

Some Zen

DOGEN (Japan, 1200-1253)

http://www.thezensite.com/ZenTeachings/Dogen_Teachings/GenjoKoan_Aitken.htm

"Actualizing the Fundamental Point" (Genjo koan)

As all things are buddha-dharma, there is delusion and realization, practice, birth and death, and there are buddhas and sentient beings.

As the myriad things are without an abiding self, there is no delusion, no realization, no buddha, no sentient being, no birth and death.

The buddha way is, basically, leaping clear of the many, of the one; thus, there are birth and death, delusion and realization, sentient beings and buddhas.

Yet in attachment blossoms fall, and in aversion weeds spread.

To carry yourself forward and experience myriad things is delusion. That myriad things come forth and experience themselves is awakening.

Those who have great realization of delusion are buddhas; those who are greatly deluded about realization are sentient beings. Further, there are those who continue realizing beyond realization, who are in delusion throughout delusion.

When buddhas are truly buddhas they do not necessarily notice that they are buddhas. However, they are actualized buddhas, who go on actualizing buddhas.

When you see forms or hear sounds fully engaging body-and-mind, you grasp things directly. Unlike things and their reflections in the mirror, and unlike the moon and its reflection in the water, when one side is illumined the other side is dark.

To study the buddha way is to study the self. To study the self is to forget the self. To forget the self is to be actualized by myriad things. When actualized by myriad things, your body and mind as well as the bodies and minds of others drop away. No trace of realization remains, and this no-trace continues endlessly.

When you first seek dharma, you imagine you are far away from its environs. But dharma is already correctly transmitted; you are immediately your original self. When you ride in a boat and watch the shore, you might assume that the shore is moving. But when you keep your eyes closely on the boat, you can see that the boat moves. Similarly, if you examine myriad things with a confused body and mind you might suppose that your mind and nature are permanent. When you practice intimately and return to where you are, it will be clear that nothing at all has unchanging self.

Firewood becomes ash, and it does not become firewood again. Yet, do not suppose that the ash is future and the firewood past. You should understand that firewood abides in the phenomenal expression of firewood, which fully includes past and future and is independent of past and future. Ash abides in the phenomenal expression of ash, which fully includes future and past. Just as firewood does not become firewood again after it is ash, you do not return to birth after death.

This being so, it is an established way in buddha-dharma to deny that birth turns into death. Accordingly, birth is understood as no-birth. It is an unshakable teaching in Buddha's discourse that death does not turn into birth. Accordingly, death is understood as no-death.

Birth is an expression complete this moment. Death is an expression complete this moment. They are like winter and spring. You do not call winter the beginning of spring, nor summer the end of spring.

Enlightenment is like the moon reflected on the water. The moon does not get wet, nor is the water broken. Although its light is wide and great, the moon is reflected even in a puddle an inch wide. The whole moon and the entire sky are reflected in dewdrops on the grass, or even in one drop of water.

Enlightenment does not divide you, just as the moon does not break the water. You cannot hinder enlightenment, just as a drop of water does not hinder the moon in the sky.

The depth of the drop is the height of the moon. Each reflection, however long or short its duration, manifests the vastness of the dewdrop, and realizes the limitlessness of the moonlight in the sky.

When dharma does not fill your whole body and mind, you think it is already sufficient. When dharma fills your body and mind, you understand that something is missing.

For example, when you sail out in a boat to the middle of an ocean where no land is in sight, and view the four directions, the ocean looks circular, and does not look any other way. But the ocean is neither round or square; its features are infinite in variety. It is like a palace. It is like a jewel. It only looks circular as far as you can see at that time. All things are like this.

Though there are many features in the dusty world and the world beyond conditions, you see and understand only what your eye of practice can reach. In order to learn the nature of the myriad things, you must know that although they may look round or square, the other features of oceans and mountains are infinite in variety; whole worlds are there. It is so not only around you, but also directly beneath your feet, or in a drop of water.

A fish swims in the ocean, and no matter how far it swims there is no end to the water. A bird flies in the sky, and no matter how far it flies there is no end to the air. However, the fish and the bird have never left their elements. When their activity is large their field is large. When their need is small their field is small. Thus, each of them totally covers

its full range, and each of them totally experiences its realm. If the bird leaves the air it will die at once. If the fish leaves the water it will die at once.

Know that water is life and air is life. The bird is life and the fish is life. Life must be the bird and life must be the fish.

It is possible to illustrate this with more analogies. Practice, enlightenment, and people are like this.

Now if a bird or a fish tries to reach the end of its element before moving in it, this bird or this fish will not find its way or its place. When you find your place where you are, practice occurs, actualizing the fundamental point. When you find your way at this moment, practice occurs, actualizing the fundamental point; for the place, the way, is neither large nor small, neither yours nor others'. The place, the way, has not carried over from the past and it is not merely arising now.

Accordingly, in the practice-enlightenment of the buddha way, meeting one thing is mastering it--doing one practice is practicing completely. Here is the place; here the way unfolds. The boundary of realization is not distinct, for the realization comes forth simultaneously with the mastery of buddha-dharma.

Do not suppose that what you realize becomes your knowledge and is grasped by your consciousness. Although actualized immediately, the inconceivable may not be apparent. Its appearance is beyond your knowledge. Zen master Baoche of Mt. Mayu was fanning himself. A monk approached and said, "Master, the nature of wind is permanent and there is no place it does not reach. When, then, do you fan yourself?"

"Although you understand that the nature of the wind is permanent," Baoche replied, "you do not understand the meaning of its reaching everywhere."

"What is the meaning of its reaching everywhere?" asked the monk again. The master just kept fanning himself. The monk bowed deeply.

The actualization of the buddha-dharma, the vital path of its correct transmission, is like this. If you say that you do not need to fan yourself because the nature of wind is permanent and you can have wind without fanning, you will understand neither permanence nor the nature of wind. The nature of wind is permanent; because of that, the wind of the buddha's house brings for the gold of the earth and makes fragrant the cream of the long river.

Excerpts from "Time Being" (Uji):

The way the self arrays itself is the form of the entire world. See each thing in this entire world as a moment of time.

Things do not hinder one another, just as moments do not hinder one another. The way-seeking mind arises in this moment. A way-seeking moment arises in this mind. It

is the same with practice and with attaining the way. Thus the self setting itself out in array sees itself. This is the understanding that the self is time.

Know that in this way there are myriads of forms and hundreds of grasses throughout the entire earth, and yet each grass and each form itself is the entire earth. The study of this is the beginning of practice. When you are at this place, there is just one grass, there is just one form; there is understanding of form and no-understanding of form; there is understanding of grass and no-understanding of grass. Since there is nothing but just this moment, the time-being is all the time there is. Grass-being, form-being are both time. Each moment is all being, is the entire world. Reflect now whether any being or any world is left out of the present moment.

HUANG BO: China, early 9th century

From "The Essentials of the Transmission of Mind"

https://terebess.hu/zen/mesterek/dBET_ZenTexts_2005.pdf

The master said to [Pei] Xiu: The Buddhas and all the sentient beings are only the One Mind—there are no other dharmas. Since beginningless time, this mind has never been generated and has never been extinguished, is neither blue nor yellow, is without shape and without characteristic, does not belong to being and nonbeing, does not consider new or old, is neither long nor short, and is neither large nor small. It transcends all limitations, names, traces, and correlations. It in itself—that's it! To activate thoughts is to go against it! It is like space, which is boundless and immeasurable.

It is only this One Mind that is Buddha; there is no distinction between Buddhas and sentient beings. However, sentient beings are attached to characteristics and seek outside themselves. Seeking it, they lose it even more. Sending the Buddha in search of the Buddha, grasping the mind with the mind, they may exhaust themselves in striving for an entire eon but will never get it. They do not understand that if they cease their thoughts and end their thinking, the Buddha will automatically be present.

This mind is the Buddha; the Buddha is the sentient being. When it is sentient being, the mind is not lessened; and when it is [one of] the Buddhas, the mind is not increased. And as for the six perfections (paramitas) and the myriad practices, and the types of merit as numerous as the [sands of the] Ganges River -- [every sentient being is] fundamentally sufficient in these and requires no further cultivation. If the conditions occur then give forth [one's spiritual charity]; when the conditions cease then be silent.

If you are not able to believe resolutely that this [mind] is the Buddha but attempt spiritual training while attached to characteristics, your quest for spiritual efficacy will be entirely based on false thoughts and contrary to the enlightenment [of Buddhahood]. This mind is the Buddha; there is neither any separate Buddha nor any separate mind.