

ZEN NOTES



HAPPY 85th BIRTHDAY TO VANESSA COWARD shown here embarking on a cruise with Mary Farkas earlier this year to celebrate their successful completion of dog cycles, in the case of Vanessa, seven, of Mary, six. Many happy returns!

THE TEACHINGS OF THE GREAT SIXTH PATRIARCH
Chapter IV,1

Editor's Note: For the convenience of the reader, we have adopted the word "wisdom" to stand for *jnana* in this chapter. Sokei-an in one place used for its interpretation "awareness of intrinsic wisdom." We like this for the meaning but prefer to abbreviate it to "wisdom." Samadhi needs no translation and appears as an English word in our dictionary.

TEXT

Worthy scholars, my Dharma is based upon samadhi and wisdom. You who hear me, do not say in delusion that samadhi and wisdom are different. They are one in entity and are not two different entities. Samadhi is the body (the substantial part) of wisdom, and wisdom is the ability of samadhi. Wisdom appears in samadhi. If you know this reason, those who are learning of samadhi and wisdom and so on do not say that samadhi precedes wisdom and that wisdom appears subsequently; or that wisdom precedes samadhi which follows later in time. If anyone has this view, in his Dharma there are two sets of conceptions (or categories). Though his speech is good, his mind (conception) is not good. His samadhi and wisdom hang in the air, and they cannot be the same entity. If his speech and mind are good, his inside and outside are one and his samadhi and wisdom will be alike.

COMMENTARY SOKEI-AN SAYS

This is a famous chapter in the Record of the Sixth Patriarch. He is speaking about his foundation of Zen. This is the most simplified and direct speech about Zen. You cannot find such a view of meditation anywhere throughout the scriptures of Buddhism.

I think that the Sixth Patriarch never dreamed that his record and this chapter especially, would be explained to Westerners in New York.

Reading this chapter, I feel that I am in a valley between huge mountains and that the ancient, simple-minded woodcutters, fishermen, monks and nuns who are living in the mountains have come to the place where they always make their gatherings; that I am one of them, now reading this chapter. From my own standpoint as a Zen monk, I seldom meet human beings; few come to see me. Perhaps my pupils, living in this mountain, are waterfalls, shadows, rainbows, or twigs. There are lions and tigers and winds howling around. We are now making a gathering to read this scripture and enrich our souls.

I translate the Sanskrit *samadhi* into English as "tranquil meditation." Or you could call it "absorption into Reality." Habitually you think of this and that with names and forms. This mind-activity is quite natural, but it is a nuisance. When your brain has nothing to do, it takes a vacation and makes this mind-stuff which has little to do with the real life you are confronting; it is very, very annoying.

When I was in Manchuria, in a truck which might be blown up at any time and at the next moment I might be dead, there was not much time to think! But there was still this mind-stuff. In tranquil meditation, we annihilate this mind-stuff, not by force, but by practice.

I was eighteen years old when I first introspected my mind and realized for the first time that my mind was always flowing. It was like looking into a dirty pond. I realized that something was moving inside but I couldn't see the bottom.

I am quite sure that many people, mature people--forty, fifty years old--have never introspected their minds, have never known what is going on there.

When I was very young, I made an attempt to keep a record of my mind activity from morning to evening, seeking to find out what I was thinking. I wrote ten pages a day. After a time, I gave up. There was too much. Of course my mother found out and laughed at me. At the age

of twenty, when I came to Zen, I realized the value of introspection. In tranquil meditation, you can see, you can observe all the activity of mind from the surface to the bottom. Naturally, the activities of mind that are useless will cease to exist. You have to practice this until your mind becomes clear as crystal; one hour, two hours--and you become independent of that mind activity; mind activity does not bother you at all. You can objectify that activity as if it were the mind activity of someone else. Finally it comes to an end. In that moment you realize that you are absorbed in great consciousness. This is samadhi.

In the regular rule of the Zen school, the Zen master will give a koan to the student who has experienced this samadhi. With the first koan, "Before father and mother, what is your original aspect?" the student comes into absorption and then into real existence. This is not mind-stuff or philosophy in the top of the head. So it is wrong to give a koan to one who has no experience of samadhi. Though you pass the 1700 koans, if you have no experience of samadhi, your experience is not very deep. So you must practice samadhi.

When I was young, I used to practice samadhi before I went to bed or in the early morning, sitting on the edge of my bed. Crossing my legs, I would practice for fifteen minutes to a half hour every morning, every evening too. This is necessary for a Zen student. In that meditation, you forget the agony of the struggle of life; you lose that horrible, insecure feeling; you are like the honest Christian who depends upon God and is not afraid of what will happen to him in the next moment. A real Zen student will find tranquillity of mind in samadhi. He relies on something very deep and infinite. He has realized that life is just an air bubble that may vanish in a moment; he is not disturbed and he does not have regrets. Why should he be afraid of this and that? We say he has a strong abdomen (guts) --but it is not only guts, it is faith.

Wisdom (*jnana* in Sanskrit, *E* in Japanese) is awareness of intrinsic wisdom. In the Sixth Patriarch's Zen, he places emphasis on wisdom; it is the flash that comes across your mind to recognize the situation--a phase of your mind.

Samadhi is like entire darkness and wisdom is like a light that elucidates the darkness.

In Zen, before the Sixth Patriarch, there were two schools of Zen--the Northern and the Southern. The Northern school did not place their emphasis on wisdom. Their type of meditation was endless absorption in samadhi, with no activity. To them, the practice of meditation was Buddhism.

But the Sixth Patriarch placed his emphasis on this awareness, wisdom.

Without this awareness, though you practice meditation for seven years, there is no enlightenment. This wisdom is enlightenment. When you realize it, you see. It is like an electric light discovering that it itself is shining. When you take *sanzen* and toil on a koan: "Before father and mother," in deep concentration, your cognition will recognize: "Oh, that was it!" In that moment, you are enlightened. This is called wisdom, the awareness that is intrinsic. This awareness discovers itself. So, without wisdom, there is no Buddhism.

The Sixth Patriarch called his school "The teaching of sudden enlightenment." When you become aware of your intrinsic wisdom, in that moment you are enlightened. In Koan study, when you come to the Sixth Patriarch's answer to the disputing monks: "It is not the wind nor the banner that is moving; your soul is moving," you will realize samadhi--that great tranquillity. That koan particularly will bring you into the tranquillity of the *alaya* consciousness. Then there is such a koan as Joshu's pink infant koan: "Has the pink infant six consciousnesses or not?" "Pink infant" means a baby just arrived in the world; he cannot hear, smell, taste--he has no consciousness of his surroundings. You cannot say he hasn't six consciousnesses, for they are latent, but you

cannot say that he has them because there is no scale. When you realize this koan in your mind--in that moment you attain this awareness of intrinsic wisdom. I cannot explain this in words, but in your koan practice you find it yourself.

There are many koans that point to this awareness of intrinsic wisdom, and there are many that point to samadhi. Another that points to wisdom is: " Buddha's samyaksambodhi came from this sutra. What is this sutra?"

"Worthy scholars, my Dharma is based upon samadhi and wisdom. You who hear me, do not say in delusion that samadhi and wisdom are different. They are one as entity and are not two different entities." Now we do not need to explain anything. If we have the experience of samadhi, wisdom is there; and if we have the experience of wisdom, samadhi is there. Each is within the other. Take the diagram of a cube. The top is wisdom, and the base is samadhi. In real practice we cannot separate these two: base and top are one.

There are four periods of Zen study. In the beginning you realize samadhi. Second, you realize wisdom. Third, you realize emptiness and Fourth, you affirm everything and there is nothing in the world that you can deny. You will affirm from God to the bed-bug. But before you come to this conclusion, the three first stages must be passed.

"Samadhi is the body (the substantial part) of wisdom and wisdom is the ability of samadhi. Samadhi appears in wisdom and, from the angle of samadhi, wisdom appears in itself." From the angle of each, the other appears. To say that fire is the body of light is the same thing, and light is the ability of fire. This is not very easy. It sounds simple, but we have to practice it for a long time. I went through all the koans and my teacher gave me final acknowledgment. Then I came to America and was living in downtown New York. During these years I was living in nothingness--emptiness. One day I stumbled on a question, "If everything is emptiness, why does

consciousness exist?" A simple question but very deep. Where does this awareness come from? In nothingness, awareness and nothingness were two different existences--separate to me--and I couldn't make them one. I looked up at the ceiling and this wisdom was like a needle eye, and from the hole in the ceiling, I saw endless vistas, the whole universe. I laughed to myself. This is what the Sixth Patriarch meant when he said that samadhi and wisdom are one. From that day, I really grasped the Sixth Patriarch's mind. But it was not so easy.

"If you know this reason, those who are learning of samadhi and wisdom and so on, do not say that samadhi precedes and that wisdom appears subsequently; or that wisdom precedes samadhi which follows later in time." Yet, in my experience, samadhi came first, emptiness second, and wisdom third. Again I entered emptiness, after which samadhi and wisdom became one. There is not one way only, but many different ways according to the person, and by that there is some difference in time. Now, I should say that samadhi and wisdom came at the same time.

All the 1700 koans can be reduced to samadhi and wisdom. The wisdom realization is the conclusion of Zen.

"Anyone who has this view--in this Dharma there are two sets of conceptions; though his speech is good, his mind (conception) is not good. His samadhi and wisdom hang in the air and they cannot be the same entity." Because his samadhi and wisdom are just knowledge; just information in his brain. So, borne in the air of experience, they hang there as a picture hangs on the wall.

"If his speech and mind are good, his inside and outside are one and his samadhi and wisdom will be alike." This is the first part of the Sixth Patriarch's discourse on samadhi and wisdom. It will take more time, so I shall translate it line by line. Do not swallow this as an easy-looking task. This is the real principle of Zen. You will realize it in your later Zen study.

Wisdom is not your own. It is the activity of the universe. And samadhi is the endless samadhi of the universe. Your own little ego will be forgotten. When you realize that samadhi and wisdom are not different, you will become a great sentient being. We call such beings "Bodhisattvas."

These lectures are very important. I am sorry that those who are absent are not hearing what I say only once in a lifetime. This lecture tonight, if you miss it, you may never hear again in so complete an expression. So you should not miss my lectures--not for my sake, but for your own. Please do not make excuses. I spend all day translating this to speak about, forty-five minutes before a few people because you cannot depend upon a poor translation. All must ask: "What is samadhi? What is wisdom?" for they know nothing about it. Perhaps it is absurd, in this age, to translate such a sutra, but I hope you will remember my words and try to attain the foundation of life, to realize my teaching, and to get this profound wisdom.

NOTED in the RUNNING RECORD for the evening this talk was given October 7, 1936.

Collection: \$3.55.

Present: Bartlett, Fowler, Kenton, Kepner, Knowles, Koons, Mandal, Spooner, Stern F, (Platov) H, Townsend. Collated from the notes of Fowler, Kenton, Bartlett, and Koons.

THE RECORD OF BANKEI

Translated by Peter Haskel

A layman asked: "If you become a buddha, where do you go?"

The Master replied: "If you become a buddha, there's no place at all for you to go. You fill the vast universe to its very limits. It's when you become any other sort of being that you have different places to go."

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THE LONDON VIHARA REVISITED

(Buddha-day with the
Sri Lanka Bhikkhus)

By Robert Schwarz
Florida Atlantic University

Three years ago I visited the Buddhist Vihara in West London, where I repeated the basic precepts of the Theravada devotees. I described this experience in a short article published last year in Zen Notes. At the end of the article I mentioned that I hoped to repeat the next set of precepts under the guidance of the Venerable Piyatissa.

This spring of 1983, three years later (almost to the day), I paid my second visit to the Vihara. Two things struck me right away: the first disappointing, the Venerable Piyatissa being in New York rather than in London, the second exhilarating, for my arrival coincided with the celebration of Buddha-Day.

The Venerable Piyaratana took me under his wings and administered the next five precepts on the ladder of acceptance into the Buddhist community. He was at first reluctant to do so, since we had never met before and he had to take my word for it that in May of

1980, the Venerable Piyatissa had "partly ordained" me. There was, however, another reason for his reluctance. The place was crowded with lay Buddhists from all parts of London, men, women and children, most of whom were Ceylonese, with a scattering of English people, all celebrating Buddha-Day, whereby the Buddha's birth, Enlightenment, and Parinirvana were all combined into one occasion. It occurred to me afterwards that poor Piyaratana badly wanted to participate in the celebration, and that my visit and request kept him from doing so. However, his English being poor, we did not communicate with ease, and I did not understand at the time that I prevented him from joining the other monks downstairs.

But so great is the Buddhist sense of karuna that he forwent the celebration, probably the most important day in the Buddhist calendar, in order to attend to one single candidate for acceptance into the Buddhist community. Had I understood the sacrifice he was making, I would gladly have come back another time. When, later, on my way home on the "underground," I realized the man's sacri-

fice, I was deeply moved.

However, neither Piya-ratana nor I were condemned to miss the entire celebration. We both took part in its last phase: a speech by the head monk, Dr. H. Saddhatissa, six saffron-robed monks at either side of the abbot, a beautiful Sutra reading by a British woman (in a very fine English rendition), a question and answer sort of "Dharma Catechism," as it were, by six beautiful children, all dressed in white, and the inevitable tea at four thirty. (Even Asian Buddhists have adopted this fine English practice.)

After these activities, I went to the Shrine Room, where three years earlier I had made my first vows, a room which now, in honor of the holiday, was full of gorgeous flowers, candles, elephant tusks, incense, and people sitting on meditation mats, overlooked by a particularly handsome Buddha statue.

When I left this wonderful center of the British Mahabodhi Society (originally founded in 1926 and reorganized in 1966) in London's Chiswick district, I was amazed at the synchronicity of my visit and second initiation on the holiest day of the Society's calendar.

JOSHU SASAKI ROSHI SAYS ON OLD LADIES

No matter what books you read, you will find that old ladies are the worst people in Zen. What I'm saying here is not that old ladies are bad, it's just that whenever a Zen master runs into an old lady, as in Rinzai Roku No. 18, he has a big problem.... There's never been a story about a priest having a fight with a young, beautiful woman...

Old ladies are women who have been retired as women, and so they are strong. They are no longer women, and this is why they are strong... when you are not a woman any longer, you become a bodhisattva...

But these old ladies who are no longer women are not men either.

So even though you might have been sitting for five or six years, you must understand that if you too were to meet this kind of old lady it would be quite an experience.

NOTED by John Storm

St. Francis de Sales praises "a heart without choice, equally ready for all things." He also recommends: "Seek nothing, refuse nothing."

JOSHU SASAKI ROSHI SAYS
The Four Dhyana Heavens
Noted by M.Farkas 4/5/80

The Ancient Abhidharma texts of Buddhism speak of various "heavens" in a lot of detail that can become quite tedious. From the Zen point of view it's really rather simple. When we speak of the four dhyana heavens, the first is the world or realm where subject and object are one. Then there's the world where subject and object are separate--that makes two worlds, right? But the first world of oneness of subject and object has two aspects; one is the aspect of being, expansion, experiencing the absolute through the positive; the other is experiencing the absolute state through the negative. To say it more simply, when mother and father embrace, there is the world of one body, one thing. But there are two ways this can come about: either the mother can take the lead and embrace the father, or the father can take the lead and embrace the mother. In the world of separateness, there are also two ways that this can come about, one by fath-

er taking the lead and separating first, and one by mother separating first. These four "heavens" are spoken of in great detail in the Abhidharma texts (which describe ancient thinking about the experience of Buddhism) but when we Zen monks speak of the four dhyana heavens, this is what we are talking about.

All the theories you read or hear about in Theravada or Tantric Buddhism, from the Zen perspective are just useless theories. Every day you, with this very body, are manifesting the four dhyana heavens. Every day with this very body you are experiencing the oneness of subject and object through positive and negative activity. In doing this, where are you? When you eat your rice, where are you dwelling? When you separate from your lover, where do you live? When you are running, what is your dwelling place? When you are using the shower, what's your house like? Every day you're manifesting the four dhyana heavens. Where do you go when you are doing this?

I FREUD AND BUDDHA:TWO
PHYSICIANS OF THE MIND

By H.Pashenz,PH.D.

Freud was a European physician whose goal was the elimination of neurotic suffering. He was aware of how the mind could influence the body and cause psychosomatic illnesses as well as neurotic and psychotic manifestations. He originated a psychotherapeutic treatment based upon understanding the functioning of the mind on both the conscious and unconscious levels. Through the process of psychoanalysis the unconscious becomes conscious and capable of being controlled.

Buddha was considered a physician of the soul whose goal was to eliminate all human suffering. His Four Noble Truths were presented as a physician of his day would treat an illness. The First Truth examined the "complaint problem" (suffering). The Second Truth then dealt with the oetiology of the problem (desire). The third Noble Truth pointed to the necessary ameliorative treatment (giving up desire) while the Fourth Noble Truth outlines the specific details of the "treatment plan"(eightfold path).

The first step of the eightfold path is Right Understanding which requires the development of insight into the nature of the self and its origin.

Both physicians accept the premise that man is unconscious of most of the dynamic forces underlying conscious thought and behavior. They both utilize specific treatment modalities whose goal is the development of a deeper and broader understanding of the mind. Freud outlined the method of psychoanalysis whereas Buddhism makes use of various forms of meditation.

DR. PASHENZ, a clinical psychologist, since 1954, works in prisons, hospitals, clinics, schools, and has a private practice. His PH.D. is from NYU. His psychoanalytic training was completed at the Institute for Advanced Studies, Adelphi College, where he is now a training analyst. He studied Zen through Aikido for the past 20 years and has a 3rd degree black belt. His formal Zen training has been under Joshu Sasaki Roshi for the last ten years.

gannotas

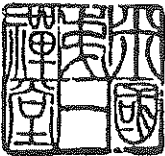
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