck and Jan Chozen Bays in 1983 and to John Daido Looi in 1987. In all, had twelve successors, many of whom have in turn transmitted to successors. Maezumi Roshi ordained 68 Zen priests in America and gave the Buddhist Precepts to over 500 people.
- 1979 Land purchased for the Zen Mountain Center, located in the San Jacinto Mountains, about 100 miles north of Los Angeles. The founding of the Mountain Center was the realization of a long-held dream of Maezumi Roshi to build a mountain retreat center for intensive monastic training. The present abbot is Sensei Charles Tenshin Fletcher. See [www.zmc.org](http://www.zmc.org).  
Also in 1979, the Zen Community of New York is founded by Tetsugen Sensei (now Bernie Glassman) in Riverdale, New York. ZCNY later began a bakery that provides job training and employment for homeless people, and a number of other community action programs. Tetsugen Sensei later founded the Greyston Foundation and the Zen Peacemaker Community. See [www.peacemakercircle.org/](http://www.peacemakercircle.org/).
- 1981 Maezumi Roshi formally opened the Zen Arts Center in the Catskill Mountains of New York. Begun in 1980 by John Daido Looi, the Zen Arts Center would later become Zen Mountain Monastery. Maezumi Roshi served as the first abbot of the monastery, until Daido Sensei (now Roshi) was installed in 1987. See [www.mro.org/mro.html](http://www.mro.org/mro.html).
- 1982 First sesshin held at Zen Mountain Center.
- 1984 Jan Chozen Bays Sensei (now Roshi) made director of the Zen Community of Oregon in Portland. She later founded the Great Vow Monastery. See <http://www.greatvow.org/>.
- 1994 Kanzeon International founded in Salt Lake City, Utah by Maezumi Roshi, with Roshi Genpo Merzel as Abbot. Roshi Genpo also teaches groups elsewhere in the United States, and also in Poland, England, France, and Hawaii.
- 1995 Maezumi Roshi was head lecturer for the Soto School's Tokubetsu Sesshin, held at Green Gulch Farm.
- 1995 May 14. Died in Tokyo, Japan.

Maezumi Roshi was twice married. First to Rev. Charlene Kyoko Maezumi, a Pure Land Buddhist priest. His second marriage, to Martha Ekyo Maezumi, produced three children: Michiko Kirsten (daughter), Yuri (son), and Yoshimi (daughter).

Maezumi Roshi was co-editor of the Zen Writing Series and also founded six temples that are registered with Soto Shu in Japan, of which the following five continue active: Busshinji at ZCLA, Yokoji at Zen Mountain Center, Doshinji at Zen Mountain Monastery, Hosshinji at Kanzeon Zen Center, and Zenshinji at Zen Community of New York. ■

## **My Childhood** by **Hakuun Yasutani Roshi**

From “Yasutani Roshi Memorial Issue”, *ZCLA Journal*, Summer/Fall 1973, pp. 32-35

*At the beginning of a series of talks called “Aspects of Modern Times from the Buddhist Viewpoint,” Yasutani Roshi talks about his early childhood.*

To begin with, let me tell you something of my childhood. I was born into a very poor family, and we survived with difficulty from one day to the next. Having been adopted at a young age, I know practically nothing about my father’s family, but I was told some things about my mother and her family. My mother’s ancestors were from Kosshu, descendants of Danjo Amari, a samurai of Shingen Takeda, one of the local lords. This samurai’s ancestors lived close to the border of Izu and Suruga, near Mishima. At an earlier time they had been prosperous, on one occasion spending a great deal of money on an aqueduct for the local people. This aqueduct, which still stands, runs between Mishima and Suruga, and is called “Sengan Toi.” It is over six hundred feet long and more than six feet in diameter. As a result of this aqueduct, the fields yielded great harvests of rice, and the local people benefited immensely. Unfortunately, my mother’s family fell more and more into poverty until they could hardly survive. It got to the point that my grandmother was forced to give up her child, my mother, leaving her in the garden of a rich farmer with no children. The farmer and his wife found the baby, and so my mother was raised. I was told by my mother that for most of her youth, she was an only child. As a consequence, she was somewhat spoiled and when, at the age of seventeen or eighteen, she was told the circumstances of her infancy, it was quite a shock for her.

Having been born into poverty, she then married into a poor family. It is in large measure due to my mother’s influence that I became a priest. She would often say that a priest can establish himself better and better in accord with his aspiration and practice. At that time, unlike nowadays, there was not so much pressure to enroll in college, and regardless of how hard they tried, it was very difficult for the poor to get established. Accordingly, my mother determined that the next son she had would become a priest. It’s as if I jumped right into this situation, since while I was still in her womb my mother was contemplating my priesthood.

About this time, my mother was caring for a very old, blind nun who was unable to care for herself. Part of my mother’s job was to read sutras for her every day. Whenever she had any spare time, my mother was reciting the Hannya Shingyo. Soon, other people began asking her to say prayers for them, and by virtue of these a number of miraculous cures occurred. Curious people asked her how she chanted, and to each she replied that she chanted the “Thousand Shingyo” (chanting the Heart Sutra a thousand times). Whatever the particular request, she performed it by chanting the Thousand Shingyo. In doing this, she held a juzu, the rosary on which her hands counted a bead for each time the sutra was chanted. When one day she realized that she was pregnant, she told the old nun, who replied: “I will give you one bead of this juzu that I’ve been using every day. Swallow it, and you will have your baby safely.” My mother was rather naive, but quite devout, so she gratefully accepted and swallowed the tiny bead. So even before I was born, there were these strong karmic forces by which I was to become a priest. You may not believe what I’m going to tell you, but when I was born, my left hand was clasped tightly in a little fist, so

tightly that it could hardly be forced open. When it was opened, in it was discovered the same little bead my mother had swallowed.

As a child I was repeatedly told this story by my mother and elder sister, and I believed them. When later I went to junior high school and studied biology, it occurred to me that something about that story was not quite right. The food canal is not connected to the birth canal, so it seemed impossible for the bead to have passed through. The idea was ridiculous! But my mother wouldn't tell a lie, so I felt right strange about it. Now, practicing the Buddha Way more and more, understanding many more channels of the Buddha Way, I realize that it is not so strange, but quite natural. My mother wanted me to become a priest, and because I was conceived in that wish and because I too desired the priesthood, the juzu expressed that karmic relation. There is, indeed, a powerful connecting force between events. We may not understand it scientifically, but spiritually, we know it is so. In ordinary life, it sometimes happens, for example, that someone swallows a needle or somehow gets it lodged in the body. What happens in this case is that the needle moves about within the body until it comes out in another place. You may think it is because of the needle's sharp point that it comes out, but a bullet lodged in the body moves around within it in the same way. I have also heard that tapeworms that grow in the stomach or intestines can break through the stomach or intestinal wall and move around within the body. Indeed, if it gets into one of the kidneys, it can kill a person. Considering these various viewpoints, I have not found it so hard to believe that I was born clasping that bead. My mother was not telling a lie after all.

It may be somewhat off the subject, but the Buddha relationship is a wonderful thing. From the standpoint of modern physiology, the conception of a human being is understood simply as a joining of an ovum and a sperm. From the viewpoint of Buddhism, this is not all there is to it. Your life is not just the joining of contributions from your mother and father, but it flows out of time much earlier than what begins at your own conception. Your life *seeks* the relation of your parents, and you are conceived. This is the Buddhist understanding of conception. There is a sutra called the "Parents' Great Gratitude Sutra." It begins: "To be born in the world as a human being is caused by karma; parents are the indirect cause." We say "Karma," meaning "energy". We have all lived numerous lives in the infinite past, and you exist as you are now as the manifestation of this energy. This energy seeks to become life by the relations of parents joining together; this energy seeks to become man, which makes parents indirect cause of birth. The source of your conception is actually the energy or power of self which desires to be born. We observe these days young people complaining that their parents gave them birth and then made them suffer, but from the Buddhist viewpoint this is not at all so. Each of us wanted to be born, and so jumped into the situation on his own. Desiring to be born human, each temporarily borrowed the relation between his father and mother. You jumped into it by yourself, and your parents' contributions gave you the chance to fulfill your desire. Moreover, loving you wholeheartedly enough to raise you, you owe them a great deal, and have no room for complaint. That is the Buddhist understanding.

I was told many times, as early as I can remember in my childhood, "When you grow up, you will become a priest," and each time I was told, I nodded yes. When, at the age of four, my mother left me at a temple without telling me why, I didn't understand at all. I don't recall the experience very clearly, but one thing I vaguely remember is the desire to get back home, and trying all kinds of tricks to accomplish that. After my mother disappeared, I wouldn't eat or talk,

and it annoyed everyone at the temple that they had to take care of me. They tried to feed me, but didn't succeed, and no matter what they said I wouldn't speak a word. They were patient with me for a few days, but when their patience wore off, they called on my mother to take me back. My mother came and put me on her back, then carried me out the temple gate to the public road. As I was told later, then I started singing. A year later, I returned to the temple, and this time I understood why. A nun came to my home. "You've always said you wanted to be a priest," I was told, "so this nun has come to take you as her pupil. Will you go with her?" I said, "Yes" and went.

Where I went was a small temple on the other side of Numazu City, Nishiura of Izu. I was raised there from the age of five, and the priest in charge of that temple molded the elements of my personality. He was a Rinzai priest, around sixty years old when I started out there, and he was considered to be very learned. Several decades ago, the temple was called Terakoya, and it was a school, not only for children but for adults as well. So the people of the village called the head priest "Teacher" and they were called his "Fudeku" ["child's brush," used to write with in school; loosely meaning "students"]. I learned from that old priest such things as reciting the Hannya Shingyo, the alphabet, and arithmetic. The public school was then in existence, but it was far away and I was able to study in the temple, so there I was taught until I was eight or nine. After that, the priest decided, it was better that I attend the public school, so I enrolled in the third grade there. (The fourth grade was the year of graduation at that time.) The education that priest gave me was very strict, but very affectionate. For example, when I learned a sutra, he made me sit on my knees in front of him, and grip my thumbs in my fists to prevent my attention from being scattered. He would then repeat the sutra three times, after which I was expected to repeat it three times. In this manner, I learned. And everyday life was simple and filled with diligence. He hardly wasted a minute, and he took excellent care of everything; even a scrap of paper or a short piece of string was kept and used. That I learned from him has helped me a great deal in my life. So, my mother having been born in poverty, had to be given up, but she survived. Because she survived, I have my life. □

From *Zen and Life*, by Hakuun Yasutani Roshi, published by Shukosha, Fukuoka 1969

# Chronology of Yasutani Roshi

## (Hakkunshitsu Gonshin Ryoko Daiocho)

Biography from *Kyo Sho (Awakening Gong)*

Edited from "Yasutani Roshi Memorial Issue", *ZCLA Journal*, Summer/Fall 1973, pp. 63-64

- 1885 January 5 - Born in Shizuoka Prefecture, the third son of Eikichi Kato. Named Seisaku.
- 1889 Entered Fukujuin Rinzai Temple and studied under Genpo Tsuyama Osho.
- 1896 Became a disciple of Ryogi Yasutani Osho of Teishinji Temple in Shizuoka. Received Tokudo and changed his name to Ryoko Yasutani.
- 1899 Entered the Shogakurin of the Soto sect at Shizuoka City and sat under the guidance of Tatsugen Nozawa Osho.
- 1900 Entered the monastery of Master Bokusan Nishiari.
- 1901 Risshin ceremony and training with Master Kodo Akino. He also studied under such noted teachers of that time as Kakujo Iwagami, Sogaku Okamura, Kenshu Yokoo, Ryouin Obara, Doko Tanaka, and Ian Kishizawa.
- 1907 Graduated from Soto Chugakurin.
- 1908 Became an elementary school substitute teacher.
- 1914 Graduated from Toshima Teachers' School and began work at the Kanda Graduate School in Tokyo.
- 1920 Became president of the Yodobashi No. 5 Grade School in Tokyo.
- 1924 Became resident priest at Rinshoji Temple in Nakanojo, Gumma. About this time, he came to know the clear-eyed teacher, Daiun Sogaku Harada Roshi through the Buddhist magazine "Daijo-Zen" ("Mahayana Zen").
- 1925 Became priest of Teishinji Temple. Attended sesshin under Harada Roshi at Nipponji Temple in Chiba for the first time.
- 1927 His kensho was approved by Harada Roshi at Hosshinji Monastery in Fukui Prefecture. Sesshin were held there every other month, and he continued to attend until 1943.
- 1931 April 8 - His first book, *Shomakyo (Demon-Disclosing Mirror)*, was published.
- 1934 Assigned to be priest of Shushoji Temple in Kanagawa.
- 1937 Became head priest of Raigoji, in Saitama.
- 1938 March 28 - Finished koan study with Harada Roshi at Hosshinji
- 1943 April 8 - Received Inka from Harada Roshi at Hosshinji.
- 1944 In order to escape the war bombing, moved to Shinkoji Temple in Saitama.
- 1949 The Hakuunkai, his zazen group in Hokkaido, was established. Their first sesshin was held at Ryuhoji in Hakodata and continued annually for 24 consecutive years.
- 1951 Sambokoryukai Sekimachi Dojo, Taiheiji Temple, was established. "Kyo Sho" ("Awakening Gong") published its first issue.
- 1952 By now, there were local zazen groups at 25 locations, mostly in Tokyo and its surrounding suburbs.

- 1953 May 23 - Kamakura Hakuunkai was established.
- 1954 January 8 - Having become independent of the Soto sect, Yasutani Roshi's organization, Sanbokyodan, was legally recognized as a religious organization. In January, the first sesshin was held at Shinkoji, and 36 times thereafter.
- 1955 He became resident priest of Taiheiji in Tokyo.
- 1957 First sesshin at Raikoji. 26 subsequent sesshins.
- 1958 First sesshin at Taiheiji. 33 subsequent sesshins.
- 1959 First sesshin at Shinkoji in Kyushu. 24 subsequent sesshins.
- 1960 September 18 - Gave Inka to Myodo Satomi (a woman) and to Koun Yamada (who included many Christians among his students).
- 1961 October 29 - Gave Inka to Toshijiro Okada and to Iko Yamaguchi.
- 1962 First visit to the United States.
- 1963 Second visit to the United States. Also, first sesshin at Jiganji in Osaka. 17 subsequent sesshins.
- 1964 First sesshin at Shofukuji in Tokyo. 10 subsequent sesshins.
- 1965 Third visit to the United States.
- 1966 Fourth visit to the United States
- 1967 Fifth visit to the United States.
- 1968 Sixth visit to the United States.
- 1969 Seventh visit to the United States.
- 1970 Resigned as archbishop of the Sanbokyodan. He was succeeded by his Dharma successor, Koun Yamada Roshi.
- December 7 - Gave Inka to Hakuyu Maezumi, Akira Kubota, Osamu Ashida, Kan'un Miyazaki.
- 1972 January 5 – 88<sup>th</sup> birthday. April 1 - Moved into the Hakuunkai Zendo in Kumamoto, Kyushu.
- 1973 March 28 at 9:20 am – Yasutani Roshi passed away while sitting. ■

## Notes on Sogaku Harada Roshi's Lineage

From *ZCLA Journal*, Winter 1973, p. 7

Harada Roshi, Yasutani Roshi's teacher, was born on October 13, 1872, and died on December 12, 1963, at the age of ninety-one. He entered the Order of the Soto School on the Buddha's birthday in 1884, and received the Dharma transmission (Denbo; Shiho) from his Soto teacher, Kakusho Sodo, in March, 1896.

He studied further, visiting various teachers of both Soto and Rinzai Schools, including such Soto Roshis as Kodo Akino, Sotan Oka, Korin Orii, Sensei Shaku, Jitsugu Watanabe, Tenkai Hoshimi, and Tatsujun Adachi, as well as Daigi Roshi, Doshu Roshi, and Dokutan Roshi of the Rinzai School. Eventually he finished his studies with Dokutan Roshi.

He resided at the six major temples of the Soto School: Jisaiin, Ankokuji, Choanji, Hoonji, Hosshinji, and Chigenji. He resigned from his position as abbot in charge of Chigenji in 1937, and settled down at Kakushoken on the Hosshinji Monastery grounds, where he trained monks and laymen.

Harada Roshi had twenty-three disciples (fourteen priests, seven nuns, two lay women, no laymen) who received Shiho, transmission of the Dharma. Among them, those who received Inka from Harada Roshi were only seven. Besides these, those who received Inka from the Roshi having had Shiho from different teachers were also seven. Altogether, fourteen people received Inka from Harada Roshi. Yasutani Roshi is one of the latter group.

Kazan Roshi, who appears in the following article, is the great dharma grandfather of Koryu Roshi.

## **On Practice** **by Sogaku Harada Roshi**

From *ZCLA Journal*, Winter 1973, pp. 7-9

I am going to mention an episode from the life of a deceased Dharma friend, Priest Chodo Kato. It was at his suggestion that I began study with Kojenshitsu Dokutan Roshi at Nanzenji Monastery. It was also Priest Kato who enabled me to stay at Yamashira while studying with Dokutan Roshi.

The first time I met Priest Kato was at the Genzo-E [an annual one-month seminar on Dōgen Zenji's Shobogenzo] held alternately by Sotan Oka Roshi and Kodo Akino Roshi at Eihei-ji Monastery. From that time on, we went together to Genzo-E about three times. On those occasions, we talked about the Dharma.

Among the stories I heard from Priest Kato, two were especially unforgettable. Even now in my teishos I sometimes retell them. One of them is as follows:

“That I have been able to establish myself as well as I have has been totally because of my teacher's guidance. It was customary for him to visit the shrines of various guardians placed around the grounds of the temple, every day after the morning service. One morning while he was making his rounds, he discovered a single chopstick in a drain. He brought it back, called me to his room, held out the chopstick to me and asked, ‘What is this?’ I replied, ‘It is a chopstick.’ ‘Yes, this is a chopstick. Is it unusable?’ he asked further. ‘No,’ I said, ‘it is still usable.’ ‘Quite so,’ he said, ‘And yet I found it in a drain with other scraps. That is to say, you have taken the life of this chopstick. You may know the proverb ‘He who kills another digs two graves.’ Since you have killed this chopstick, you will be killed by it.’ Spending four or five hours on this incident, he told me how I should practice. At that time I was seven or eight year old. His guidance at that time really soaked in. From that time on, I became very careful and meticulous about everything.”

Listening to this story, I was deeply impressed. In later years I mentioned it to someone. To speak more precisely, I vowed to go to Hosojima in Hyu Ga, Kyushu, every year for about three years. There was one very successful businessman named Chuhachi Taniyama. One day he unexpectedly visited me at the temple in Yamashira and stayed about a week. Since that was when I was visiting Dokutan Roshi to have sanzen at Nanzenji Monastery, I hardly had any time to spend with him.

One day I told Mr. Taniyama this episode, and he was greatly impressed and inspired. Being a businessman, he expressed it interestingly: “To come here to meet you I spent much time and money, but listening to this story of one chopstick, my investment has been repaid and then some!” Then he returned to Kyushu. I have forgotten the name of Priest Kato's teacher, but he must undoubtedly have been a great man. Priest Kato later became Godo (Director of Training) at Eihei-ji Monastery, and I suspect that it was the guidance he received as a seven- or eight-year-old boy that helped him to develop his practice so well. I also greatly respect that little boy.

Another episode is one which happened while Priest Kato was studying with Kazan Roshi of Iyo in Shikoku. Being a Soto priest, he first studied with Gasan Roshi of Tenryuji Monastery in Kyoto. After Gasan Roshi passed away, Priest Kato talked with a friend and decided to study with Kazan Roshi. Six fellow students went together. Kazan Roshi was famous for the severity and vigorousness of his training. So when they went to Kazan Roshi, he brusquely turned them away, saying, "My temple is too poor to take you in." These fellow students each in turn begged him until he finally said, "Well, then, I'll allow you to come here just to have dokusan with me." So the six of them separately found places to stay and had dokusan with him. Priest Kato told me that he stayed under the balcony of a shrine in the village.

During the day, the six of them barely supported themselves by begging food (takuhatsu). Kazan Roshi was moved by the sincere devotion of these monks. He later joined them on takuhatsu so they could receive more offerings and, thus, made it easier for them to pursue their practice.

Now the episode begins. One day, as usual, with Roshi leading the procession, the six students went on takuhatsu. On the way, they came to a road which led up a hill. There was a man pulling a cart so heavily loaded with bundles that he couldn't get it up the hill. Priest Kato automatically left the procession to help the man with his cart. At that instant, the Roshi (who normally never turned around) looked at him, suddenly walked back to the temple and told his attendant not to allow Priest Kato to come to the monastery any more. It was a very heavy punishment—the gravest one. Needless to say, Priest Kato and his friends worried greatly about it and wanted to at least know why he had been expelled. Then Kazan Roshi told them, "Being trainees and on Takuhatsu, one's attention should be on Takuhatsu, not on another person's situation. That's why I told him to leave"

Having learned the reason, Priest Kato did monshuku (an overnight stay before the temple gate) and spent a week doing zazen there while his five Dharma friends continuously begged Roshi to pardon him. Finally their apology was accepted and Priest Kato was able to continue dokusan with him again.

What a wonderful episode! Even telling you this story, I feel tears come to my eyes. These monks were as extraordinary as the Roshi. Nowadays, how many teachers or monks are such as them? Probably none. To pursue the ordinary practice is not much. However, for those trainees who wish to realize the grave importance of life, their practice must be genuine and undefiled. They must at all times be totally absorbed in their koans wherever they are. When on takuhatsu, to look around is to be distracted. Such a loose attitude is not at all acceptable. Consequently, Kazan Roshi used his killing dagger.

When I was making a pilgrimage on Shikoku Island, I visited Kazan Roshi's temple. At that time I saw two portraits of him and one of them was crossed out, painted over by brush strokes. It was explained to me that Roshi did it himself, declaring, "Such a thing is not my portrait." In such an episode, I see vividly what kind of man he was. I couldn't help smiling, seeing those two portraits.

# Chronology of Baian Hakuju Daiosho's Life

Provided by Roshi Junyu Kuroda (2003)

- 1898 Born on March 15 as second son of Mr. Komazo and Mrs. Taka.
- 1901 His father, Komazo, died January 1.
- 1907 His mother, Mrs. Taka, remarried Rev. Hattori Guhaku and he became a disciple of Rev. Guhaku Daiosho.
- 1908 Koshin-ji Temple was reduced to ashes by a disastrous fire.
- 1922 Designated abbot of Koshin-ji in Otawara City, Tochigi Prefecture.
- 1923 Graduated with a B.A. from the faculty of "Science of Religion", Nihon University, and rebuilt the ruined temple, Koshin-ji.
- 1925 Married Miss Yoshi, née Maezumi.
- 1926 His first son, Tetsundo, was born (died in childhood).
- 1928 His teacher and father-in-law, Rev. Guhaku Daiosho died.
- 1929 His second son, Toshio (Shunyu), was born. Is now the abbot of Kôshin-ji.
- 1931 His third son, Hirota (Hakuyu), was born. Became abbot of Busshin-ji in Los Angeles. (He took on his mother's family name in order to carry on the Maezumi family name.)
- 1933 His fourth son, Motokiyo, was born. Is now General Manager of Nikkatsu Movie Production Company.
- 1935 His fifth son, Akiyoshi, was born. Has set up his own company.
- 1938 His sixth son, Takeshi (Bushi), was born. Was abbot of Yokohama Zenko-ji and President of the Yokohama Zenkoji Scholarship Foundation for International Buddhist Study. Passed away in December, 2004.
- 1940 His seventh son, Sumio (Junyu), is born. Is now abbot of Kirigaya-ji.
- 1942 His eighth son, Yoshikatsu, is born. Is now professor at the Tokyo Art College and Gunma University.
- 1947 Installed as a member of the Assembly of the Soto sect.
- 1949 Established the Kôshin-ji Foundation (Gojikai) - its aim is to support Kôshin-ji with financial help.  
Constructed the temple of Nasu-dera.
- 1951 Installed as Vice-director of Soji-ji, one of the two Head Temples of the Soto School.
- 1955 Constructed the temple of Kirigaya-ji, Tokyo. Its present abbot is Rev. Junyu Kuroda.
- 1962 Installed as Adviser to Soji-ji.
- 1963 Attended the Eighth World Buddhist Conference as Head Clerk to the Japanese Buddhist Representatives.
- 1965 Installed as Secretariat-President of the Japan Buddhist Federation.

- 1966 Installed as president of the Japanese Association of Religious Organizations.
- 1969 Installed as Head of the Judiciary of the Sôtô School.  
Constructed the temple of Zenkoji-ji, Yokohama. Rev. Takeshi Kuroda was abbot until his death in 2004.  
Installed as director of the International Buddhist Brotherhood Association.  
Received the highest priestly rank of “Daikyôshi” within the Sôtô Zen School.
- 1970 Founded the temple of Busshin-ji in Los Angeles. The founding abbot was Rev. Hakuyu Maezumi.  
Installed as chairman of the Komazawa Society.
- 1972 Installed as Chief Adviser at Sôji-ji
- 1978 Installed as Tôdô (Honorable Abbot) of Kôshin-ji. Attained Pari-nirvana at the age of eighty one.
- 1979 The Special Title called “Seido” was conferred posthumously to him by Sôji-ji.

# A Chronology of Mrs. Yoshi Kuroda's Life

Provided by Roshi Junyu Kuroda (2003)

- 1903 Born as eldest daughter of the late Rev. Bokuô Daioshô (Maezumi) and Mrs. Arini in Naga- no Prefecture.
- 1920 Graduated from Nagano Girl's High School.
- 1924 Graduated from Women's College of Art, Tokyo.
- 1925 Married to the late Rev. Hakujun Kuroda, 36th abbot of Kôshin-ji, Otawara City, Tochi Prefecture. She had eight sons.  
Contributed to the reconstruction and development of Kôshin-ji Temple.
- 1949 Contributed to the construction of Nasu-ji, Yokohama Zenko-ji, and of Busshin-ji in Los Angeles.
- 1955 Contributed to the construction of Kirigaya-ji as "Kaiki" (lay-founder).
- 1964 Constructed "Hikari Kindergarten".
- 1971 Attended the opening ceremony of Busshin-ji in Los Angeles, travelling to the United States of America and Mexico.
- 1988 Contributed to the construction of Fuji-dera as "Kaike". The founder of this temple is Rev. Junyu Kuroda, abbot of Kirigaya-ji.
- 1992 Passed away at the age of ninety. ■

## Women Buddhist Ancestors

### HYMN TO THE PERFECTION OF WISDOM

Homage to the Perfection of Wisdom,  
Prajnaparamita, the Mother of the Buddhas.  
The lovely and the holy Perfection of Wisdom gives light.  
Unstained the entire world cannot stain her.  
She is a source of light and from everyone  
in the triple world, she removes darkness.  
Most excellent are her works.  
She brings light so that all fear and distress may be forsaken  
and disperses the gloom and darkness of delusion.  
She herself is an organ of vision.  
She has a clear knowledge of her own being of all Dharmas,  
for she does not stray away from it.  
The Perfection of Wisdom of the Buddhas  
the Buddhas set in motion the wheel of Dharma.

### Great Ancestors:

Mahapajapati	Dhammadina
Mitta	Kisagotami
Yasodhara	Vasetthi
Tissa	Ubbiri
Sumana	Patacara-Pancasata
Upasama	Isidasi
Viskha	Bhadda-Kapilani
Khema	Mutta
Uppalavanna	Capa
Sundari-Nanda	Dhamma
Vaddhesi	Citta
Patacara	Vimala
Uttama	Addhakasi
Bhadda-Kundalakesa	Padumavati
Nanduttara	Ambapali
Dantika	Anopama
Sakula	Abhirupa-Nanda
Siha	Jenti

The seven-year old daughter of the Dragon King Sagara  
Soji, Dharma heir of Bodhidharma  
Mo-shan, disciple of Kao-an Ta-yu  
Miao-hsin, disciple of Hui-chi who enlightened 17 monks  
Iron Brush Liu, an equal of Master Isan.

The women disciples of Dogen Zenji

Egi

Eshin

Shogaku

Ryonen

The women disciples of Keizan Zenji

Sonin, Dharma heir and chief priest of Enzuin

And her daughter Ekan, chief priest of Enzuin

Shozen

En'i

Shinmyo

Myosho

Shinsho

Ekyu

Jonin

Myoshin

Ninkai

And all other direct Soto women ancestors:

Shune

Joa

Genshu

Shue

Honsho

Somyo

Soki

Soitsu

Zensho

Myojun

Ryoso

Myozen

Myoko

Mugai Nyodai, founder of the first Zen Buddhist convent in Japan

Ryonen Genso, who sacrificed her beauty

Kojima Kendo, advocate of the equality of women in the Soto Sect

Ruth Fuller Sasaki, first American Rinzai priest

Jiyu Kennett, founder of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives

Gesshin Myoho Prabhava Dharma, founder of the Moon Heart Sangha

Maurine Stuart, American Zen pioneer

Jishu Angyo Holmes, co-founder of the Zen Peacemakers

We recognize all laywomen who carried the Dharma

The Indian Queen Srimala, who roared the Lion's Roar

Flora Eko Courtois, founding member of ZCLA

and especially to

Antoku Inden Kasho Myokei Zenni, mother of Taizan Maezumi

And to all the Women Ancestors whose names have been forgotten or left unsaid.

## SECTION 4: BOWING, VERSE OF THE KESA, AND THE RAKUSU

### Glossary

GASSHO — placing the two palms together.

1. Gassho expresses reverence, appreciation, and greeting. When we greet another person with gassho, we are greeting their buddha nature.
2. Gassho means to bring opposites together. As we practice, the opposites in our life —  
—  
good/bad, right/left, enlightenment/delusion — come together as one.
3. Gassho reveals no separation or no gap. Just as our two hands are aspects of one body, right now we are in unity with buddha nature.
4. Focusing on our gassho develops alertness of mind and prevents our mind from scattering. Be aware of how you are doing gassho in the zendo. If you are not sure of the correct way to do gassho, ask for instruction.

CHOKI — Kneeling with the hands in gassho. Most of the time during the Jukai ceremony, you will be in choki. At the end of the Jukai, ceremony when the Preceptor gives remarks, you may sit in seiza with a zafu that the shika will hand to you.

BOWING — To incline the head or body as salutation. Bowing is an act of respect and reverence to our own true nature.

Some Westerners have some reservations about bowing. Look at your attitude toward bowing and whatever concepts are involved in that attitude. Ask yourself, “Who am I bowing to?” Be sure to get instructions on how to bow correctly in the zendo. Remember to keep the palms of your hands flat when you raise them above your head during a full prostration. Consider: “Why do you bow?”

KESA — Outer robe worn by Buddhist monks. Legend says that King Bimbisara designed it to distinguish Buddha’s followers. The panels represent rice fields. In the rice fields everything is orderly. The fields are laid out evenly, and the bugs, fish, and frogs all live together in harmony. The kesa was made from discarded cloth, such as the cloth that has wrapped a corpse. Using the impure cloth represented the monk’s freedom from attachment and greed.

RAKUSU — A small version of the kesa. Its origin is unknown. It could have come into being during the Buddhist persecution in China. The rakusu was worn under monks’ clothing so they could avoid being identified as monks.

Wear the rakusu to all zazen periods and services in the zendo, except the early morning sitting. At the end of the early morning sitting, rest the rakusu on the top of your head and chant the “Verse of the Kesa” with everyone. Take off the rakusu when you use the bathroom and when you receive the kyosaku.

Keep your rakusu in a cover or rakusu bag.. Only when really necessary, the rakusu can be dry cleaned.

BUDDHIST or DHARMA NAME — The Preceptor will probably ask you what kind of name you would like or request a list of qualities and things that have meaning for you. Your name represents what you intrinsically embody, and it is also an expression of what you can be.

# Bowing

by Sensei Bernie Tetsugen Glassman  
Dharma Talk given at ZCLA on November 12, 1977

The first thing that the person having Jukai does is make three full bows to Manjusri, then three full bows to his or her parents, and then three full bows to the kaishi (the person from whom we receive the precepts or kai). There are many types of bows in the Zendo and Dharma Hall. We are constantly making bows, but in a way, we don't have a practice of bowing.

Our basic practice is zazen, but you could have a practice that was based on bowing, in the same way that we have a practice based on zazen. During shiho (dharma transmission) there is a week of kegyo, a special week of practice for the shiho ceremony. One of the major practices during that week is bowing. During my shiho, I got to appreciate bowing as a practice.

Some of you have practiced in Tibetan schools and one of the preliminary practices, before starting Tantric practice, is bowing 100,000 prostrations. You can imagine 100,000 — if you did 100 full bows a day, it would take 1,000 days or three years. There are people who do finish that preliminary practice of bowing in a year. It's like 300 bows a day, and probably for some it's quicker, some longer.

When we start bowing as a practice, the similarities between that and zazen become clear. It is impossible to describe it without actually doing it. Doing that kind of bowing, you have to really just put yourself into it. After 20, 30, 40, 50 bows, you start losing yourself, forgetting yourself, and just bowing. This attitude in bowing is what we should do when we do fudosampai or three bows. That is, when you bow, completely forget yourself, not bowing to anything or anybody in particular; just bow.

Dōgen Zenji writes about bowing. In fact in one place, he says it's more important than having kensho-type experiences. He says, forget about that, just bow. He says that even though you don't understand a single word, just making a full prostration is face-to-face transmission. Without understanding or realizing anything, just making full bows, right there, right then, that's face-to-face transmission; mind-to-mind transmission.

We should make these bows regardless of the time and place. As in showing appreciation, it doesn't matter when it is or where it is. It doesn't even matter if the person to whom you're showing appreciation is there or not. So, for example, we do nenju once a week. Nenju is essentially showing appreciation for the teachings for the week prior to hosan, and we show appreciation to the head of the monastery. At ZCLA we show appreciation to Maezumi Roshi. It doesn't matter if he's here or not. We just show appreciation.

The bows in the beginning of the Jukai ceremony are requesting bows. That's important, too. It's really interesting how we have bows requesting Manjusri to be present. Bows for the kaishi, requesting him to be kaishi and to give us the precepts. Bows to our parents, requesting their presence. We can say that Manjusri is not here, we could even say that Manjusri doesn't exist, but Manjusri exists and is here. Where? You see, we are nothing but Manjusri, yet if we don't request Manjusri to be here, he won't, she won't, it won't. We are nothing but Manjusri, but without requesting it, Manjusri won't appear.

The same for our parents. We can say that our parents don't want us to have Jukai because they are from a different tradition. It might even make them upset, yet our parents are here. But again, without requesting, they are not here. Obviously, you need to request the kaishi to give you Jukai. To the degree that we are separate from the kaishi, that much we can't receive Jukai. All of that is seen in how we make our bow. If any of that separation exists, it shows immediately in the bow itself. If we can truly just bow, that bow means there is no separation, there is no difference.

Through the ceremony, we make many, many bows, and then after the ceremony is over, we make bows. Bows of appreciation, bows of thanks, but basically just bows. In the sutra, it says that Shakyamuni Buddha talked about bows this way, and this is a quote: "Oh, bodhisattvas, when you make bows, you should remind yourself thus: 'I now wholeheartedly pay homage and bow to all the buddhas in the ten directions. I enter into the various supreme dharmas and make bows with the whole body to unify the five worlds, deva [heavenly], human, animal, hungry ghosts, and demons [creatures of hell], and to do away with the five desires.'"

In our bow, we unify the five worlds. How? By just bowing. In a way, how we bow and how we look at bowing represents how much we can accomplish. Our practice is not guru-oriented. There are many Eastern practices where there is a very strong guru-student relation. Zen is not that way. In fact, many of us are attracted to Zen because it gives us the feeling of more independence. But, if your relation to the teacher is such that you have hesitation or you are holding back something, if you are unwilling to accept the direction and the teachings, then that much you can't learn and accept.

Some people can't even bow. The very notion of bowing goes against the whole ego structure. "I can't bow." Then we may start to bow and say to ourselves, "I do it because it's supposed to be done and I don't want to look strange." Even putting oneself into it and bowing, if there is something we're holding back, if it's not just bowing, then we still haven't accomplished the Way. This goes hand-in-hand with how much of our own self is still sticking out there.

There's a bowing verse, a gatha, a gatha of bowing. It's a very important gatha.

*Bowing and being bowed, nature is empty. My  
body and other's bodies are not two. Realize  
liberation with all sentient beings.*

*Raising the Supreme Mind, return to True Nature.*

QUESTION: In dokusan and daisan, are we bowing to Maezumi Roshi or to you?

ROSHI: Those bows are not done to Maezumi Roshi or to myself but to buddha. Those are bows to the whole lineage, so they are appreciatory bows for the whole lineage from Shakyamuni Buddha on.

# The Rakusu and Verse of the Kesa

## by Sensei Gerry Shishin Wick

Dharma Talk given at ZCLA on January 22, 1983

In our formal koan study, the very last thing that we study are the precepts, so don't expect that you will have a complete understanding of the whole thing. I can fairly safely say no one fully understands the precepts when they take Jukai. In my own case, I felt like I had to accomplish a certain level of understanding in Buddhism before I was worthy to have Jukai. Then one day, Roshi said, "Why don't you take Jukai?" This after I had been here for about three or four years. I said, "Will it help my practice?" He said, "Oh definitely," and I said, "Okay."

Our understanding continues to change, just like our reason for coming to practice. We may have one reason why we start to practice, but as we continue to practice, these reasons always evolve and change.

The amount of importance that is put upon the wearing of the rakusu or the kesa is illustrated by some stories in a book entitled *Zen Master Dogen*, by Yuho Yokoi. Dōgen Zenji emphasized the merit of wearing the rakusu or the kesa over and over again. Just taking the precepts and wearing the rakusu, even though we aren't able to maintain the precepts, is better than having never taken the precepts at all.

I'm not very well versed in the history of the kesa and rakusu. My understanding is that the rakusu is an abbreviation of the original kesa that was worn by the Buddha. The kesa is the outer garment monks wear over the robe, covering only one shoulder. At a time in China, when Buddhists were being persecuted, they started to make these smaller versions called the rakusu, and wore them underneath their clothing. I think that is true in other religions that when there was an era of persecution, they had to wear certain symbolic garments underneath their clothing.

Part of the joy (for some of us) of having Jukai is that you make your own rakusu, which, for those of you who don't know how to sew, is a real challenge and a great feat of accomplishment when you're done. According to what I've heard, as you are stitching your rakusu, you should be chanting the Verse of the Kesa. This is the verse we chant every morning after dawn sitting. We take the rakusu out of its case or wrapping, place it on our head, put our hands palms together in gassho, and chant:

*Vast is the robe of liberation,*

*A formless field of benefaction.*

*I wear the Tathagata's teachings,*

*Saving all sentient beings.*

Then we put the rakusu on. Any time you put on your rakusu, chant that verse silently. Now, let's look at the Verse of the Kesa. "Vast is the robe of liberation." That is the rakusu. It is vast, which means it is boundless, it has no beginning and no end. That's the true kesa which has been transmitted generation after generation, from the time of Shakyamuni Buddha up to the present time. That's the robe of liberation – free, unhindered, unrestricted, and unattached. This actually is what the rakusu represents. The rakusu is the vast robe of

liberation. If we really appreciate it, of course, it is none other than our life itself— vast, empty. That’s what Bodhidharma said when he was asked, “What is the primary principle of Buddhism?” and he said, “Vast emptiness, no holiness.” That is the rakusu — vast.

“A formless field of benefaction.” Formless, meaning that there is no fixed form. As soon as we try to fix something, then we’re attached, stuck. But everything is always changing. That’s a basic Buddhist principle, impermanence. A formless field — if you look at the rakusu, it looks like a field with the different strips and patches. A formless field of benefaction, compassion, joy, but again, don’t get stuck to it, to doing good.

“I wear the Tathagata’s teachings.” The Tathagata is another name for the Buddha. I’m wearing it; whether I wear the rakusu or not, I’m wearing it, but the point is when we are wearing it, we’re reminded of it.

“Saving all sentient beings.” Realizing the Buddha’s teachings for the sake of others, that’s the point.

When you make your rakusu, Roshi writes the Verse of the Kesa on the back. It will also have the name that Roshi gives to you and his name as the kaishi, the teacher of the precepts. His name will be on there, the name of the temple, the date of the ceremony, and his seal. This is what is on the reverse side of the rakusu.

Another interesting story about the origins of the rakusu is that the rakusu is supposed to come from discarded cloth, and you patch it together. That’s where the phrase “patched-robe monks” came from. Originally, in India, they made some robes from the cloth that was used to cover cadavers. Since they used saffron and turmeric as embalming material, the cloth was that saffron yellow color. That’s why originally in India and in Southeast Asia, they used these saffron-colored kesas and robes and rakusus. Of course, as Buddhism moved from one country to another, it took on more of the local traditions, local culture. Since it’s a lot colder in the north in China, they had different kinds of kesas and robes. The ones that we wear come from Japan.

The little green design on the back of the rakusu strap is a pine stitch. It represents pine needles. During weddings or Jukai ceremonies, Roshi will take a branch from a pine tree and use it during the ceremony. What he does is bless the water in the cup, and then he’ll dip the pine branch into the water. Then he moves it from the crown of his head toward the water, taking energy from himself and putting it in the water. Then he dips it in the water again and he’ll move his hand in the opposite direction, from the front of his head to the back of his crown, and keeps turning the energy.

Let me mention a few things about the care and feeding of your rakusu. You shouldn’t wear the rakusu when you’re doing a kind of work that might get it dirty, nor should you wear it into the toilet. When you go to the toilet, take it off by bringing the two corners together and putting your hand behind your head and lifting it over your head. Then you fold it and set it down on a flat surface, or hang it on a hook or doorknob. When you come out of the toilet, you put it back on.

You should make a cover for your rakusu using a piece of cloth that you can fold into thirds, and put it in the center. You should keep it that way when you’re not wearing it, and try not to get it dirty. Sometimes when people do food serving during sesshin, they might tuck their rakusu under a cord or a belt so that it doesn’t flop out and get dirty. The point is that this is a

garment of the buddha and it should be treated with that kind of respect. Normally, the rakusu is worn inside the zendo, after the dawn sitting time, and removed when you leave the zendo. At the end of evening sitting, you remove it as indicated above, and put it into the cover or case.

Since the rakusu is a version of the kesa, monks only wear one or the other. The kesa is worn in the zendo at certain times, during formal talks, and during meals in the zendo. Traditionally, there were variations of the kesa, depending on the occasion. You would wear nine strips if you were visiting a king, or seven strips if you were doing something else. If, as we hear, everything is one, why nine, seven, etc.? Well, there is oneness and there are also differences.

Part of the practice is to see the oneness, but we also have to see the differences. It's nice to say all is one, but if you live your life like that, I think it would be a mess. I'll give you a ludicrous example. If everything is one, do we have to look both ways before crossing the street? You know, if you don't, then you really will be one with the bus or car. So what does this oneness mean? It doesn't mean that there are no differences. It just means that because everything is empty, we can appreciate the differences for what they are.

There is a story in Kapleau Roshi's book, *Three Pillars of Zen*, where he went to Japan and met Soen Roshi, who was bowing to the Buddha. Kapleau Roshi said, "What's this? I thought that Zen masters spit on the images of the Buddha." And Soen Roshi said, "If you want to, you can do that; but I prefer to bow."

# On Gassho and Bowing by Taizan Maezumi Roshi

with John Daishin Buksbazen

from *On Zen Practice: Body, Breath, & Mind*, pp. 53-58

People new to a Zen center often ask about the palm-to-palm gesture called gassho and about the practice of bowing. What is the meaning of these gestures and why is it necessary to do them so precisely and uniformly? The gassho and the bow are common to all traditions and sects of Buddhism. These two gestures were present in India even before the earliest days of Buddhism. These gestures have moved from India throughout Asia to the Western world.

After Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment, he encountered five of his former companions with whom he had previously practiced various austerities and spiritual disciplines. These five ascetics had felt that Shakyamuni had gone astray when he abandoned their ascetic practices. "Come," they said to each other on Shakyamuni's departure, "let's not pay any attention to him. He no longer is one of us."

These ascetics were dismayed to find that he had seemingly abandoned his spiritual practice, going so far as to even drink milk and take a bath (two forbidden acts, according to their tradition). They could not understand why he seemed only to sit motionless, doing nothing.

But when the Buddha approached them after his enlightenment, it is said that these five ascetics were so struck by the transformation of their former companion, by his serenity and the radiance of his personality, that they spontaneously placed their palms together and greeted him with deep bows. Perhaps it is a little misleading to say that they greeted him; more accurately, they were bowing not to their old friend Siddhartha, but to the Buddha—the Awakened One.

What the Buddha had experienced was the supreme perfect enlightenment (in Sanskrit, *anuttara samyak sambodhi*): the direct and conscious realization of the oneness of the whole universe, and of one's own unity with all things. This very realization is actually in itself the act of being the Buddha. And it was to this enlightened state that the five ascetics bowed.

When the Buddha realized his enlightened nature, the first thing he said was: "Wonder of wonders! All sentient beings have this same nature!" And thus, in bowing to the Buddha, the five yogis were bowing to themselves and to all beings. They were expressing their recognition of the great unity that their former companion had directly and profoundly experienced.

Let us examine the gassho and the bow more closely.

## GASSHO

The word *gassho* literally means "to place the two palms together." Of all the mudras, the symbolic hand gestures we use, gassho is perhaps the most fundamental, for it arises directly from the depths of enlightenment. It is used to express respect, to prevent scattering of the mind, to unify all polarities (left and right, passive and dominant, and so on) and to express the One Mind—the total unity of being.

Although there are many types of gassho, let us examine the four most common ones in the Soto Zen sect:

### *The Firm Gassho*

The most formal of the gasshos, this is the one most commonly used in our daily practice. It is the gassho we use upon entering the zendo and upon taking our seats. We also use it at least sixteen times in the course of a formal meal, and during all services. This gesture is made by placing the hands together, palm to palm, in front of the face. The fingers and thumbs are placed together and are straight rather than bent, while the palms are slightly pressed together so that they meet. The elbows are held somewhat out from the body, although the forearms are not quite parallel with the floor. There is about one fist's distance between the tip of the nose and the hands. Fingertips are level with the tip of the nose. This gassho helps establish an alert and respectful state of mind.

### *The Gassho of No-Mind*

Used in greeting one another, this is a less formal gassho. In this position, the hands are held together a little more loosely, with a slight space between the palms, the fingers still touching. The elevation of the elbows from the floor is not so great as in the firm gassho; forearms should be at approximately a 45-degree angle to the floor. This gassho has the effect of deepening one's state of samadhi.

### *The Lotus Gassho*

This gassho is used primarily by officiating priests on special ceremonial occasions. It is made like the gassho of no-mind, except that the tips of the middle fingers are held one inch apart. Its name derives from the resemblance of this hand position to the shape of a just-opening lotus bud.

### *The Diamond Gassho*

This gassho is also known as the gassho of being one with life. Like the lotus gassho, it is used by officiants in certain services. Although the hands and arms are in basically the same position as in the gassho of no-mind, the diamond gassho is made with the fingers of each hand extended and interlaced, and with the right thumb on top of the left.

In each of these gasshos, we keep the eyes focused on the tips of our middle fingers. But regardless of the style or variety of the gassho, and in whatever setting it is used, the fundamental point of the gassho is to be one with the Three Treasures: Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.

Of course, we can look at the Three Treasures from many perspectives, and we can look with varying degrees of depth and clarity. At perhaps the most immediate level, the Three Treasures are seen as external objects of supreme veneration for all Buddhists. Unfortunately, in this view, the Three Treasures tend to be perceived as something other than oneself. But as our vision opens up, we experience that each of us is, in fact, the Buddha. We see clearly that everything we encounter in the world is the Dharma, the functioning of underlying enlightenment. And, realizing the oneness of all beings, we come to realize that the Sangha is simply harmony of all composite things, including each of us. Having this awareness, we realize that we are the Three Treasures.

So, joining our hands palm to palm, we simultaneously create and express the oneness of the absolute and relative, beyond all dualities. It is from this perspective that we make the gassho, and with this awareness that we bow.

It is not just some person who bows and not just some person who makes the gassho; it is the Three Treasures recognizing itself as all things. If anyone thinks in terms of “just another person,” this is, in effect, defaming the Three Treasures. And as we place our palms together, we unite wisdom and compassion, knowledge and truth, enlightenment and delusion.

## **BOWING**

Dōgen Zenji once said: “As long as there is true bowing, the Buddha Way will not deteriorate.” In bowing, we completely pay respect to the all-pervading virtue of wisdom, which itself is the Buddha.

In bowing, we should move neither hastily nor with exaggerated slowness, but simply maintain a reverent and humble attitude. When we bow too fast, the bow is then too casual; perhaps we are even hurrying to get it over and done with. This conveys a lack of respect.

On the other hand, if our bow is too slow, then it becomes a rather pompous display; we may have gotten too attached to the feeling of bowing, or our own (real or imagined) gracefulness of movement. We have lost the humble attitude that a true bow requires.

Our bow is always accompanied by gassho, although the gassho itself may not always be accompanied by bowing. As with the gassho, there are several varieties and styles of bowing. Here we will deal only with two kinds of bows.

### *The Standing Bow*

This bow is used upon entering the zendo, and in greeting each other. The bow begins with the body erect and the weight distributed evenly on the feet, which are parallel to each other. The head is not tilted on the neck. With hands in gassho, the body bends at the waist, so that the torso forms an angle with the legs of approximately forty-five degrees. The head remains aligned with the spine and does not leave the plane of the shoulders. The hands do not move relative to the face, but remain in position and move only with the whole body.

The seated bow is made in the same way, except that one remains in a seated position.

### *The Deep Bow (Full Prostration)*

This bow is most often used at the beginning and end of services, and upon entering and leaving formal interview with a teacher. The full prostration is somewhat more formal than the standing bow; which also requires continuous concentration during its execution. The bow itself begins in the same way as the standing bow, but once the body is bent slightly from the waist, the knees bend and touch the floor. If necessary, the hands may be used for support. The movement of the torso continues, until the forehead touches the floor. At this point, the hands are placed on the floor, palms upward, on either side of the head. The body touches the floor in seven places: the knees, elbows, hands, and forehead. The buttocks should be tucked in. The hands are then slowly raised, palms upward, to a point just above the ears, and then slowly returned to the floor. This action of the hands is symbolic of placing the Buddha’s feet above one’s head as an act of reverence and humility. There should be no sharp, abrupt movements of the hands or arms, and no bending of the wrists or curling of the fingers while executing this gesture. When the hands have been raised and lowered, stand up, using your hands for support as necessary. Once off your feet, place your hands in gassho. In kneeling, the knees do not touch the ground simultaneously, but in sequence; first the right and then the left knee touches the floor. The same is true for the right and left hands and right and left elbows, in that sequence. In practice, however, the interval

between right and left sides touching the ground may be so minute as to be unnoticeable. In bowing, movement should not be jerky or disjointed, but should flow smoothly and continuously without disruption or arrested motion.

Master Obaku, the teacher of Master Rinzai, was famous for his frequent admonition to his students: "Don't expect anything from the Three Treasures." Time after time, he was heard to say this. One day, however, Master Obaku was observed in the act of bowing and was challenged about his practice. "You always tell your students not to expect anything from the Three Treasures," said his questioner, "and yet you have been making deep bows." And in fact, Master Obaku had been bowing so frequently and for so long that a large callous had formed on his forehead at the point where it touched the hard floor. When asked how he explained this, Master Obaku replied, "I don't expect. I just bow."

This is the state of being one with the Three Treasures. Let us just gassho. Let us just bow.

## **Gassho and Bowing** **by Sensei Jan Chozen Bays** Dharma Talk given at ZCLA, circa 1980

During the Jukai ceremony, we keep our hands in gassho. *Gassho* means “to place the two palms together.” According to legend, the gassho was used first by the five companions of Siddhartha, the Indian prince who became the Buddha. These men had been working together with him on attaining enlightenment. They had all been fasting and practicing other forms of asceticism. When the Buddha turned from extreme self-renunciation and began to eat again, his companions left him. He practiced meditation alone and finally attained enlightenment. According to legend, he then sought out his companions to share with them what he had learned. As soon as they saw him, they realized he had reached enlightenment and spontaneously put their palms together in reverence.

Gassho has several meanings. The first is a sign of reverence, a greeting, or an expression of thanks. We do gassho when we pass each other on the grounds of the Zen Center. It is a good way to show respect and gratitude toward each other for mutual support in our practice. It also says, “I revere the buddha nature in you.” Thus, no matter how our small self feels about someone, we bow to their Self.

The second implication of gassho is to bring opposites together; right and left, good and bad, active and passive. All the opposites we set up in our lives are brought together and understood in our practice. It brings us into unity with each other and with our buddha nature.

When we do gassho, it is important to keep the fingers together, the thumbs against the fingers, and the palms pressed together so there is no space between the hands. This is the third implication of gassho - no separation, no gap. That is what our practice is about, to eliminate the gap between ourselves and everything else, between our self and our Self. Every time we gassho, it reminds us not to separate.

The gassho also helps to concentrate the mind. During sesshin, you can tell how well people are concentrating by how their gassho looks. If their concentration is poor, the gassho will be loose and sloppy. If their concentration is good, it will be firm and tight. Just like our posture, the physical expression of a firm gassho helps bring our mind-body to one-pointedness.

Another hand posture that we use during walking meditation is called “shashu”. We put the left hand in a fist over the solar plexus and overlap the right hand over it. The elbows are held out from the body a little and the forearms are parallel to the floor. It feels as if our body is a large tree trunk that we are embracing as we walk. This posture helps us to maintain stability and concentration during walking. Compare it to walking with the arms dangling at the sides. There’s a big difference.

During much of the Jukai ceremony, those receiving Jukai face Roshi in a posture called “choki”. In choki, we kneel with the hands in gassho. Do not sit on your heels, but kneel with the thighs perpendicular to the floor. If you have arthritis or bad knees and this posture is difficult, you may use a zafu during the ceremony.

There are many full bows during the Jukai ceremony. Bowing arouses different feelings in people, often aversion, dread, or the question “Why do this?” Whenever there’s something in the practice that catches us, something that’s sticky, that’s the very thing we should work on. It means we have some idea of how things should or shouldn’t be; we’re stuck to a concept. Bowing is a particularly sticky concept.

The dictionary definition of *bow* is to incline the head or body as a salutation, a sign of respect, reverence, or submission. That’s what we’re doing by bowing. But to what are we bowing? To whom are we expressing respect and reverence? And for what? We’re showing respect and reverence to our true nature. We aren’t just bowing to a piece of carved wood, metal, or jade on the altar. Many people would be happier bowing to a rough hunk of stone or piece of driftwood than to a graven image. Yasutani Roshi used to say that the problem wasn’t the Buddha image on the altar but the Buddha image in our minds. What is on the altar is a piece of wood or metal. Our mind turns it into something else, something to be revered or reviled.

By bowing we are showing respect or reverence to our true nature. The Buddha statue reminds us of our search to find out who we really are. We are bowing in gratitude to the historical Buddha who undertook the same search and showed us the way to find the answer for ourselves. Each time we bow, we’re affirming and submitting to our true nature. We know it is right here with us. In a way, we’re greeting it and saying, “I know you’re there. Come out!”

The way to do a full bow is to put the hands in gassho and then to bend from the waist, then bend the knees. Traditionally the right knee strikes first and then the left knee slightly after it. Don’t worry about that kind of technicality. The knees touch the floor, the body folds down, the forehead touches the floor, and the hands come apart and touch the floor or mat. Then the hands are raised palm up to about the level of the top of the ear. The idea is that you are raising the feet of the Buddha above your own head. The hands should not be raised up too high, nor the fingers curled or flipped (you might flip the Buddha backwards over your shoulder!). The fingers and thumbs should be together and the hands raised just as if there were someone standing on your palms. Lift the hands up gently to ear-top level and down again. Use the right hand to “push off” from the mat, then come up and end the bow in gassho.

There are many bows during the Jukai ceremony. You might want to think about bowing and what it means to you. When I used to hear the phrase “lifting the feet of the Buddha above your head,” I really didn’t understand what it meant. It was too mystical for me. I worked with it as a koan for a long time. The way I think of it now is that I’m folding my little self up, folding up all my ideas and notions about how things should be, physically

folding them up, and raising true reality above my own thoughts and ideas. Each time I bow, I try to remember to make that affirmation: “Yes, I want to see true reality. I know it’s right here, and I put it above all my notions. I’m willing to get rid of the false notions. I have to find out what true reality is.”

Bowing can be a whole practice. There are many Buddhists who perform as a practice 108 bows or more every day. It is a wonderful practice. Sometimes they do 10,000 bows. At first, it’s just a physically exhausting practice. Then the mind quiets down the way it does in zazen. The mind becomes tired of chattering as you’re going up and down, up and down. When the mind quiets, it becomes like active zazen, just pure movement. It’s a particularly good practice for those of us who are proud, holding onto our own ideas. I guess that’s all of us. It’s nice to fold up our ideas and be open to a fresh look at reality.

The first series of bows we do during Jukai are bows of gratitude. We make three full bows to the image on the altar in the room where Jukai is being held. In our zendo, the image is Manjusri Bodhisattva. He represents the aspect of wisdom, cutting off delusion with the sword you see in his hand. Another altar image is Kannon Bodhisattva, the representation of compassion. When we bow to those images, we are bowing to those aspects - wisdom and compassion, which have led us to be able to practice and to receive Jukai. Remember that those aspects are not outside us! Next, we make bows to our parents, if they have attended Jukai, or in the direction where our parents live if they were unable to attend. Many people have bad feelings toward their parents, thinking they could have done a better job in some way. This is not the Buddhist understanding. We believe that we actively chose to come into this life through the vehicle of the relationship between our parents. Thus, we should be grateful to them for giving us life. Whatever they did, however we feel about how they treated us, their actions did help in our taking the path of practice and in coming to this day of Jukai. So we express our gratitude to them by bowing.

The next three bows express gratitude to the kaishi, the teacher who is giving us the kai (precepts). We thank him for his kindness and concern, and for the opportunity to go deeper in the practice.

## SECTION 5: ATONEMENT

### Notes

Master Banjin Dotan said:

“Life and death are one. This is the body of atonement. When we really do atone for life, right there is the very body of atonement, the very state of life and death are in realization.”

As an exercise, try keeping one of the precepts for one week. You may find yourself constantly violating, breaking, and defiling your precept.

Atonement is creating no division. At-one-ment is constantly practiced. It is becoming one with our intention and the Way. Atonement is vowing to ourselves to maintain the precepts. Zazen is true atonement.

#### HOW DO WE ATONE?

1. Do zazen. Actualize the body and mind as one. Dissolve all divisions and excuses.
2. Be aware. Be aware of breaking the precepts.
3. Penetrate into the cause and effect of our actions and thoughts.
4. Make amends and transform our conduct.

#### FORMAL ATONEMENT — FUSATSU

The Fusatsu ceremony was started in the Buddha's time. All of the monks would attend. At ZCLA, people who have had Jukai are especially encouraged to attend Fusatsu at least once a month. It is a time to reaffirm our vows that were made during Jukai. Roshi usually gives a talk on one of the precepts during the Fusatsu ceremony.

# On Atonement

## by Taizan Maezumi Roshi

Teisho given at ZCLA in February, 1991

We have sixteen precepts. I am reluctant to translate *kai* as “precepts.” *Precept* has the sense of the restriction of committing certain actions, but *kai* is something very different. In our tradition, to transmit *kai* means to become aware of one’s own nature. Bodhidharma defined *jukai* by saying that “ju” is “to receive” or “to transmit.” To transmit is to be awakened. To become awakened is to become awakened to one’s own true nature. This is called *Jukai*. So *kai* is the patriarchs directly transmitted or the bodhisattva directly transmitted. That’s the *kai* that we maintain. It’s very different from 5, 10, 20, 250, or 378 rules for nuns and monks to maintain. For the lay people, there are just ten precepts. These precepts have their own value and significance. But this *kai* that we maintain is not something about “do this” or “don’t do that.”

Then what is it? Sometimes we call it *kai* and *Buddha’s kai*. What kind of ‘*kai*’ is that? Sometimes we call it *buddha-nature kai*. In a way, it has nothing to do with the numbers. We say sixteen precepts but *buddha-nature* doesn’t have numbers. So, what is it? Life. My life. Your life. Bodhisattva’s life and Buddha’s life. Furthermore, it’s the life of anything, everything. That is the *kai* that we maintain, and we renew it in having *Fusatsu*.

The first thing that we do in *Jukai* or *Fusatsu* is repentance. Renewal or receiving; having *Jukai*, or having *Fusatsu*; it is the same thing. At the beginning, the first thing we do is repentance or atonement. Again, to repent what? Have atonement about what? Refresh our lives. What does that mean? Refresh our mind, body, refresh ourselves, refresh our understanding, or refresh our realization. Refresh our realization. Our realization being the fact that our life is no other than the very nature of all beings. It is not just this life in a restricted way. We talk about big life and big self and small self, but there is no big or small, either. Just this one self that is expressed as anything, everything. That’s what realization means. One. One buddha, precepts, see? One Buddha, itself is no other than the precept of *kai*. Maintain the *kai* as one thing. That’s what the buddhas and the bodhisattvas directly transmitted. Now those who have received *kai*, that’s what it is.

Our atonement is to recognize and realize and fully accept that fact, that fact of this very life as the Three Treasures. The rest of the ten, thirteen precepts are all just an expression of how to take care of these Three Treasures. Again, Three Treasures can be reduced to one. Dharma is okay. Buddha is okay. Sangha is okay because they are three aspects of one thing. That one thing is this life.

There are different kinds of atonement. One kind is face-to-face atonement. That’s what *Fusatsu* is. Recite all the names of the Buddhas and be one. Throw ourselves into each one of these Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, which are the ten different aspects of life. All Past Seven Buddhas, who are they? We are part of them and they are part of us. How then do we reassure the fact of being one with these Buddhas? That’s face-to-face atonement. That’s one kind of atonement.

Then another kind of atonement is to go straight through to *dojo*. *Dojo* is “the place of the Way,” or “the place where the Way is practiced.” So this atonement is to go directly to the place of the Way.

There are many kinds of dojos. The karate dojo is where karate is practiced. There are dojos for kendo and judo. There’s even a dojo for flower arrangement or for tea ceremony. For us, the kind of way that we practice is the Buddha Way. The Buddha Way, what is that? That’s the very best way.

Now what’s that very best way? I’ve talked a few times this past month about suchness. Isness, vastness, as-it-isness. That is all life. You are what you are. Right straight through. Bodhi. Way. Enlightenment. Wisdom. You are just as you are. Everything just as-is-itself, is no other than that straightforward way, which is the best way. Being life, just that itself is the atonement.

Then the next kind of atonement is undefiled atonement. It’s the same thing, see? Undefiled. What defiles us? What defiles this vastness or suchness or as-it-isness? Our views and opinions and evaluations and judgments and criticism and analysis; all these are artificial devices that produce something else. We judge with certain standards. That’s what spoils things. That is what defiles this very nature which is undefiled.

Look at what conflict is happening all over. Happening where, see? Where is it going on? What is contaminated? It’s all within our hearts. In one way or another, we are biased and conditioned. Even myself talking about what is the possible best way, I am colored by that. One shouldn’t be just ideas. Then it doesn’t work. It is supposed to be the way that is just my existence itself, your life itself. It’s not some kind of understanding or idea or evaluation of something else. Otherwise, it’s an idea and not the straightforward way. So, this undefiled atonement, really be yourself. As a whole, see? Atonement is not partial; conditioned by good or bad, right or wrong. All together, don’t be defiled by even the idea of good or bad or even the best.

We have another kind of repentance, reality repentance. Real form, real appearance, existence. What is that? Again, that’s our life. Life of anything, everything appearing as they are. As our practice, we call it “shikantaza”. Non-thinking. Non-doing is all we manifest. Our life manifests as all the dharmas. That’s because there is no division. Good, bad, right, wrong, weak, strong, all together as one. What kind of life is that? Make our life, make our practice, make it to be in such way. That’s all repentance. Reality itself is the atonement. That’s all atonement.

What’s the difference between atonement and the Three Treasures? It’s the same. Three Pure Precepts is another way to expound that reality. Vast isness saying to do good, eliminate evil, and do good for others. Do good for others and for oneself. Again, not different. Then it is further elucidated in the ten ways. That is further explanation or expression of what atonement is. How to refresh the Three Treasures and how to put it in action. So there are ten different ways to do it. But actually when you really do take care of one thing, everything is taken care of.

I realize all sixteen precepts all together. The sixteen precepts are all contained in atonement. As the life of each of us and as elucidated as the Three Treasures. It’s elucidated as Three Pure Precepts; it’s elucidated as Ten Grave Precepts. All together these sixteen precepts are no other than your very true self, your true nature. They are no other than your suchness, your reality, and your existence. The precepts are your life as your life.

# Atonement

## by Sensei Jan Chozen Bays

Dharma Talk given at ZCLA on August 9, 1983

When our actions are appropriate, and not a matter of good or bad, our actions naturally come into alignment with the enlightened way. We don't have to worry about good or bad, or violating, or defiling, or any of those things we worry about, because it just happens naturally. But it's a long, long process.

There are different kinds of atonement. Repentance is one. Repentance is maybe the simplest way to think of it. That is our usual idea of "I feel bad that I did this thing." Then take it one step further, to reality atonement: holding all of reality as part of atonement. Being one with all that we call good, all that we call bad, and all that we manifest. How do we really atone? Constantly defiling the precepts, constantly atoning. How can we be at one? And go on. And break or violate the precepts, then atone, and go on. Go on and break them, atone, break them, atone, break them.

The best way is by doing zazen. Because as we do zazen, we bring our body and mind into atonement: with the floor and with each other. It's fascinating to watch; it really happens. We may not be aware of it as we sit and we struggle with "Oh, now, I can't get back to the count of two," and on the second day of sesshin, all I can think of is violence, and what I've left undone at the office. In our daily struggle to sit, and to sit with a quiet mind and a quiet body, we lose sight of what zazen really is. It really is the physical and mental manifestation of at-one-ment. Of coming into one.

I can give you many examples. Recently I went to a sesshin. In this group, there were not many people who sit, but still they split into two groups. So there were two sitting groups that were at constant war with each other, not overt war but underneath subtle war, the worst kind. I got there for sesshin, and both groups had brought a complete altar set-up. Right away, there is this feeling of, "Is my Buddha or their Buddha going on the altar? Is my candlestick or their candlestick going on the altar? Is my incense bowl or their incense bowl going on the altar?" The sesshin was fraught with this right from the very beginning — these two groups. As we began to sit together what happened was that it all went away, all disappeared. People started working together; old things were forgotten. The conflict just dropped away and the sesshin proceeded. Every day during sesshin, the unity was more and more obvious, until at the end, it was fine. Now the sitting groups have broken back up again, but it's gradually healing, it's gradually taking care of itself. Because they do come together occasionally to sit, especially when a teacher comes. They think it's the teacher. They say, "If we only had a teacher here, we could get together and we would all cooperate," but it's the sitting together that does it.

What about not speaking ill of others? Often when we say nice things about someone, we make a negative comparison with someone else. So that when we are speaking well of someone, we are putting someone else down. It's very tricky. Can we support someone, encourage them and speak well of them without at the same time creating the opposite somewhere else? If you have three children and you say to one of them, "Aren't you a good boy?" Then are you making the others automatically bad, or can you support them all at one time?

Nobody said this practice was easy. This is a very subtle point, and a very important point. As soon as we divide good and evil, and we uphold good, we are also upholding evil, we are creating more evil. So we have to be very careful. It doesn't mean that we never say anything nice, but just to be aware of that aspect of it.

We also should be aware of right speech, not talking ill of others, and not being too rigid about that, either. Because you're violating precepts, too, if you're trying to be too rigid and puritanical and pure. "I'm better than you because I don't gossip." Usually the more rigidly we hold a precept, the worse we are violating the precept. Like "Do not gossip" — we can begin to think of ourselves as very pure because we are not gossiping. In a way, you are putting someone else down for gossiping, and you can sense that in people's behavior by even the way they hold their body. So, it's more like just being aware of its happening, and then it begins to turn itself off earlier than it did before.

Awareness is the first aspect of atonement. That's really the key; once you are aware of inappropriate behavior, it's already dead. Margaret Mead said that if there's a custom that's so ingrained in a culture that no one steps back and is aware of it, it will live forever. But as soon as somebody steps back from it and notices it and questions it, it's already dead. It may take generations for it to die, but it's already dead.

The same thing is true in our practice. Once we step back and notice, "Oh, I gossip an awful lot. I wish I didn't," that's all we need. If we keep on being aware of it, eventually it will die. How long will it take, who knows? But eventually it will go, and it's much better than holding it in a rigid way. Just let it die a natural death.

Now what about maintaining and breaking the precepts, and atonement. It's an ongoing thing. We take the information in, digest it, practice with it. Then we have Jukai, and we go to fusatsu, and on and on. For an exercise, take one of the precepts and try to maintain it for one week, or even one day, or even one hour. Just do that as a practice for the next week. Look at the list of precepts, and take one precept and try to maintain it. The one I recommend is "Don't put others down. Don't put yourself up by putting others down." Observe, even in one hour or one day, how many times in our mind we violate that precept or break that precept. It's pretty overwhelming! I tried it just for one zazen period once. I was sitting and thinking, "All right, I'm going to watch if I break this precept," and then my mind drifted off to the person sitting next to me. "Why can't he wear the right — oops!" Okay, one. And then back again, "Why can't — why doesn't he — oops, two." And then, back again, three. Just on that one person sitting next to me.

And look at the judgments of yourself. "Oh, I'm not sitting straight. Why can't I sit straight for five minutes? Oops!" It's quite appalling. Just notice it, and what you discover is that we are constantly breaking the precepts. Particularly "Not to elevate ourselves by putting others down." Or "Not to speak ill of the Three Treasures." That means not to speak ill of everything, because everything is the Three Treasures. So that means never speak ill of anything or anybody. Just try maintaining that one for a day (that means in thought as well as in speech). Not to think ill of anyone, or speak ill of anyone or anything. That means the hot weather, the smog, people, animals, dirty sidewalks — everything! No ill thoughts and no ill speech. Try it for an hour or for a day, and see how we are constantly breaking them.

At first it's very overwhelming and very discouraging, but it's a fact of our life, it's just the way we are. We have an ideal that we would like to approach, and we see we are very far from it. This practice is not just a practice for a year and then, "Oh, I'm going to have kensho and then my life will be perfect." Look around you and see the people who have been practicing for ten years, twenty years, thirty years. We just keep on working, we are patient with ourselves, and on and on it goes. Little by little, our life comes more into alignment with the wisdom that gives rise to the precepts. As our minds get clearer and clearer, it's not even a matter of breaking or maintaining the precepts; automatically they are maintained.

If we do maintain the precepts, we become very ordinary people with very simple ordinary lives. Roshi always talks about that, about orderliness and ordinariness. Just living our lives, washing the dishes, making our beds, going to work, driving back home, no ill thoughts, and no judgments. Sure, our minds make comparisons. There are times when we have to decide to do one thing or another thing, or whether one thing is bigger or smaller or more appropriate to do than another. That's different from elevating yourself by putting others or other things down. Or speaking ill of the Three Treasures, or speaking ill of anything. And we will violate the precepts all the time.

We also distinguish between two kinds of breaking of the precepts: there are two different words in Japanese, one is breaking and one is defilement; in a way, we shouldn't talk about breaking. When the Japanese say breaking the precepts, they mean giving up faith altogether. Giving up faith in the Buddha Way, in the Three Treasures, in the precepts, and most importantly, in yourself. Since we are the Three Treasures, the Buddha Way, the enlightened ones, if we break with them, we break with ourselves. This means a complete break with any faith in this practice and in ourselves. And giving up in our progress toward maintaining the precepts. So that is what is meant by breaking the precepts.

The other kind of breaking is more a word like defilement of the precepts. In English, the two words might sound a little strange to us, but the idea of breaking is that it can never be fixed again. You have made a clean break with the enlightened way and with the idea that you could maintain these precepts. You have given up on finding out who you are and leading the enlightened life. Breaking that completely can never be fixed again. On the other hand, defilement means it gets dirty and you wash it off; it gets dirty and you wash it off. Underneath it is pure shining nature.

I was once told about a very touching image of statues made of gold, covered with dark dust, but here and there the gleam of pure gold shows through. That to me is the dharma. No matter how it's treated or defiled, no matter what happens in the course of history with countries or with people that covers up the dharma, it's always there, and always it's shining through. When we say defilement, we mean that it gets dirty, it gets covered with dust. We are not observing the precepts in this moment, but then we wash it clean and there's the pure life of the enlightened one, which is our life. It's shining clear and pure underneath whatever we're doing. We wash it and we try to see it, and it gets dirty and we wash it and we try to see it.

We have a gatha that we recite that is the gatha of repentance or atonement. We recognize that we constantly violate or defile the precepts, and then to wash it clean, we atone or we repent. We changed the word from *repentance* to *atonement*, because in English there is a very different feeling to those two words. To repent means to feel sorrow or regret for something done or left undone. That has the feeling of holding onto regret or sorrow and carrying it with us. That regret is violating the precepts.

If we carry that guilt or shame or regret with us, we take it out of the moment in time when we did it and drag it through the rest of our life. It affects everybody else's life around us, too. From it comes this chain of causation, of karma, that spreads out of us throughout space and time. In a way, we've done a worse violation if we hold regret or sorrow or shame or guilt. Holding onto it for a long time and dragging it around with us, allows it to be a bigger and bigger burden. We are violating the Three Treasures: speaking ill of ourselves and everything, if we do that.

Atonement has an entirely different flavor. It contains repentance, but it goes beyond repentance. The dictionary definition of atonement is:

*Unity of feeling, harmony, concord, agreement, at-one with others.*

The word *atone*, *atonement*, comes from the two words "at one." So "to be at one." In fact, it said in the dictionary that originally the word was "at-one" or "at-one-ment," and it constantly occurred throughout the translation of the Bible; then in the 1600s they put them together to make them one word, *atone* or *atonement*.

*The act of setting at one, after discord or strife.*

See what a different feeling that has from repent? Yes, we feel sorrow or regret; we feel discord or strife about something we've done in our life, but then we set it at one. That's atonement.

*To restore by forgiveness to favor or to friendly relations.*

We are forgiving ourselves. If we repent and carry that shame or guilt with us for the rest of our life, we've never forgiven ourselves, and we probably haven't forgiven the other person involved either. Friendly relations with whom? With ourselves. See, if we carry a burden of shame or guilt throughout our life, we are not on friendly terms with ourselves. We are not upholding the Three Treasures; we are not upholding our own buddha nature.

Another definition of atonement is to reconcile contending persons. Who are the contending persons? Almost always, they are inside ourselves. We think we get angry with somebody else, but the problem is right here. It's not out there. It's my narrow little image of myself. We have a contention within ourselves about who we are, or who we aren't. Those are the contending people: who we think we are, who we think we aren't, who we exclude, and who we accept within ourselves. As long as there are contending people within ourselves, we can always get upset, always we can get shoved off balance by people or by situations.

In a way, I always welcome conflict or anger or upset, because I know somebody or something has hooked into some idea of who I am and knocked me off balance. I am forced to look and see what it was that they hooked into. Where have I gotten some kind of idea of who I am or who I'm not that they violated? It doesn't have to do with him or her at all, or the situation at all. If I don't resolve it, somebody else will come along and will hook into the same place and grab me and push me off balance again. So that's why we have to get to the bottom of situations like that, and realize what concept we're holding on to. What are these internal contending forces or people I have to reconcile? And how? By atonement.

Atonement is unity of feeling, harmony, concord, agreement, at one with others. The act of setting at-one after discord or strife. To restore, by forgiveness, to favor or to friendly relations. To reconcile contending persons.

If we think of that in terms of ourselves, it means unity of feeling within oneself, knowing who we are; being at harmony with who we are; concord, agreement, at one with others. Then there can be no gap, no separation between ourselves and others or other things. Atonement is the act of setting at one, after discord or strife. We violate or we defile the precepts - then we realize it, then we set it at one after discord or strife. To restore ourselves to one, by forgiving ourselves and going back to who we really are. That's why we use this Gatha of Atonement.

The Gatha of Atonement is chanted during a Jukai or a wedding or a Fusatsu — these are the three times that we use it. The words are:

*All evil karma ever committed by me since of old,  
On account of my beginningless greed, anger, and ignorance, Born of  
my body, mouth, and thought,  
Now I atone for it all.*

The simplest way to think of karma is effect, with no emotions attached to it, just effect. Every action that we do has effect or result. Those effects become causes for more effects, so it's this endless chain of cause and effect, cause and effect, cause and effect. Everything that we do has effects. You could say: all evil or inadequate effects of what I have done, all bad effects ever committed by me, or ever caused by me, since of old. Those words "me" and "of old" are really key. Expand "me". Not just me, but the whole of me, the whole of existence, every bad effect ever caused by anyone or anything. "Of old" means since beginningless time and into beginningless future, because all time is right here, right now. So every act, every thought, every word, spreads out and affects what we call the past, and what we call the future.

It's hard to imagine, it's beyond the imagining of our mind, which works generally in a very linear way. But that's the implication of this gatha. All evil karma, all bad effects ever caused by me, ever committed by Me with a capital M, all existence, every bad effect ever caused by all existence, since of old, in all time, all space. All evil ever committed by me since of old, on account of my beginningless greed, anger, and ignorance. We normally tend to think of my anger, my greed, my ignorance. We give it a time span: "Well, it started yesterday when he insulted me; that's when my anger began." This gatha expresses the notion that greed, anger, and ignorance are beginningless and endless. They are always with us, always there; so what do we do about them? Usually if you try to get rid of it, when you are angry at someone and you try to push it down, it gets stronger and stronger. It sits down there, but it never disappears. At some time, it's going to come up. So, resisting the anger usually makes it stronger. Recognizing that it's beginningless and endless, that always there is greed, anger, and ignorance, we try to transmute it.

Roshi talks about the three poisons — greed, anger, and ignorance — and transmuting them into the three virtues of aspiration, determination, and wisdom. We can work with that in our life. When we feel angry, how do we work with it? First, acknowledge it, let it come up: "I'm very angry." Then transmute it into determination to find out what's at the bottom of that anger. That's our practice; the idea of getting to the bottom of the concept of who I am, is our practice. Who am I? What am I doing here, what is my life about? Why did this person make me angry? What notion am I holding onto about myself that this person was able to tap into? Take that anger, turn it into determination, and drive it right back around to the bottom of that anger. Turn it into determination to practice. In this way, anger can be transmuted into determination.

Greed, the same way. We are infinitely greedy. If we want to be enlightened, then take greed and turn it into desire to accomplish the Way and the desire to know who we are. Ignorance is a poison, too — not knowing who we are. We do all kinds of bad things, we defile the precepts all the time, not realizing that we are all one. That's at the bottom of all of the problems. Greed, anger, ignorance — everything comes from not knowing who we are, comes from that ignorance. Take that ignorance and turn it around into an open mind. To just clear our minds and take the teaching of the Buddha as true, and try to live them until we can see clearly that they are true. We take it on faith that these precepts are a living example of the enlightened way, born of my body, mouth, and thought.

We can defile or violate these precepts through our body, through our mouth (with speech), and through thought. And we can be aware of all three aspects of our action all the time, and use them correctly and not defile the precepts.

The last line is: Now I atone for it all. You might want to work with this gatha, just go over it in your mind, before you have Jukai.

*All evil karma ever committed by me since of old,  
On account of my beginningless greed, anger, and ignorance,  
Born of my body, mouth, and thought,  
Now I atone for it all.*

Everything is ours: all bad actions, all good actions, all neutral actions — everything that has ever happened born of body, mouth, and thought, is ours, and we take it, we recognize it, we hold it, we bring it into at-onement, we bring it into onement, and in that act of onement is contained reconciliation, repentance, forgiveness. Accepting it, acknowledging it, and going on. That's washing the defilement away, and seeing the pure truth underneath — that oneness — and then going on.

## Repentance (from The Sutra of Hui Neng)

Translated by Thomas Cleary

Ordinary people who are ignorant and confused only know to repent of their former errors and do not know to repent of future faults. Because they do not repent of future faults, their past errors do not disappear, and later faults also arise. If the former errors do not disappear and later faults also arise, how could this be called repentance?

Good friends, once you have repented, I will make the four universal vows for you. Each of you should be careful to listen accurately.

“The beings in my own mind are infinite; I vow to liberate them. “The afflictions in my own mind are infinite; I vow to end them.

“The teachings in my own nature are inexhaustible; I vow to study them. “The buddhahood in my own nature is supreme; I vow to attain it.

Good friends, doesn't everyone say, “Beings are infinite; I vow to liberate them”? Speaking this way doesn't mean I am going to do the liberating. Good friends, the beings in the mind are delusion, deception, immorality, jealousy, malice—states of mind like this are all beings. Each of you must liberate yourselves through your own essential nature; that is called true liberation.

What is meant by liberating yourself through your own essential nature? That means the beings in false views, afflictions, and ignorance are liberated by accurate insight. Once you have accurate insight, you get the wisdom of prajna to break through the beings in folly and delusion, so each one is self-liberated. When falsehood occurs, truth liberates; when delusion occurs, enlightenment liberates. When folly occurs, wisdom liberates; when evil occurs, good liberates. Liberation like this is called true liberation.

What is more, “Afflictions are infinite; I vow to end them” means using the prajna wisdom in your own essential nature to get rid of false ideas. And “Teachings are inexhaustible; I vow to study them” requires you to see your own essential nature and always act on right principle; this is called true learning.

As for “I vow to attain supreme buddhahood,” once you are able to humble your mind and practice straightforwardness at all times, you always produce prajna, beyond delusion and awakening; setting aside both reality and falsehood, you see buddha-nature. Then you attain buddhahood at a word. Always thinking of practical application is the principle of the power of vowing.

Good friends, having made the four universal vows, now I will transmit to you the precepts of the formless three refuges.

Good friends, we take refuge in the most honorable of two-legged beings, the awakened one. We take refuge in the honorable one correctly detached from desire. We take refuge in the pure honorable one in the midst of the crowd. From this day forth we call awakening our teacher,

relying no more on demonic cults, always witnessing ourselves through the Three Treasures in our own essential nature.

Good friends, I urge you to take refuge in the Three Treasures in your own essential nature. “Buddha” is awareness, “Dharma” is truth, “Sangha” is purity. When your own mind takes refuge in awareness, error and confusion do not occur. One who has few desires is content and able to be aloof from materialism and sensuality, is called the most honorable of two-legged beings.

When your own mind takes refuge in truth, you have no false views from moment of thought to moment of thought. Because you have no false views, you have no personal selfish pride, craving, or clinging. This is called the honorable one detached from desire.

When your own mind takes refuge in purity, your own essential nature is not affected by all mundane toils and objects of desire. This is called the honorable one in the midst of the crowd.

This is taking refuge in oneself. Ordinary people who do not understand this take the Three Refuge Precepts from morning to night. If you say you take refuge in Buddha, where is Buddha? If you do not see buddha, where can you take refuge? The words would then be falsehood.

Good people, let each of you examine yourself. Do not use your mind mistakenly. Scripture clearly says to take refuge in the buddha in oneself, not to take refuge in another buddha. If you do not resort to your own inherent buddha, you have nothing to rely on.

Now that you are self-realized, each of you should take refuge in the Three Treasures in your own mind. Inwardly tame the nature of mind, outwardly respect other people: this is called self- refuge.

Good friends, once you have taken refuge in the Three Treasures in yourself, let each of you focus your mind, and I will explain to you the buddha of our own nature as three embodiments of one substance, to enable you to see the three embodiments and clearly realize your own essential nature by yourself.

Let everyone follow me in saying:

“I take refuge in the Buddha as the pure body of reality in my own physical body.

“I take refuge in the Buddha as the fulfilled body of reward in my own physical body.

“I take refuge in the Buddha as thousands of hundreds of hundreds of millions of projected bodies in my own physical body.”

Good friends, the physical body is a house; it cannot be called a resort or a refuge. The aforementioned Buddha in three embodiments is in our own essential nature; everyone in the world has it, but because of confusion in their own minds, they do not see their inner nature, and so they seek a three-bodied Tathagata externally, not seeing that they have buddha in three embodiments within their own bodies.

You have heard an explanation that will enable you to see, in your own body, that in your own essential nature is a buddha with three embodiments. This buddha with three embodiments comes from your own essential nature, and is not attained from outside.

What is the buddha as the pure body of reality? The essential nature of human beings is originally pure. All things come from essential nature; when you think about all evil things, it produces bad behaviors; when you think about all good things, it produces good behaviors. Thus all things are in your own essential nature. It is like the sky, which is always clear, and the sun, which is always shining; when they are covered by drifting clouds, there is light above but darkness below. Suddenly a wind blows away the clouds, so above and below are both light; then myriad forms are visible.

The nature of worldly people is always drifting, like the clouds in the sky. Good friends, wisdom is like the sun, insight is like the moon: knowledge and insight are always light, but when you fixate on objects outside, you get your own essential nature covered by the drifting clouds of errant thoughts, so you cannot have light and clarity. If you meet a spiritual benefactor and hear truly authentic teaching, you get rid of confusion so that inside and out are thoroughly clear, and myriad things appear within your own essential nature. This is how it is with people who see essential nature. This is called the buddha as the pure body of reality.

Good friends, your own mind taking refuge in your own essential nature is taking refuge in the real Buddha. Self-refuge means getting rid of bad states of mind in your own nature—jealousy, flattery, selfishness, deceptiveness, disregard for others, disrespect for others, false views, conceit, and any bad behavior that might take place at any time. Always seeing your own faults and not discussing others' good or bad is self-refuge. One should always be humble in mind and be respectful toward everyone. This is mastery of seeing essential nature, without any more obstruction. This is self-refuge.

What is the fulfilled body of reward? Just as one lamp can obliterate a thousand years' darkness, one insight can annihilate ten thousand years' ignorance. Don't think about what has already passed, and don't keep thinking about what is yet to come. Perfectly clear moment to moment, see original nature yourself. Though good and bad differ, the original nature is not dual. The nondual nature is called the true nature. When your own nature produces a single thought of good, it can achieve the ending of countless evils, all the way to unsurpassed enlightenment. Seeing yourself in every moment of thought, not losing basic mindfulness, is called the embodiment of reward.

What is the embodiment of thousands of hundreds of hundreds of millions of projections? If you don't think of myriad things, your nature is basically like space. A single moment of thought is called a projection. If you think of bad things, you produce hell. If you think of good things, you produce heaven. Viciousness produces dragons and snakes; compassion produces bodhisattvas. Wisdom produces higher states, folly produces lower states. The projections of our nature are very many; confused people are unable to be alert to them, and so create evil thought after thought, constantly going in bad ways. If they would turn a single thought to good, wisdom would thereupon be born; this is called the Buddha as embodiment of projection of our nature.

Good friends, the body of reality is originally there. Spontaneously seeing your own nature in every moment of thought is the buddha as the embodiment of reward. Thinking from the embodiment of reward is the embodiment of projection.

Self-realization and self-cultivation of the virtues of one's own nature is true refuge. Skin and flesh are the material body; the material body is a house, and cannot be called a resort or

refuge. Just realize the three embodiments in your own nature, and you will know the buddha in your own nature.

I have a formless hymn: if you can memorize it, the impact of the words can cause your accumulated eons of confusions and errors to dissolve away all at once.

*Confused people cultivate blessings, not the Way; They*

*simply say blessings are themselves the Way. The blessings  
of charity and alms may be boundless,*

*While in the mind the three poisons are created all along. If you  
try to cultivate blessing to annihilate sins,*

*Though you gain blessings in the coming life, the sin is still there.*

*Just get rid of conditions of sin within your mind. That is called true repentance within your own nature.*

*Suddenly realizing the true repentance of the Great Vehicle, Getting rid of  
falsehood, acting on truth, you're then impeccable.*

*In studying the Way, always observe your own nature, And you'll be of a kind with all the buddhas. My  
spiritual ancestors only transmitted this teaching of immediacy,*

*Wishing all to be one in seeing nature.*

*If you want to seek the reality body in the future,*

*Detach from the appearances of things, and clean the mind.*

*Strive to see for yourself; don't waste time. When the following moment is cut off, a whole lifetime's over.*

*If you understand the Great Vehicle, you'll see essential nature:*

*Reverently and respectfully, seek with all your heart.*

The Master said: Good friends, everyone should memorize this, cultivate your behavior in accord with it, and see essential nature under the impact of the words. Then even if you are a thousand miles away from me, it is as though you are always with me. If you do not awaken at these words, then you are a thousand miles away even when we are face to face—why bother to come so far?

Take care; go well.

Everyone in the crowd heard the teaching and opened up in understanding. Joyfully they put it into practice.

# Deep Faith in Cause and Effect (Shinjin Inga) by Eihei Dōgen Zenji

From *How to Raise an Ox*, translated by Francis Dojun Cook, pp. 117-124.

Whenever the Zen master Pai-chang preached the Dharma in the Dharma hall, there was always an old man there who respectfully listened to the Dharma teaching and then left with the monks. However, one day, when the monks left, he stayed behind. “Who is this standing before me?” asked the master. The old man answered, “I am not really a human being. Long, long ago, during the time of Kashyapa Buddha, I lived here as chief priest of a monastery. One day a monk asked me, ‘Does a person who has perfected his training and is enlightened remain subject to cause and effect or not?’ I answered, ‘He is not subject to cause and effect.’ Because of this answer, I have spent five hundred lifetimes in the body of a fox. I now ask you respectfully to say some turning word [which will change my mental attitude] and free me from this fox body.” Then he asked the master, “Is a person who has become enlightened subject to the law of cause and effect?” Pai-chang replied, “He does not ignore cause and effect.” Upon hearing these words, the old man had a great satori. Bowing to Pai-chang, he said, “I am now liberated from the body of the fox, which you will find at the foot of the cliff near the monastery. May I be so bold as to request the Chief Priest to have it buried as you would a dead monk?”

The master had the ino [liturgist] strike the mallet and announce to the monks that there would be a funeral service for a dead monk right after the meal. The monks were quite agitated and wondered, “Since all the monks here in this monastery are healthy, and there is no one in the infirmary, who could have died, that we must perform funeral services for a dead monk?” After they had eaten, the master took them to the foot of the cliff where, poking about with his staff, he found the remains of a fox. He had the body cremated in accordance with the custom among Buddhists.

That evening, during his talk in the Dharma hall, he spoke of the circumstances surrounding the cremation of the fox. Huang-po asked him, “The old man gave a wrong answer to the monk, and as a consequence, he had to abide in the body of a fox for five hundred lifetimes. But if he had not made a mistake, what would he have become?” Pai-chang said, “Come closer and I’ll tell you.” Huang-po came close to the master and suddenly slapped him on the cheek. Pai-chang clapped his hands and laughed. “I thought the foreigner’s beard was red, but it was really a red-bearded foreigner.” This story is recorded in the Mumonkan [Gateless Gate].

Monks in training do not understand the principle of cause and effect and consequently, many have made the mistake of thoughtlessly doubting this principle. This is truly lamentable, for once bad habits begin to spread in the world, the Way of the ancestors begins to decline. To think that one is not subject to cause and effect is to deny cause and effect, and the result is that you fall into the realms of animals, the purgatories, and so on.

However, to affirm this great principle and say that one does not ignore cause and effect clearly indicates a deep faith in the principle of cause and effect. As a result, one can become liberated from suffering in this present lifetime. Do not have any doubt about the principle of cause and effect. Do not question it. Many who practice Zen these days do doubt it. How do I know they doubt it? They either believe that they are not subject to cause and effect, or else they

believe the nature of this principle is such that no one can escape it anyway, so in either case, they deny cause and effect.

The nineteenth ancestor, Kumarata, said, “There are three periods for the maturation of good and bad karma. When we look at human life, we see that often the compassionate person suffers and dies, while the wicked person who gets along in the world by means of violence is happy and lives a long life. Also, the decent person is unhappy and wretched, while the wicked person who commits the five unpardonable offenses without ever thinking twice about it is happy. This is the way it seems, and we may wonder why it is this way. When we study this situation, we see that the person who trains in a superficial way thinks that cause and effect have nothing to do with this life and that misery and happiness have nothing to do with cause and effect. This person does not understand that the law of cause and effect never deviates, any more than a shadow or echo deviates from its source. Nor does he understand that the law of cause and effect never lapses, even after millions of eons.”

You should understand that none of the ancestors has ever denied the law of cause and effect. It is due to their own negligence that people who practice Zen these days do not understand the teachings of the compassionate ancestors. Negligent though they may be, they become self-styled teachers of men and gods, and thus they rob men and gods and are the sworn enemies of all real students. These fellows who crowd around younger students should not spread the false teaching that denies the principle of cause and effect. It is a wrong teaching because it is not the Dharma of the ancestors. If you become careless, you will fall utterly into this wrong view.

Certain monks in Sung China these days say, “We have acquired human form and have encountered the Dharma, but we still do not understand this present life or the future life. We understand that after that priest became a fox, he spent five hundred lifetimes in the body of a fox, but he did not become a fox as the result of karma. Even though he passed through the difficult barrier of practice and acquired supreme enlightenment, he did not remain in that state, but descended into the world of animals and was constantly reborn there.”

This is the sort of thing taught by people who are called “great leaders of the world.” But this explanation is not in accordance with the essence of the ancestors. There are those who have the supernatural power to know their past lives, whether as humans, animals, or some other form of sentient life. However, this supernatural power is not acquired by becoming enlightened in the Dharma; rather, it is the result of bad karma in past lives. Shakyamuni himself taught this principle extensively. That people do not understand it is due to their neglect of practice. Truly it is a shame, for even though one knows a thousand past lives or even ten thousand past lives, this is not really knowing the Dharma. Even non-Buddhists sometimes know the events of eighty thousand eons. However, this is still not the Dharma. Even if you can understand a little of the events of five hundred lifetimes, it is not really much of an ability.

Zen monks in China nowadays display a dismal ignorance of the fact that this teaching of not being subject to cause and effect is an incorrect teaching. What a pity! They are worthy of the Buddha’s teaching, correctly transmitted from ancestor to ancestor, yet they become people who negate the law of cause and effect. Those who practice Zen should stir themselves and clarify this principle of cause and effect right now. Pai-chang’s assertion that one does not ignore cause and effect clarifies this principle. Therefore, the principle according to which one acquires a certain result on the basis of a cause in the form of action is quite clear, and it is the

truth of the Buddha and ancestors. Generally speaking, if you have still not sufficiently clarified the Buddhadharma, you ought not to preach the Dharma rashly and heedlessly to others.

Nagarjuna, our ancestral teacher, said, “The non-Buddhists say that if you deny the law of cause and effect in this life, then the present life and the future life are destroyed. If you deny that the appearance of all the Buddhas in the world due to their enlightenment results from cause and effect, then you negate the Three Jewels, the four holy truths, and the four fruits of the monk.” You must clearly understand that if you deny cause and effect in the world or in the supramundane realm, you have become a non-Buddhist. Saying, “The present world does not exist,” you believe that while the body appears here in this world, the self abides in a permanent, immutable world. The self is identified with the mind. The mind is explained as something remaining apart from the body. This is the way in which non-Buddhists think about the body.

Or else it is sometimes said that when a person dies, his self returns to the great ocean of essence. Therefore, if one naturally returns to the ocean of essence even though he has not cultivated the Dharma, he no longer transmigrates in the world of birth and death, and therefore, there is no afterworld. This is the annihilationist view of non-Buddhists. Even if in appearance, he looks like a Buddhist monk, the fool who believes such a teaching is not at all a son of the Buddha. He is truly a non-Buddhist. The idea that the present world and the afterworld do not exist because there is no law of cause and effect is incorrect. The denial of cause and effect results from not studying with a real teacher. If you study for a long time with a real teacher, you will not fall into wrong views that deny cause and effect. You should deeply believe in the compassionate teaching of Nagarjuna and humbly accept it.

The great master Hsüan-chüeh was a prominent disciple of Zen Master Ts’ao-ch’i. Earlier, he had studied the *Lotus Sutra* of the T’ien-t’ai sect, and he was a fellow student of the great master Tso-chi Hsuan-lang. As Hsüan-chüeh read the *Nirvana Sutra*, a golden light filled his room. When this happened, Hsüan-chüeh was enlightened in the principle of the Birthless. Thereupon, he continued his efforts, and visited the Zen master Hui-neng on Mount Ts’ao-ch’i to demonstrate his enlightenment to the Sixth Ancestor. Hui-neng approved his satori and transmitted the Dharma to him. Afterward, Hsüan-chüeh composed the *Cheng tao ko*. In it are these lines:

*A liberal emptiness negates cause and effect;*

*Like flourishing grasses and rippling waves, calamities come.*

You should understand that if you deny cause and effect, you will invite calamity. All the old Buddha ancestors clarified the matter of cause and effect. However, Zen monks nowadays who come after them are deluded about cause and effect. In this state of affairs, people who arouse a pure thought of enlightenment and attempt to study the Dharma for the sake of the Dharma should clarify the principle of cause and effect in the same way the old ancestors did. “No cause, no effect” is something said by non-Buddhists.

The Zen master Hung-chih Cheng-chüeh explained Pai-chang’s statement about cause and effect with these verses from his *Ts’ung yung lu*:

*A foot of water becomes a foot of waves;*

*So nothing could be done about the five hundred lives as a fox. Arguing*

*‘is not subject to causation’ or ‘does not ignore it’,*

*As of old, they still fall into a den of complexities and cannot escape. Ha-ha-ha! I wonder if you understand?  
O monks, if you have eliminated false thoughts and are free,  
You will have no difficulty with my mindless “goo-goo, nah-nah”! Sing  
before the spirits and dance with the earth deities  
And you will be able to compose your own tune. Then  
you and I, united, will clap hands joyously, Singing  
“tum-tiddly-um tum-tiddly-um tum.”*

Now Hung-chih's phrase “Arguing ‘is not subject to causation’ or ‘does not ignore it,’ they still fall into a den of complexities,” means nothing less than that not being subject to cause and effect and not ignoring cause and effect are to be considered the same.

At any rate, this principle of cause and effect is still not thoroughly clear. The reason is that even though it is a fact that the old man was freed from the body of the fox, the story did not say that after being freed, he was reborn in the human world, or that he was reborn in the celestial realm, or in the realm of animals, and so on. If after leaving the body of the fox, he had been reborn in one of the fortunate destinations, he would have become a human or a celestial being. If he had been reborn in an evil destination, he would have been reborn in the purgatories, among hungry spirits, as an animal, or as a fighting *asura*. When he was freed from the body of the fox, he had to be reborn someplace. If you say that upon dying a living being returns to the great ocean of essential being, nirvana, or that he returns to the Great Self, that is the incorrect view of non-Buddhists.

The Zen master Chia-shan Yüan-wu explained the situation in the following verses:

*When a fish swims, the water becomes muddied; When  
a bird flies, its feathers fall.  
Just as an object is reflected in a polished mirror,  
Nothing can escape the law of cause and effect.  
Just as not a single thing can be hidden in the vast sky,  
The five hundred lives as a fox came from the great activity of cause and effect. Swift  
lightning may rend the mountains, the winds may make the seas tremble. But just as gold  
refined a hundred times still retains its color,  
The activity of cause and effect is eternal and unchanging.*

In these verses, there is some remnant of the tendency to deny cause and effect, and there is also some remainder of the eternalist view.

The Zen master Ching-shan Ta-hui says,

*The turning phrases “is not subject” and “does not ignore” are identical*

*In the same way a stone head and the earth spirit are the same. The  
freedom from the fox body after five hundred lives  
Was like the pulverizing of a silver mountain.  
Someone hears such a doctrine and claps his hands joyously  
And with shaking belly laughs uproariously—it is Pu-tai.*

People in China in the present time consider these men to be splendid teachers. However, Tahui's opinion is still far from the teaching of Skillful Means, for it falls into the view of naturalness held by non-Buddhists and does not exemplify a deep faith in cause and effect.

All in all, more than thirty priests have composed verses or koans in connection with Pai-chang's fox, but every one of them thought that the words "is not subject to cause and effect" deny the law of cause and effect. What a pity! These men did not clarify the principle of cause and effect, and while they argue "does" or "does not," they fruitlessly waste their lives in the very midst of life. In studying the Dharma, the first thing to do is to clarify the principle of cause and effect. The kind of people who deny it produce extremely bad wrong views and cut off the roots of goodness and end up as people who are hard to help.

The principle of cause and effect is clear, and it is evident everywhere. The person who does evil falls into the purgatories, and the person who cultivates good is freed from all suffering, and this truth never varies by so much as an inch. If this principle were destroyed, the Buddhas would not appear in the world, and Bodhidharma would not have gone to China. Therefore, living beings would not see the Buddha or hear the Dharma. The principle of cause and effect cannot be explained by such people as Confucius and Lao-tzu; only the Buddhas and ancestors have explained it and correctly transmitted it. Zen students during the time of the decline of the Dharma are unhappy and cannot find a real teacher; consequently, they cannot hear the real Dharma. Thus, they cannot come to clearly understand the principle of cause and effect. Moreover, if they deny this principle, then, as a result of their offense, they cannot avoid the calamities, numerous as blades of grass in the fields, that befall them. Even though one commits no other bad karma besides denying cause and effect, the pain that comes from just this one wrong view is extremely great.

Therefore, those who study Zen in the buddhadharma may wish to start by arousing the thought of enlightenment and repaying the kindness of the Buddha and ancestors, but first of all they should clearly understand the principle of cause and effect.

# ZCLA Ceremony of Atonement (Fusatsu): An Outline

Incense/Lavender buds offering by Sangha as purification

for atonement. Officiant does formal entrance.

## GATHA OF ATONEMENT

(Each line is recited first by the Chanter, then repeated by All)

*All karma ever committed by me since of old,  
Due to my beginningless greed, hatred, lust, envy and delusion,  
Born of my actions, speech and thought,  
Now I atone for it all.*

## NAMES OF THE BUDDHA

(“•” symbol indicates that a hit is given on the small kesu signaling a full prostration)

*Chanter: Being one with Past Seven Buddhas*

All: Being one with Past • Seven Buddhas

*Chanter: Being one with Shakyamuni Buddha*

All: Being one with Shakya- • -muni Buddha

*Chanter: Being one with Manjusri Bodhisattva*

All: Being one with Manju- • -sri Bodhisattva

*Chanter: Being one with Samantabhadra Bodhisattva*

All: Being one with Samanta- • -bhadra Bodhisattva

*Chanter: Being one with Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva*

All: Being one with Avalokites- • -vara Bodhisattva

*Chanter: Being one with Maitreya Buddha*

All: Being one with Maitre- • -ya Buddha

*Chanter: Being one with Successive Honored Ones*

All: Being one with Succes- • -sive Honored Ones

## SANGHA RECITES THE PRECEPTS TOGETHER

The Three Pure Precepts.

The Ten Grave Precepts.

## OFFICIANT ASKS IF SANGHA IS READY FOR REFLECTION:

*Having purified ourselves by chanting the Gatha of Atonement, invoking the presence of the Buddhas, and reciting the precepts, we are now ready to reflect upon our own actions. Shall we begin?*

Chanter prompts: “Everyone, please say: Yes, let us begin.”

Everyone: “Yes, let us begin.”

Officiant: “*Let us read the Statement of Repentance.*” (READ 3X)

All: May I always be free  
from the taints of ignorance and delusion.  
I repent for all my thoughts, words, and deeds  
committed in ignorance or under delusion.  
May they be extinguished at once  
and may they never rise again.

May I always be free  
from the taints of arrogance and dishonesty.  
I repent of all my arrogant behavior  
and dishonest dealings in the past.  
May they be extinguished at once  
and may they never rise again.

May I always be free  
from the taints of envy and jealousy.  
I repent of all my thoughts, words, and deeds  
committed in an envious or jealous spirit.  
May they be extinguished at once  
and may they never rise again.

OFFICIANT INVITES SANGHA TO COME FORWARD FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION.  
(Bearing Witness and speaking how we will adjust our conduct)

GUIDED MEDITATION ON FORGIVENESS.  
(Each line is recited first by the Chanter, then repeated by All)

*For all the harm that I have caused others,  
either intentionally or unintentionally,  
I ask forgiveness.*

*For all the harm that I have caused myself,  
either intentionally or unintentionally,  
I forgive myself.*

*For all the harm that others have caused me,  
either intentionally or unintentionally,  
I forgive them.*

THE THREE REFUGES

*Chanter: Being one with the Buddha -*

Everyone: - with all beings. Raise the bodhi mind, • let the supreme way be realized.

*Chanter: Being one with the Dharma -*

Everyone: - with all beings. Penetrate all sutras, • let wisdom be like the ocean.

*Chanter: Being one with the Sangha -*

Everyone: - with all beings. Lead the people, • let harmony pervade everywhere.

#### THE FOUR VOWS

Everyone:

Numberless beings, I vow to serve them.

Inexhaustible delusions, I vow to end them.

Boundless Dharmas, I vow to practice them.

Unsurpassable Buddha Way, I vow to embody it.

#### DEDICATION OF MERIT

*Chanter: May the merits of maintaining the precepts permeate the Dharma world and may our vows to accomplish the Buddha Way be realized together.*

END OF CEREMONY ■

## SECTION 6: JUKAI

### Why Receive Jukai? Points and Questions to Consider

*Here are some points to consider about Jukai. Each person will have their own valid reasons for choosing to receive the precepts:*

- To take Jukai is to reveal or embody the precepts.
- We take these precepts and practice because we are enlightened.
- Vows are a natural outgrowth of our desire to clarify our life. Our own vows help to strengthen our practice and give us an opportunity to actualize our desire.
- To study the precepts is a chance to study the cause and effect of our actions.
- Other?

*Here are some questions for you to think about:*

- Why take Jukai?
- What kind of commitment will this involve?

- What does revealing myself as the Three Treasures mean?
- How should I work with the precepts?
- When will I be ready to take Jukai?
- Is it possible to keep the precepts?
- What does the Zen student-preceptor relationship mean?
- What is my responsibility as a Buddhist?
- How will having Jukai change my practice?

## On Receiving the Precepts by Taizan Maezumi Roshi

From *On Zen Practice: Body, Breath, & Mind*, pp. 67-71

The word “Jukai” literally means to “receive the precepts,” and it is also used for giving the precepts. (In the latter case, the Chinese ideographs are different even though the pronunciation is the same.) That is to say, from the teacher’s side, Jukai means to give the precepts, and from the student’s side, Jukai means to receive them. In Japanese, we speak of giving and receiving the bosatsu kai, the “bodhisattva precepts.”

In the Soto School, the precepts for lay persons, monks or nuns, and priests are fundamentally the same. All receive the sixteen bodhisattva precepts consisting of the Three Treasures, the Three Pure Precepts, and the Ten Grave Precepts. The only difference is that the lay person maintains the precepts as a lay person, the monastic as a monastic, and the priest as a priest. Monastics devote their time fully to accomplishing the Way while lay persons accomplish the Buddha Way in secular life.

The Soto School uses two terms: “shukke tokudo” and “zaike tokudo”. Zaike tokudo refers to the layman’s taking the precepts, and literally means “to stay home” or “to remain in the family home.” Shukke tokudo, the ordination for monastics and priests, means “to go out from home, to cut off relations to the family as such.” At the beginning of this ordination, the head is shaved. This symbolically represents cutting off all attachments.

In the ceremony, we chant the Head-shaving Gatha in which we say that while we are in this world, it is very difficult to extinguish attachments, so we vow to do this as the way to appreciate life. However, since modern Zen priests often marry and may even have a family, people who make this commitment have to maintain and accomplish the Way as much as possible in the midst of this. So, even though, strictly speaking, we are not to be called “monks” or “nuns”—because we are married—we fully dedicate our lives to the Dharma. We are perhaps half lay person, half monastic.

The important thing is to become unattached and make oneself free, to accomplish oneself, and also to be beneficial and helpful to others. Just receiving shukke tokudo does not necessarily mean that one has reached an accomplished state. Being a monastic or priest, one could be much less accomplished than a lay person, and being a lay person, one could accomplish far more than the average monastic or priest. Regardless of lay, monastic, or priest standing, all can accomplish as the Ancestors did. What makes the difference is freedom from attachment.

Shaving the head means casting off attachments, abandoning worldly desires. But truly, cutting off the hair means not only to shave the hair on the outside of the head but rather to shave the hair of the mind, to detach from the three poisons of greed, anger, and ignorance.

Before receiving the precepts, we must make atonement, which is extremely important. To atone, in the sense we use it, is not only to repent of the bad things you have done or are doing, but rather, to make yourself one with the Three Treasures. What this term literally means is to identify yourself with reality through atonement. We chant the Gatha of Atonement:

*All evil karma ever committed by me since of old,*

*On account of my beginningless greed, anger, and ignorance, Born of my body, speech, and thought — Now I atone for it all.*

Actually that itself is the state of Zen. It is said that when you truly atone, you make yourself one with all reality, and right there, the precepts are all maintained. Having made yourself pure and unconditioned by sincerely reciting the Verse of Atonement, you are ready to receive the precepts.

The first group of precepts is being one with the Three Treasures of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. This is the very state of reality itself. Being one with the Three Treasures is identifying yourself with reality. After the Three Treasures come the Pure Precepts: not doing evil, doing good, and doing good for others. In other words, simply being one with reality, life as it is.

With regard to the first Pure Precept, we say “not doing evil”—but it is not only a matter of prohibition, but rather a reminder that one simply cannot live this precept when one loses sight of one’s unity with life as it is. In this sense, evil means being out of harmony or seeing oneself as separate from life as it is.

Each individual has certain roles, and these roles change in accord with environment or circumstances. One person from time to time could be a parent, worker, friend, son or daughter, according to circumstances—namely the different times, places, positions, and degrees of relationship. One’s role, and how one responds in accord with life as it is, are constantly changing. That is what the first Pure Precept means.

The second and third Pure Precepts, doing good and doing good for others, follow from the first. The third Pure Precept, doing good not only for yourself but for others as well, is the fundamental functioning of the Three Treasures, and this, in turn, is reality, the totality of life as it is.

Following the Three Pure Precepts are the Ten Grave Precepts, which define the practical functioning of this reality. The Ten Grave Precepts are specific views of harmonious living.

The first of these is the precept of non-killing. These Ten Precepts could all be reduced to this first precept. If one maintains this precept, the other precepts are maintained as well. Dōgen Zenji comments that non-killing is maintaining the life of the Buddha.

Clearly, in order to survive we have to take some forms of life. We eat fruits and vegetables, fish, and even, from time to time, meat. Life feeds on life in order to maintain life. That’s life as it is, and also, we ultimately offer our own life to other beings. Thus, maintaining this precept is not a matter of killing or of sacrifice as such, but rather of living this Buddha life.

We can look further at what it means to maintain the life of the Buddha. Everything is the Buddha; time itself is the life of the Buddha. Do not kill time; when you are killing time, you are killing the Buddha. Even a scrap of paper, if you carelessly discard it, then you kill the Buddha, too. And the more your awareness increases, you become more careful in maintaining these precepts. By doing so, all things go smoothly simply because there is no friction with life as it is.

The sixteen precepts—the Three Treasures, the Three Pure Precepts, and the Ten Grave Precepts—have been handed down generation after generation to the one who is receiving Jukai.

To receive the precepts means to actually confirm oneself as a member of the Buddha’s family. At the very end of the Precepts ceremony, we quote the verse from the *Bonmokyō Sutra*

*(Brahma Net Sutra)*: “When beings receive the precepts, they enter into the realm of the Buddhas which is the Buddha Treasure, anuttara samyak sambodhi. Truly they are the children of the Buddha.”

Some people wonder about the necessity for a formal ceremony in receiving the precepts. I see it like this: A couple may live together informally for quite some time. But once the relationship has been established, it is quite natural to want to publicly affirm it, to make it not only a private matter but to extend this relationship into its place in society. The formal marriage is thus significant, since it clearly marks the formation of a family, and allows society to recognize a lineage for the children of such a couple. And further, such a public declaration of their union may serve to encourage and strengthen the couple in their life together.

Of course, if the marriage is hasty or ill-founded, then all the ceremonies in the world cannot give it life. But if a truly serious and clear-minded commitment is there, then the act of getting married is a natural expression of the couple’s inner state, and arises from it quite appropriately.

To receive the precepts is, for the follower of the Buddha Way, similarly important, natural, and significant.

When a couple gets married, they wear rings as a symbol of their union. Similarly, when a person receives the precepts, one receives a rakusu, which is the Buddha’s robe. Since you have become a member of the Buddha’s family, you wear the robe of the Buddha. Also, in the Jukai ceremony a person also receives a Buddhist name and the chart showing blood lineage. The blood lineage chart represents the transmission of the teachings from Past Buddhas through Shakyamuni Buddha through generations of teachers to the teacher giving the precepts and the student who receives them.

Receiving the precepts and maintaining them is not easy. Even when we reflect upon ourselves and our practice, we may see that in the very living itself, we are almost constantly violating the precepts. That means constant atonement is necessary. By atoning in each moment, you renew your vows and precepts and your determination to genuinely maintain them. The more you do this, the better.

Certainly, maintaining precepts is impossible. We look at this in two distinct ways. As we live, we defile the precepts, but that does not mean we are breaking the precepts. But what would it mean to break the precepts? If you cannot put your faith in the Three Treasures anymore, then you are breaking the precepts, and in that case, you are no longer Buddhist. But, on the other hand, even though you may have faith in the Three Treasures, yet you may have trouble maintaining the precepts. This is defiling the precepts, though not breaking them. Once they are defiled, wash them off; then they become clear and clean again. That is the functioning of atonement.

## Commitment by Sensei Tetsugen Glassman

Dharma Talk given at ZCLA on October 1, 1977

“Kai” means “precept”: the Sanskrit is “sila.” In a way, precept isn’t quite the right word. The closest that I know of is “aspects”, aspects of our life. But there is also a similarity with the way we use the word precept in a Western sense. “Ju” means “to receive, to receive the precepts.” So in a sense, this precept is the core of what we should understand.

What does this kai mean? When we say it’s the aspects of our life, then it’s saying that we have to know what our life is. To fully understand this kai means to fully understand what Zen is, what our life is. For that reason, the study of the kai is the beginning of our training, and in a way, it is also the end of our training. In the formal sense, it literally means to begin training as a Buddhist. In shiho, or when you’re receiving dharma transmission, you receive the kai again. It’s a little different kind of ceremony called denkai. “Den” is “transmission”, transmission of the precepts. In the ceremony of Jukai, there is a gatha that says that now, receiving these precepts, we are the buddha. Literally, we are the children of the buddhas. That means that we are the buddha itself. Whether we accept it or not, at the moment of that transmission, we are so. So this kai is a big subject.

There are three different ways of looking at these precepts: a Hinayana sense, a Mahayana sense, and a buddhayana or buddha-nature sense. In the Hinayana sense, we view these precepts literally. In the Mahayana sense, we view them in a more relative setting, looking at the time, place, people, and amount involved. In the buddha-nature sense, we look at them from the standpoint of no separation, of the oneness of life. When we receive the precepts and when we say that we will maintain them, it means to maintain them in all three senses — Hinayana, Mahayana, and buddha-nature.

Today I wanted to discuss a little about commitment and the general feeling of Jukai. When I had Jukai, I didn’t know anything about all of these subjects I’m going to talk about. In fact, the only thing I had was this commitment. I had no knowledge. I had never seen a Jukai ceremony. To tell you the truth I had never heard the term. All I did was say to Roshi, “I’d like to be a monk.” I didn’t know there was such a thing as a ceremony. Now we all take that for granted. Definitely, you can have Jukai without knowing any of these things, and, in fact, I’m sure it’s true that all of us have had Jukai in that way. Still I think it pays to talk about it.

Commitment. Definitely that’s the most important part. It is the only thing that has meaning in terms of Jukai. In one of the On Zen Practice books, there is an article about Jukai in which Roshi compares it to a marriage ceremony. That is, people can be living together for a long time and at some point for some reason, there’s this feeling of, “We should get married and have a ceremony.” In a way, Jukai is the same thing. We can be practicing for a long time, and at some point there’s this feeling, “I want a ceremony to mark the occasion that I am practicing this Way.” Along with that desire, there’s a responsibility. It’s important for us to have some knowledge, some thoughts about that responsibility and not take it too lightly.

We have a tendency in our modern generation — every generation is a modern generation by definition — to take a lot of these ceremonies very lightly. Lightly in the sense that we make the commitment, and then as soon as something's not working out quite right, we want to drop it and run from it. We have a wonderful analogy in Buddhism that our life is like our oryoki bowls. When you carry your oryoki bowls, if you're walking up a steep and hazardous path and you're holding your bowls and it gets a little slippery and easy to fall, there's a tendency to just throw those bowls down, and then you can hold on a little better or you can go somewhere else. In the monastery, if you drop your bowls, you're kicked out. That's about the most terrible thing you can do.

The other side of this desire to make a commitment is to realize that we're taking it upon ourselves to make a bond that we should try to make work. We're past the point of saying, "I'm just trying it out." Of course, it doesn't mean that things don't change, but certainly when we make this step, we should have the feeling that, "No matter what goes wrong, I'm going to try to make it work because what's going wrong is myself."

I talked a little about this at the end of sesshin during my shiho. During the study for shiho, one of the important aspects is the identification, the complete identification of student and teacher, which means that although there may be things you don't agree with, there's no place for standing apart and criticizing. The only thing you can do is to work harder because the things you don't agree with are things you don't agree with in yourself. One easy sign of seeing how much you're fully accepting your commitment is to look at how much suffering you are causing in the person you've made your commitment to. It's very easy to rationalize that what you're doing is somehow the right thing to be doing, but if so, then it shouldn't be causing any suffering. Most things we do cause suffering. If you're causing suffering in the person that you've made your commitment to, there's something wrong.

We should also be attentive to when and why we're causing suffering and how we should improve. It's not that when we see suffering, we should figure out how we can fix up those people who are causing suffering. We're the ones who are causing it. The biggest commitment in our Jukai is to the Three Treasures, and the Three Treasures is nothing but ourselves. One of the first things we say is, "Be one with Buddha, be one with Dharma, be one with Sangha." That is us. Be one. We could even start there. Commitment is to be one. If not, right there we cause suffering. In a sense, we should first look at that important vow and see what kind of suffering we're causing.

From the positive side — suffering, perhaps, is positive, too — from the happier side, commitment works two ways. We should realize that when we're having Jukai, when we're taking the precepts from the teacher, he is putting more into it than we are. That is, you may take it lightly, but he doesn't. It's extremely meaningful, and because of that his commitment is extremely strong. There's this feeling of commitment that's led us up to it, and there's an extra determination that results from our standpoint, whether we physically see it or not, and from the teacher's standpoint. And so, having Jukai, our practice has to change.

## Jukai: Receiving the Precepts by Taizan Maezumi Roshi

*The Ten Directions*, Vol. II, No. 2, June 1981, pp.1, 8

Jukai literally means “to receive the kai, receive the precepts.” But in a deeper sense *ju* is a synonym for *kaku*, “to realize.” Buddha himself is called *kakusha*, realized or enlightened person. Kai does not merely mean “precept” as such; kai is a synonym of buddha nature. In other words, Jukai means “to realize the buddha nature.”

Another definition of Jukai I quote when we perform the Jukai ceremony is “to truly realize what transmission means.” In a sense, there is nothing to be transmitted; you have to realize your true self or buddha nature by yourself. The same thing is true of Jukai: to truly receive the precepts is, in itself, to realize your true nature.

At the end of the Jukai, I ask you three times, “Will you maintain them well? Will you maintain them well? Will you really maintain them well?” And you answer, “Yes...yes...yes”. We repeat it three times to make it really certain. At that moment, you are what we call *kai tai*, “the body of the kai”; buddha nature is revealed in you. At the beginning of the ceremony, we repeat the verse of *sange*, “repentance” or “atonement.” But that repentance is not merely to repent something we did wrong as such; it is not such a tiny thing. We explain *sange* in three ways, which correspond to the three fundamental aspects of the Buddha Way: samadhi, precepts, and wisdom. The first we call *shuso sange*, to penetrate deep into the Samadhi and see the buddha, realize who buddha is. The next is called *sanbo sange*, which is closer to the usual understanding of repentance. Whatever we did which was inadequate or wrong, we repent and cleanse ourselves: our body, mouth, and mind. And the third is called *musbo sange*: “musbo” literally means “no-nature,” which is a synonym of true nature, buddha nature. To realize the buddha nature which transcends the dichotomies of good and bad, right and wrong, is repentance.

The first of these corresponds to samadhi: to really penetrate into samadhi and meet the buddha, to see our true nature, is atonement. The second one corresponds to maintaining the precepts in the best way we can. Of course, the question “What are the precepts?” is a big matter in itself. The third, *musbo sange*, is equivalent to wisdom: to reveal the wisdom through which we see the true nature of ourselves that transcends good and bad, right and wrong.

In this sense, we can say that our atonement itself is the Buddha Treasure. Usually, we think that the Buddha was a prince who lived in India 2500 years ago, left his castle and family at the age of twenty-nine, and after six years of hard practice attained enlightenment. Of course, that is Buddha too. But what he realized—the very nature of ourselves which is no-nature, which we call *annutara samyak sambodhi*, the supreme Way, the unsurpassable Way, the very best wisdom—we call the Buddha Treasure of one body. Of the Dharma Treasure of one body, we say it is “pure and genuine, apart from defilements.” The Dharma Treasure is also no-nature; that is why it is genuine. And because of that no-nature, things appear to be as they are, not only ourselves, but all phenomenal existence. Everything is the result of causation, and causation in its very nature is no-nature. This no-nature is buddha nature, supreme wisdom, supreme Way, the supreme enlightened state, which is the Buddha Treasure. As we are, each one of us is distinctly different; that is the Dharma Treasure. Yet all taken together as one is the Buddha

Treasure. And the plain fact that these two are inseparable is called the Sangha Treasure. In other words, each one of us manifests as the Three Treasures. The Three Treasures are nothing but each one of us, the phenomenal world. To realize this is the true meaning of Jukai.

We also have what we call the realized Three Treasures. The historical Buddha Shakyamuni who realized enlightenment is the realized Buddha Treasure. The content of that realization is the realized Dharma Treasure. And those who study the Buddha Way, the Buddha Dharma, as we are doing, are the Sangha Treasure.

To receive the Three Treasures means to identify ourselves with the reality that is our very life. And the fundamental form and functioning of the Three Treasures, of our total existence, are the Three Pure Precepts and the Ten Grave Precepts. In other words, to receive the Pure Precepts and the Grave Precepts means to identify ourselves with the harmonious functioning of all life. When we receive the precepts, we are not given something that exists outside ourselves. In receiving the kai, we reveal our life as the very body, form, and functioning of the enlightened state itself.

Gesshu Zenji, one of the outstanding Soto masters who lived in the seventeenth century, composed poems from time to time, and these poems were compiled into a book by one of his successors. The following poem is found in that collection:

*Receiving the precepts,  
sentient beings are one with Buddhas.  
Buddhas are one with all beings.  
Individuals, just as they are,  
reveal the unity of Buddhas and beings  
without inside or outside.  
It is wholly manifested at this very moment in  
this very place.*

That is to say, at the moment of receiving Jukai, your very nature is revealed as the Three Treasures. That is why, in the Jukai ceremony, we say: “Ki e bukkyo; ki e hokkyo; ki e sokkyo. Being one with the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha has been completed, has been accomplished.” Receiving Jukai, we confirm ourselves as one with the Buddha, as children of the Buddha.

That is what we chant at the end of Jukai ceremony:

*Be one with Buddha.  
Be one with Dharma.  
Be one with Sangha.*

*Be one with Buddha, the incomparably Honored One.  
Be one with Dharma, honorable for its purity.  
Be one with Sangha, honorable for its harmony.*

*The Buddha has been revealed.*  
*The Dharma has been revealed.*  
*The Sangha has been revealed.*

“When all sentient beings receive the Buddhas’ precepts, they enter the realm of the Buddhas.” This means that their position is the same as that of the great enlightened person. “Indeed, they are the children of the Buddhas.” Their position is the same, yet they are as baby buddhas. Sooner or later each of us will grow up, but from the beginning, we are all members of the Buddha family. To receive Jukai is to reveal and affirm this wonderful truth.

Q: Roshi, it sounds as though one must be willing to assume a great deal of responsibility in maintaining the precepts.

Roshi: In a sense, that is what it means to “do good,” the second of the Three Pure Precepts. And “do not commit evil,” the first of those Three Pure Precepts, is equivalent to no self, buddha nature itself. That is why Dōgen Zenji says, “‘Do not commit evil’ is where all buddhas make their original dwelling place.”

Certainly we can say that is our responsibility. But it is even more than a responsibility, it’s the very life of each of us. Whatever we do becomes the right action that goes along with the Dharma, rather than a matter of “we should do this or that.” Of course, I am talking about the very fundamental, intrinsic aspect. Experientially, we have to make all sorts of effort and endeavor.

Q: I was thinking earlier, “How could anyone taking Jukai remember and keep in mind all those points?”

Roshi: In a way, it is almost impossible to maintain these kai. That is why we must constantly atone. I want you to see both sides: to begin with there is nothing to be defiled, nothing to be maintained; yet, because we are constantly creating separation through our body, mouth, mind, there is something to defile and something to maintain. When we lose the awareness that the buddhas and all of us are altogether one, we defile ourselves. And realizing that, we have to rinse ourselves off and keep ourselves as clean as possible.

## Receiving the Precepts (Jukai) by Eihei Dōgen Zenji

From *Zen Master Dōgen: An Introduction with Selected Writings*, pp. 84-87

[Revisor's note: *Jukai*, in this text, refers to the transmission of the precepts as given during "shukke tokudo" (monk's ordination). This is why *kesa*, eating bowls, etc. are discussed.]

It is stated in the *Ch'an-yuan Ch'ing-kuei*: "All the Buddhas in the three stages of time have taught that one realizes enlightenment after having entered the monkhood. The twenty-eight Indian patriarchs and the six Chinese patriarchs who transmitted the buddha-mind seal were all monks. It may be said that it is because monks strictly observe the precepts that they are the paragons of the three worlds. Therefore if you wish to do *zazen* and pursue Buddhism, you should first observe the precepts. How can you expect to become a buddha or patriarch if you do not guard against faults and prevent yourself from doing wrong?"

"The manner in which the precepts are to be received is as follows: first, by way of preparation, the three types of *kasaya* [*kesa*], eating bowls, and a ceremonial seating cloth, all new, should be obtained. If new *kasayas* are unavailable, old ones should be made pure by washing them thoroughly. When mounting the ordination platform to receive the precepts, you should not borrow the sacred *kasayas* and eating bowls of others. Great care should be taken not to violate these regulations, for it is in this way that the dignity of the Buddha is maintained and his precepts are preserved. It is no small matter to come into possession of the same things that the Buddha used; it should not be treated lightly. If you mount the ordination platform and receive the precepts having borrowed the *kasayas* and eating bowls of others, you cannot truly be said to have received the precepts. Without having even once received the precepts, you will become a 'man of no precepts' for your entire life, willfully following scholastic Buddhism and vainly wasting the votive donations of others. Those who have only recently entered the monkhood have not yet had time to memorize the precepts and, without a master to guide them, are apt to become men of no precepts. It is for this reason that I dare to give you the following candid advice, which I hope will be taken to heart. If you have already received the precepts for a Sravaka, you should further receive those for a Bodhisattva. This is the first step to becoming a Buddhist."

The Buddhas and patriarchs of India and China have all stated that receiving the precepts is the first step to entering the Way. Without having received them, one cannot be considered to be a disciple of the various Buddhas or a follower of the patriarchs, for in practicing *zazen* and pursuing Buddhism, it is necessary to guard against faults and prevent oneself from doing wrong. The words "receive the precepts first of all" already truly express the highest supreme Law. People who have become Buddhas and patriarchs have done so through having never failed to receive and observe this highest supreme Law. The Buddhas and patriarchs who correctly transmitted the highest supreme Law have unfailingly received and observed the precepts, for otherwise, it would have been impossible for them to become Buddhas or patriarchs. They received the precepts either directly from the Buddha himself or from one of his disciples. In either case, they have all inherited the essence of the Way.

The precepts that the Buddhas and patriarchs correctly transmitted were passed down in China by Bodhidharma alone through the four patriarchs to Hui-neng. His successors, Hsing-ssū

of Mount Ch'ing-yuan and Huai-jang of Mount Nan-yueh, further correctly transmitted them to the present day. What a pity it is that some careless senior monks are quite ignorant of this fact!

The admonition "Receiving the precepts of a Bodhisattva is the first step to becoming a Buddhist" is something of which all trainees of the Way should be aware. The manner in which the precepts are to be received has been correctly transmitted to those who, by virtue of their long training, have realized the essence of the Buddhas and patriarchs, and not to those who have been negligent in their practice. The manner of receiving the precepts is as follows: the initiate should first burn incense and prostrate himself before the precept-bestowing master, asking his permission to receive the precepts for a Bodhisattva. Next, if permission is granted, he should purify his body by bathing, and then put on a new clean *kasaya* if available, or a newly washed one if not, after having scattered flowers, burned incense, and respectfully prostrated himself to the *kasaya*. By prostrating himself to various Buddhist images, the Three Treasures, and senior monks, it is possible to remove various hindrances and purify one's body and mind. These customs have long been correctly transmitted as the essence of the Buddhas and patriarchs.

Thereafter, in the ceremonial hall of the monastery, the precept-bestowing master and his assistant instruct the initiate first to prostrate himself three times and then, kneeling before them with hands joined in *gassho*, to repeat the following words: "I take refuge in the Buddha; I take refuge in the Law; I take refuge in the Buddhist community. I take refuge in the Buddha, the most venerable of human beings; I take refuge in the Law, venerable because it is free of desire; I take refuge in the Buddhist community, the most venerable community of all. I have taken refuge in the Buddha; I have taken refuge in the Law; I have taken refuge in the Buddhist community." [Repeated three times]

Next, the initiate is instructed to say, "The Tathagata realized true supreme enlightenment and is my great teacher. I have now taken refuge in him. From now on, I will not take refuge in evil spirits or non-Buddhist teachings. Please look with compassion on my humble vows. Please look with compassion on my humble vows." [Repeated three times]

Next, the master says, "Virtuous man! Since you have discarded wrong and taken refuge in good, the Buddhist precepts are already fulfilled. At this time you should receive the Three Pure Precepts.

"The first precept is to do no evil; can you observe the precept from now till you realize buddhahood?" The initiate answers, "Yes, certainly." [Questions and answers are repeated three times.]

"The second is to do good. Can you observe this precept from now until you realize buddhahood?" The initiate answers, "Yes, certainly."

"The third is to confer abundant benefits on all sentient beings. Can you observe this precept from now until you realize buddhahood?" The initiate answers, "Yes, certainly."

"You must not break any of these three precepts. Can you observe this from now until you realize buddhahood?" The initiate answers, "Yes, certainly."

The master then says, "Observe the precepts as you have promised. [Initiate prostrates himself three times and, kneeling, joins his hands in *gassho*.]

"Virtuous man! You have already received the Three Pure Precepts. Next, you must receive the ten grave prohibitions. They are the great precepts of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

“Do not kill. Can you observe this from now until you realize Buddhahood?” The initiate answers “Yes, certainly.” [Questions and answers are repeated three times.]

“Do not steal. Can you observe this from now until you realize Buddhahood?” The initiate answers, “Yes, certainly.”

“Do not engage in sexual relations. Can you observe this from now until you realize Buddhahood?” The initiate answers, “Yes, certainly.”

“Do not lie. Can you observe this from now until you realize Buddhahood?” The initiate answers, “Yes, certainly.”

“Do not deal in intoxicating beverages. Can you observe this from now until you realize Buddhahood?” The initiate answers, “Yes, certainly.”

“Do not speak of the faults of Bodhisattvas, whether they be laymen or monks. Can you observe this from now until you realize Buddhahood?” The initiate answers, “Yes, certainly.”

“Do not be too proud to praise others. Can you observe this from now until you become a Buddha?” The initiate answers, “Yes, certainly.”

“Do not covet either the Law or property. Can you observe this from now until you become a Buddha?” The initiate answers, “Yes, certainly.”

“Do not give way to anger. Can you observe this from now until you realize Buddhahood?” The initiate answers, “Yes, certainly.”

“Do not disparage the Three Treasures. Can you observe this from now until you realize Buddhahood?” The initiate answers, “Yes, certainly.”

“You must not break any of these ten precepts. Can you observe them from now until you realize Buddhahood?” The initiate answers, “Yes, certainly.”

“Observe these precepts as you have promised. [Initiate prostrates himself three times.]

“The foregoing three refuges, the Three Pure Precepts, and the ten grave prohibitions have all been received and observed by the various Buddhas. Can you observe these sixteen precepts from now until you realize Buddhahood?” The initiate answers, “Yes, certainly.” [Repeated three times]

“Observe these precepts as you have promised.” [The initiate prostrates himself three times.]

In conclusion, the master chants the verse that begins: “The world around us is as vast as the sky,” and says, “We take refuge in the Buddha; we take refuge in the Law; we take refuge in the Buddhist community.” [Initiate then leaves the ceremonial hall.]

The Buddha and patriarchs have correctly transmitted the manner in which the precepts are to be received. Both T'ien-jan of Mount Tan-hsia and the initiate-monk Kao of Mount Yao received and observed these sixteen precepts. Indeed, although some patriarchs never received the precepts for a Sravaka, all patriarchs have received and observed these sixteen precepts for a Bodhisattva, which the Buddhas and patriarchs have correctly transmitted. *[Date of writing omitted]* □

# **ZCLA Ceremony of Receiving the Precepts (Jukai)**

## *An Outline*

### **OPENING OF CEREMONY**

1. Preceptor makes a formal entry, offers incense, and makes three full bows to Manjusri Bodhisattva (altar image) with everyone.
2. Recipient(s) enter room following the Guest Master and face the altar. The Guest Master announces:  
With all your heart, with all your love, with all your might, please make three bows to Manjusri Bodhisattva (Buddha).
3. Recipients face family and friends. The Guest Master announces:  
With all your heart, with all your love, with all your might, please make three bows to your parents and family.
4. Recipients face the Preceptor. The Guest Master announces:  
With all your heart, with all your love, with all your might, please make three bows to the Preceptor.
5. Everyone recites the Maka Hannya Haramita Shingyo (either English or Japanese).
6. Guest Master strikes clappers and announces:  
Honored guests, family, and recipients, I respectfully announce to everyone that the Ceremony of Receiving the Precepts for: NAMES OF RECIPIENTS will now begin.  
Strikes clappers again.

### **INVOCATION OF THE THREE TREASURES**

All: Being one with the Buddhas in the Ten Directions  
Being one with the Dharma in the Ten Directions  
Being one with the Sangha in the Ten Directions  
Being one with our principle teacher Shakyamuni Buddha  
Being one with the Great Compassionate Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva  
Being one with the Great Wise Samantabhadra Bodhisattva  
Being one with the Great Holy Manjusri Bodhisattva  
Being one with Dōgen Zenji Honored One  
Being one with Keizan Zenji Honored One  
Being one with the successive great teachers in our Bodhisattva lineage.

### **MERIT OF THE CEREMONY**

Being one with the Three Treasures, the Buddha Tathagata, all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, and all the teachers, may this ceremony be witnessed and blessed for NAMES OF RECIPIENTS [and the Renewing of the Precepts for ].

### **PREPARING THE BUDDHA**

Recipients receive rakusu, kechimyaku, and Dharma name from Preceptor.

Recipients say:

Bodhisattvas, please intensely concentrate and wholeheartedly reflect. I, (use your Dharma name), now receive this five-striped robe and vow to maintain it.

### **VERSE OF THE KESA**

All (repeated 3 times):

Vast is the robe of liberation,  
A formless field of benefaction.  
I wear the Tathagata teachings,  
Serving all sentient beings.

### **GATHA OF ATONEMENT**

All (repeated 3 times):

All karma ever committed by me since of old,  
Due to my beginningless greed, hatred, lust, envy and delusion,  
Born of my actions, speech and thought,  
Now I atone for it all.

### **WATER WISDOM OF THE LINEAGE**

Preceptor gives recipients the water wisdom of the lineage.

### **RECEIVING THE PRECEPTS**

#### **THE THREE TREASURES**

(Each line chanted first by the Preceptor, then repeated by all recipients)

Preceptor: Be one with Buddha

Recipient: Being one with Buddha

Preceptor: Be one with Dharma

Recipient: Being one with Dharma

Preceptor: Be one with Sangha

Recipient: Being one with Sangha

Preceptor: Be one with Buddha, the incomparably Honored One

Recipient: Being one with Buddha, the incomparably Honored One

Preceptor: Be one with Dharma, honorable for its purity

Recipient: Being one with Dharma, honorable for its purity

Preceptor: Be one with Sangha, honorable for its harmony

Recipient: Being one with Sangha, honorable for its harmony

Preceptor: The Buddha has been revealed.

Recipient: The Buddha has been revealed.

Preceptor: The Dharma has been revealed.

Recipient: The Dharma has been revealed.

Preceptor: The Sangha has been revealed.  
Recipient: The Sangha has been revealed.

### **THE THREE PURE PRECEPTS**

Preceptor:

First: Do no evil. Will you vow to live in not-knowing as the source of all manifestations and to realize no-self? (Recipients reply, "I will".)

Second: Do good. Will you vow to bear witness to the joys and pains of all life, clearly seeing what is, without attachment or judgement? (Recipients reply, "I will".)

Third: Do good for others. Will you vow to help others awaken to their True Nature? Will you vow to commit your energy and love to the healing of yourself, the earth, humanity, and all beings? (Recipients reply, "I will".)

### **THE TEN GRAVE PRECEPTS**

Preceptor:

First: The precept of Non-killing.

Will you vow to recognize that you are not separate from all that is? Will you refrain from leading a harmful life, and from encouraging others to do so? Will you live in harmony with all life and the environment that sustains it? Will you maintain this? (Recipients reply, "I will".)

Second: The precept of Non-stealing. Will you vow to be satisfied with what you have? Will you abstain from taking anything not given, and freely give, ask for, and accept what is needed? Will you maintain this? (Recipients reply, "I will".)

Third: The precept of Not Being Greedy. Will you vow to encounter all creations with respect and dignity? Will you refrain from unchastity, and give and accept love and friendship without clinging? Will you maintain this? (Recipients reply, "I will".)

Fourth: The precept of Non-lying. Will you vow to speak the truth and deceive no one? Will you listen and speak from the heart, and see and act in accordance with what is? Will you maintain this? (Recipients reply, "I will".)

Fifth: The precept of Not Being Ignorant. Will you vow to cultivate a mind that sees clearly? Will you abstain from intoxicants that delude the mind, from encouraging others to be deluded, and embrace all experience directly? Will you maintain this? (Recipients reply, "I will".)

Sixth: The precept of Not Talking about Others' Errors and Faults. Will you vow to unconditionally accept what each moment has to offer? Will you refrain from blaming or criticizing others, and acknowledge responsibility for everything in your life? Will you maintain this? (Recipients reply, "I will".)

Seventh: The precept of Not Elevating Myself and Blaming Others. Will you vow to speak what you perceive to be the truth without guilt or blame? Will you give your best effort and accept the results? Will you maintain this? (Recipients reply, "I will".)

Eighth: The precept of Not Being Stingy. Will you vow to use all of the ingredients of your life? Will you refrain from fostering a mind of poverty in yourself and others? Will you maintain this? (Recipients reply, "I will".)

Ninth: The precept of Not Being Angry. Will you vow to transform suffering into wisdom? Will you refrain from harboring resentment, rage, or revenge, and roll all negative experience into your practice? Will you maintain this? (Recipients reply, "I will".)

Tenth: The precept of Not Speaking Ill of the Three Treasures. Will you vow to honor your life as an instrument of peacemaking? Will you recognize yourself and others as manifestations of the Oneness of Buddha, the Diversity of Dharma, and the Harmony of Sangha? Will you maintain this? (Recipients reply, "I will".)

### **GATHA ON RECEIVING THE PRECEPTS**

Preceptor chants (3x):

When sentient beings receive the precepts,  
They enter the realm of the Buddhas  
Which is the Buddha Treasure, Anuttara Samyak Sambodhi.  
Truly, they are the children of the Buddha.

### **CEREMONY OF RECOGNITION**

Preceptor and all who have received jukai:

Buddha recognizes Buddha and Buddha bows to Buddha.

Guest Master:

I respectfully announce to everyone that the Precepts Ceremony for NAME(S) OF RECIPIENTS WITH THEIR DHARMA NAMES [and the Renewing of the Precepts for [\_\_\_\_\_]] is now concluded.

### **JAHAI [Bows of Appreciation]**

CONCLUSION Four Great Vows (3x)

All: Numberless beings, I vow to serve them.  
Inexhaustible delusions, I vow to end them.  
Boundless Dharmas, I vow to practice them.  
Unsurpassable Buddha Way, I vow to embody it.

## SECTION 7: READING LIST FOR PRECEPTS AND LINEAGE

You may find the following books helpful when studying the precepts (not in any order):

### **Precepts:**

1. *Infinite Circle: Teachings in Zen*, by Bernie Glassman. Shambhala, 2002, pp. 109-136.
2. *The Heart of Being: Moral and Ethical Teachings of Zen Buddhism*, by John Daido Looi. Tuttle, 1996.
3. *The Mind of Clover; Essays in Zen Buddhist Ethics*, by Robert Aitken. North Point Press, 1984.
4. *Good Life, A Zen Precepts Retreat with Cheri Huber*, edited by Sara Jenkins. Present Perfect Books, 1997.
5. *Waking Up to What You Do: A Zen Practice for Meeting Every Situation with Intelligence and Compassion*, by Diane Eshin Rizzetto. Shambhala Publishing, 2006.
6. *For a Future to be Possible: Commentaries on the Five Wonderful Precepts*, by Thich Nhat Hanh (and other Buddhist teachers). Parallax Press, 1993.
7. *The Path of Compassion: The Bodhisattva Precepts [The Chinese Brahma's Net Sutra]*, introduced and translated by Martine Batchelor. International Sacred Literature Trust, 2004.
8. *The Ten Pillars of Buddhism*, by Sangharakshita. Windhorse Publications, 1984.
9. *Being Upright: Zen Meditation and the Bodhisattva Precepts*, by Reb Anderson. Rodmell Press, 2001.
10. *Ordinary Life, Wondrous Life: Talks on the Ten Bodhisattva Precepts*, by Elihu Genmyo Smith, Prairie Zen Center, 2002.
11. *Taking Our Places: The Buddhist Path to Truly Growing Up*, by Norman Fischer. Harper San Francisco, 2003, pp. 141-184.
12. *Being Good: Buddhist Ethics for Everyday Life*, by Master Hsing Yun, translated by Tom Graham. Weatherhill, 2002.
13. *Ethics for the New Millennium*, by his Holiness the Dalai Lama. Riverhead Books/Penguin Putnam, 1999.
14. *Wholehearted: Slow Down, Help Out, Wake Up*, by Koshin Paley Ellison. Wisdom Publications, 2019.

## Lineage:

1. *Appreciate Your Life: The Essence of Zen*, by Taizan Maezumi. Shambhala Publications, 2001.
2. *The Record of Transmitting the Light: Zen Master Keizan's Denkoroku*. Translated by Francis H. Cook. Center Publications, 1991.
3. *Living Buddha Zen*, by Lex Hixon. Larson Publications, 1995. (Lex Jikai Hixon is a posthumous successor of Roshi Glassman. This book was written during their study of the *Denkoroku*. It is not a translation, but a “transcreation.”)
4. *Nine-Headed Dragon River: Zen Journals 1969-1982*, by Peter Matthiessen. Shambhala, 1986. (Roshi Peter Muryo Matthiessen is a successor of Roshi Glassman. This is a record of their trip to Japan, visiting places associated with the White Plum lineage.)
5. *The First Buddhist Women: Translations and Commentaries on the Therigatha*, translated by Susan Murcott. Parallax Press, 1991.
6. *Songs of the Sons and Daughters of Buddha*. Translated by Andrew Schelling and Anne Waldman. Shambhala Publications, 1996.
7. *Zen's Chinese Heritage: The Masters and their Teachings*, by Andy Ferguson. Wisdom Publications, 2000.
8. *ZCLA Journals* and *The Ten Directions*, for ZCLA history (in ZCLA Library).

Please let us know of additional titles. Thank you. ■

## **Additional Biographical Information**

Dr. Ryushin Azuma Roshi – abbot of Daijo-ji Temple and Monastery in Kanazawa, Japan and former head of Kmoazawa Women’s University.

Daiun Sogaku Harada Roshi (1871-1961) Dharma heir of the Soto master Harada Sodo Kakusho and a Dharma heir of the Rinzai master Dokutan Sosan. Was the teacher of Hakuun Yasutani Roshi.

Roshi Bernie Tetsugen Glassman – see [www.peacemakercircle.org](http://www.peacemakercircle.org)

Roshi Gerry Shishin Wick – see [www.gmze.org](http://www.gmze.org).

Roshi Jan Chozen Bays – see [www.greatvow.org](http://www.greatvow.org)

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ZCLA Journal, Summer-Fall, 1973; Winter, 1973. ZCLA, Los Angeles (in ZCLA Library)