

ZAZEN WASAN
THE SONG OF ZAZEN

By Hakuin Ekaku Zenji

Sentient beings are primarily all Buddhas.
It is like ice and water:
Apart from water, no ice can exist;
Outside sentient beings,
Where do we find the Buddhas?

Not knowing how near the Truth is,
We seek it far away--what a pity!
We are like one who, in the midst of water,
Cries in thirst so imploringly.
We are like a child of a wealthy home
Who wandered away among the poor.

The reason why we transmigrate
Through the six worlds is that we are lost
In the darkness of ignorance.
Going astray further and further in the
 darkness,
When are we able to be free from birth and
 death?

As for Zazen practice in the Mahayana,
We have no words to praise it fully.
The virtues of perfection, such as charity,
 morality,
And the invocation of the Buddha's name,
Confession, and ascetic discipline,
And many other good deeds of merit—
All these return into THIS!
Even those who have practiced it
For just one sitting
Will see all their harmful karma erased;
Nowhere will they find deluded paths;
The Pure Land will be near at hand.

With a reverential heart,
If we listen to this truth even once,
And praise it, and gladly embrace it,
We will surely be blessed most infinitely.
But if we concentrate within,
And testify to the truth that
Self-nature is no-nature,
We have really gone beyond foolish talk.

The gate of the oneness
Of cause and effect is open;
The path of non-duality runs straight
 ahead.

To regard the form of no-form as form,
Whether going or returning,
We cannot be any place else.
To regard the thought of no-thought as
 thought,
Whether singing or dancing,
We are the voice of the Dharma.

How boundless the cleared sky of
 Samadhi!
How transparent the perfect moonlight
Of the Fourfold Wisdom.

At this moment, what more need we seek?
As the truth eternally reveals itself,
This very place is the Lotus Land of Purity,
This very body is the Body of the Buddha.