

*The Record of Ippen:
Sayings Handed Down by Disciples (II)*

TRANSLATED BY DENNIS HIROTA

41. Further he said, Concerning birth (往生 *ōjō*, lit. "going forth and being born"): "going forth" is principle and "being born" is wisdom. The fusing of principle and wisdom into one is birth in the Pure Land.¹

42. Further he said, Those who believe only in [the retribution of] good and evil doubt [Amida] Buddha's five kinds of wisdom and aspire to attain birth through their own faculties;² hence, though born [on a lotus in the Pure Land], they are impeded by being enclosed within the flower.³ You may, with your foolish mind of the six forms of consciousness, perform meritorious acts and enter into contemplative states, but since

* This is the second of three parts of *The Record of Ippen: Sayings Handed Down by Disciples*. Part I appeared in *EB* xi, 2, October 1978, pp. 113-131.

¹ In its method of breaking down words and terms, Ippen's explanation of birth as the oneness of knower and known here resembles his handling of *sesshu-fushu* ("taking in and not abandoning") in section 37, and also of *Namu-amida-butsu* (section 49). *Genshaku* notes that principle corresponds to "going forth" because it is universal and all-pervasive; wisdom to "being born" because it dispels darkness and gives rise to illumination.

² Śakyamuni teaches in the *Larger Sutra*, T12, 278a, 22-28: "Suppose there are sentient beings who, plagued with doubts, aspire to be born in that land through the practice of various meritorious acts; unawakened to the Buddha wisdom, the inconceivable wisdom, the ineffable wisdom, the all-inclusive wisdom of the great vehicle, and the unequalled, peerless, and supremely excellent wisdom, they doubt these [five] wisdoms and do not entrust themselves. Nevertheless, believing in [the retribution of] evil and good, they aspire to be born in that land by performing good acts. Such sentient beings, even though born in the palace of that land, for 500 years will never behold the Buddha, nor hear the Dharma, nor witness the sacred host of bodhisattvas and śrāvakas."

³ Based on *Jōzengi*, T97, 264a, 14.

THE RECORD OF IPPEN

the mind that perceives is empty and illusory, the Pure Land thus perceived is also without reality. The Land of Bliss is the true and real land of no-self, so it is altogether impossible to attain birth there through good acts performed in the self-attachment of self-power.⁴ Birth can be attained only through the one practice of the universal Vow. It is impossible, then, for foolish beings to be born through their own will and aspiration. To pursue a variety of aspirations aside from saying the Name all through to the end of your life is to be ignorant of the true and real Buddhist teaching, and thus to be unable to attain birth.

43. Further he said, That of no-mind and stillness is called Buddha. That which gives rise to will or aspiration cannot be called Buddha. Aspiration is illusive attachment.

He spoke in this manner always.

44. Further he said, There are three classes of nembutsu practicers. The practicer of superior nature, while keeping wife and children and living ordinary home life, is free of all attachments and so attains birth.⁵ The practicer of middling nature, though he abandons wife and children, still maintains a place to live and provisions for clothing and food, and being without any attachment to these attains birth. The practicer of inferior nature abandons and frees himself from all things to attain birth. We are convinced that, since we are of inferior natures, were we not to abandon all, we would unfailingly cherish attachments to different things at the point of death and it would hinder our birth. Hence we practice in this manner. You should deliberate on this fully in your own minds.

Upon hearing this, someone asked, In the explanation of the three types of practicers, the *Larger Sutra* teaches that the superior practicer is one who abandons home and casts off desires.⁶ This differs from what you have just stated. Please explain why.

⁴ Those who cling to their own efforts while uttering the nembutsu can be born in the borderland of the Pure Land as described above, but they cannot attain birth directly into the nine ranks of the Pure Land proper. (*Genshaku*)

⁵ Modern commentators have applied this description to Shinran; Ippen himself more probably had in mind, for example, the Heian period monk Kyōshin 敬信 (see *Ichigon Hōdan* 98, *EB* x, 1, May 1977, p. 102), whose grave he visited several times, expressing the wish to die there (*Hijiri-s* 9).

⁶ T12, 272b.

THE EASTERN BUDDHIST

Ippen answered, All Buddhism takes the working of heart and mind to issue. External appearances are of no concern. The heart, abandoning home and casting off desires, is without attachment; this is what is taught as the superior practitioner.

45. Further he said, Master Fa-chao states, "Thinking as such is no-thinking; voicing as such is no-voicing."⁷ Hence the Name, as it stands, is no-name. Bodhisattva Nāgārjuna states: "In preaching the Dharma for sentient beings, there is no word that names it."⁸ "No word that names" is the Name. Moreover, the Name is the name of life, so that the three syllables, *A-mi-da*, denote "Immeasurable Life." This is life without measure and timelessly abiding, neither arising nor perishing. It is itself none other than the life of all sentient beings. For this reason Amida is called "the body of the dharma-realm."⁹

46. Further he said, Concerning "Immeasurable Life": the life of all sentient beings is timelessly abiding, neither arising nor perishing; this is termed "Immeasurable Life." It is the Dharma that is praised. And the

⁷ From *Gos-hōjisan* 五會法事讚 T47, 476b, 7-8: "Simply think on the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Saṃgha, and do not have any distracting thoughts whatever. 'Thinking as such is no-thinking' is the Buddha-way of nonduality; 'voicing as such is no-voicing' is the supreme truth." Fa-chao 法照 (j. Hosshō) was a T'ang dynasty Pure Land master strongly influenced by Shan-tao and active in the latter part of the eighth century. He was known especially for the rhythmic and chant elements which he introduced into formal nembutsu recitation, transmitted to him while in a state of samādhi and likened to the purifying tones heard in Amida's land.

⁸ From the twelve hymns to Amida known as *Jūnirai* 十二願, included in *Ōjōraisan*; T47, 442c, 2. In context, the line means that the Dharma surpasses all verbal expression.

⁹ Expression from the eighth meditation of the *Meditation Sutra*, T12, 343a, 19-20: "The Buddha-Tathāgata is the body of the dharma-realm, entering into the minds of all sentient beings." Seizan doctrine states that when Dharmākara fulfilled his Vows and attained enlightenment, the birth of all beings was accomplished in Amida, the Buddha-body of the oneness of perfect enlightenment and the birth of sentient beings, which takes the life of beings as its own. Hence, the virtues of Amida's body and mind have, from that time, entered and filled the hearts of all sentient beings throughout the dharma-realm, becoming one with them. The *Chikurinshō* 竹林鈔 of the Seizan master Ken'i (顯意, 1238-1304) states: "The life of impermanence and birth-and-death in which sentient beings have transmigrated for innumerable kalpas is, from the very beginning, the immeasurable life of timelessly abiding nirvana, which is the virtue of Buddha" (T83, 465b, 9-11; quoted in *Genshaku*).

THE RECORD OF IPPEN

words, "In the West is the Buddha of Immeasurable Life," indicate the Buddha who praises. This is because he is the Buddha of the path universal to all Buddhas.¹⁰

47. Further he said, Most people think that they can attain birth by understanding the significance of Namu-amida-butsu. This is altogether absurd. This Dharma cannot be fathomed by the foolish mind of the six forms of consciousness. The term "to apprehend,"¹¹ then, means to realize that apprehending this Dharma thus is out of the question. Hence Shantao states, "It is beyond the measure and scrutiny even of bodhisattvas of the three orders of wise men and the ten degrees of sages."¹²

48. Further he said, All the Buddhas throughout the ten quarters and three times praise "[Amida's] virtues, wondrous beyond conceivability."¹³ Moreover, in the *Larger Sutra* [Śākyamuni] teaches, "[Amida's light] is beyond the light of all the Buddhas."¹⁴ Light is the manifestation of wisdom; hence, it is beyond even the profound wisdom of the Buddhas. How, then, could it possibly be fathomed by the illusory wisdom and illusory consciousness of sentient beings? Simply say the Name, entrusting

¹⁰ This section is based on the *Amida Sutra*, T12, 347b-c: "In the world of the western quarter is the Buddha of Immeasurable Life (and others) . . . speaking these true and real words: 'Sentient beings! Believe in this sutra, which praises the inconceivable virtues and which is protected by all the Buddhas.'" Interpretations have traditionally varied as to whether the Buddha mentioned here is Amida or another with the same name. Since this passage lists a number of Buddhas in the various quarters, it is usually understood simply to mean that all Buddhas give witness to Amida's Vow; Ippen, however, stresses that a Buddha is one who has awakened within to the Dharma of Immeasurable Life already realized by Dharmākara, and awakening and praising, each becomes the same as Amida, the Buddha of original enlightenment.

¹¹ The term *ryōge* 領解, used in Seizan doctrine to indicate the awakening of the Three Minds (faith in the Vow) and the realization that one's birth was fulfilled in the Name with Amida's attainment of enlightenment ten kalpas ago.

¹² *Gangibun*, T37, 246b, 11-12: "Vast and profound is the Buddha's innermost meaning, and difficult this teaching-gate [of the Primal Vow]—it is beyond the measure. . . ."

¹³ From the *Amida Sutra* (see fn. 10). Hsüan-tsang's translation gives the "virtues of the Buddha Land" as the object of praise (T12, 350b, 4). Ippen may well have intended in particular the virtues of the Name, based on another passage of the sutra (see section 5).

¹⁴ *Larger Sutra*, T12, 270a, 24.

THE EASTERN BUDDHIST

yourself with reverence, and beyond this do not chase after a wisdom of your own aspiring.

49. Further he said, *Na-mu* signifies the sentient beings throughout the ten quarters; *A-mi-da* is the Dharma; *Butsu* is the person who has attained enlightenment. The six characters are provisionally unfolded into the three—being, Dharma, and enlightenment—and ultimately these three become one. Thus, apart from the Name there is no sentient being taking refuge, no Dharma taken refuge in, and no person of enlightenment. In other words, it is the point where [the dichotomies of] “self-power” and “Other Power,” “being” and “Dharma” are done away with that is *Namu-amida-butsu*. Just as the flame dies out when the firewood is exhausted, so, when the calculative thinking of the practitioner has come to an end, the Dharma also rests. Hence it is stated in a work entitled *Diamond-like Treasure Precepts*, “Within *Namu-amida-butsu* there is neither being nor Dharma.”¹⁵ If one sets up “being” and “Dharma” and holds to “illusion” and “enlightenment” in any way whatever, then one follows a dharma of [duality that is like] medicine given to counteract sickness, and not the Dharma itself, true, real, and ultimate. “Illusion” and “enlightenment,” “being” and “Dharma” having been eradicated, and “self-power” and “Other Power” relinquished—it is this that can indeed be called the Name wondrous beyond conceivability.

50. Further he said, *Namu* is the being who now [after long transmigration] attains enlightenment; *Amida-butsu* is the Dharma that is original enlightenment. *Namu-amida-butsu*, then, is the nonduality of now-ness and originalness.

51. Further he said, Neither one utterance nor ten utterances has anything to do with the Primal Vow. Though we have Shan-tao's explanation, with that alone it still cannot be understood.¹⁶ Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī instructed

¹⁵ *Kongōhōkaishō* 金剛寶戒章. A work at one time attributed to Hōnen but now believed to be by various hands. The quotation is from the last of three sections, which Ōhashi conjectures to be by a monk of Hōnen's line but with a strong interest in the fusion of Zen and Pure Land Buddhism (*Hōnen, Ippen*, *Nihon shisō taikēi* 10, p. 386).

¹⁶ Shan-tao teaches that birth is attained by saying the Name, and further that the number of times the Name is said is irrelevant: “The Buddha welcomes [all,] from those who devote their entire lives [to the nembutsu] down to those of ten or three or five utterances” (*Hōjisan*, T47, 435b, 10–11); “All attain birth through the power of the

THE RECORD OF IPPEN

Fa-chao in this manner: "Although there are passages stating 'one utterance' and 'ten utterances' in the sutra, do not rely on these words, but solely on birth through the nembutsu."¹⁷ The nembutsu is *Namu-amida-butsu*. In its very essence this Name is itself birth. Where there is the Name, there is no count of one or ten utterances.

52. Further he said, Birth is the first thought-instant [of taking refuge].¹⁸ The term "first thought-instant," however, is still used with regard to the practitioner; from the very beginning, *Namu-amida-butsu* itself is birth. This birth is no-birth. The point of encountering this Dharma [of *Namu-amida-butsu*] is provisionally called one thought-instant. When a person has turned and entered into the Name, which cuts off all past, present, and future, birth is without beginning and without end.

The distinction between the moment of death and normal, ongoing life is again a dharma-gate expounded with regard to practitioners of illusive discrimination.¹⁹ In *Namu-amida-butsu*, there is neither moment

Buddha's Vow—from the person who at the most exhausts his entire lifetime, down to the one of but ten utterances" (*Gengibun*, T37, 250b, 7–8), etc. Among Hōnen's followers, however, there were those who asserted that since birth was settled with one utterance, any further recitation was not only unnecessary, but revealed a lack of true faith in the Vow (doctrine of once-calling, *ichinen-gi*). Adherents of this position cited the passage expressing the fulfillment of the 18th Vow in the *Larger Sutra*: "When beings . . . are joyous in a trusting mind even but one moment (or in one utterance), . . . then they attain birth." A contrary position (many-calling, *tanen-gi*) was developed around the stance that true aspiration manifests itself in incessant recitation, and that since the 18th Vow itself speaks of "ten utterances," one should endeavor to utter the Name as often as possible.

¹⁷ *Genshaku* cites the Sung dynasty biography of T'ien-t'ai monks, *Bussotoki* 佛祖統記, T49, 264a, 2–4: "Fa-chao asked: It is still not clear what Dharma-gate the foolish beings of this latter age should practice. Mañjuśrī replied: Among all the various practices, there is none which equals the nembutsu. Difficult to fathom is the power of Amida Buddha's Vow. Devote yourself to the utterance of the Name and without fail attain birth."

¹⁸ For the traditional context of this statement, see *Ichigon Hōdan* 109–110 (*EB* x, 1, May 1977, p. 104). Also see D. T. Suzuki's translation of this section in *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, Second Series, 1933, pp. 186–7.

¹⁹ This distinction stems from the decisive importance traditionally given to a person's last moments, for it was thought that if one did not attain right-mindedness then, eradicating all the karmic evil of one's lifetime through the nembutsu, one might fail to receive Amida's welcome. This notion was rejected by Shinran, who emphasized that one's birth in the Pure Land at the end of life is settled with the realization of true

of death nor ordinary life. It is the Dharma ever constant throughout the three times. Since [death] does not wait even for the completion of exhaling breath or inhaling breath, there can be no point of facing death other than the single thought-instant here and now. Thus each instant is the facing of death, and each instant is birth. For this reason it is explained, "Turning about at heart, moment by moment aspire to be born in the Land of Peace."²⁰ Buddhism speaks of nothing other than the single thought-instant here and now. The three times are, as such, this one thought-instant.

53. Further he said, There is the matter of the "mind with anticipation" and the "mind free of anticipation."²¹ The absence of any expectations whatever beyond this single thought-instant here and now is the "mind free of anticipation." In short, we must do away with the multiplicity of expectations in our hearts.

He spoke in this vein every day and every night.

54. Further he said, Nembutsu-samādhi is Dharma without color, without form, and beyond comprehension; it has no functioning.

The Name, [however], is Dharma which brings things to fulfillment, and the myriad things are dharmas which are brought to fulfillment. Hence it is explained: "The Dharma (the Name), transferring its own scent, brings to fulfillment the wisdom of the myriad practices of the three orders of wise men and the ten degrees of sages."²² The embellishments adorning Amida's outward appearance are all forms of the [Name's]

entrusting—that is, during normal, ongoing life. Within the Seizan school, there were currents which emphasized the nonduality of ordinary life and the point of death—that is, of the settlement of birth here and now and its ultimate realization—and Ippen seems to have drawn from them.

²⁰ *Hanjusan*, T47, 454b, 25: "If, turning about at heart, moment by moment you aspire to be born in the Land of Peace, finally you will behold the golden flower approaching."

²¹ Derived from T'an-luan's *Ōjōronchū* 往生論註, T40, 834c, which explains how ten utterances of the Name can outweigh a lifetime of karmic evil by applying, in place of standards of time or quantity, those of 'mind,' 'condition,' and 'decisive settlement': "It is a matter of decisive settlement in that the karmic evil of such evildoers arises from a heart of anticipation and anxiety (有後心 *ugoshin*), a heart of distraction. The ten utterances, however, arise from a heart free of anticipation (無後心 *mugoshin*), a heart undistracted. . . . Thus, the ten utterances have the greater weight."

²² *Sanzengi*, T37, 273c, 6–7.

THE RECORD OF IPPEN

perfect fulfillment of the myriad kinds of good acts.

[Thus,] the two types of recompense of the Land of Bliss—[the land itself as] basis and [Buddha as] master—are the forms of the myriad dharmas. The Buddha body that comes to welcome is the Buddha of the perfect fulfillment of the myriad kinds of good acts; the being who is born is again [born through the Name's fulfillment of] the myriad kinds of good acts. The myriad kinds of good acts include all the sentient beings throughout the ten quarters.²³

“Once sitting [the Buddha] neither shifts nor moves”²⁴ means that nembutsu-samādhi itself is Amida, so there is no here or there—no coming [to welcome], no going [to be born]. It is the Dharma of no coming and no leaving, surpassing all conceivability and comprehension.

[Nevertheless,] the aspect of Amida's coming is indeed the Dharma of [the fulfillment of] the myriad kinds of good acts; hence, “birth through various practices” is an actuality.²⁵ Every practitioner is included in the various practices, and it is the practitioner that attains birth. But to regard such sundry practices as [a condition of] the Primal Vow is wholly without foundation, and simply reveals ignorance of the subtle points of the Dharma.

55. Further he said, People think that if the practitioner waits in expectation, then the Buddha will come to welcome him. But even if, awaiting thus, one were to obtain [Amida's coming], it would still be a matter within the three times. The state of saying the Name is itself the true coming of Buddha. When one has realized that saying the Name is itself Amida's coming, then Amida's coming is decisively settled; hence, on the contrary, one is awaited. It is a matter of course that all things apart from the Name are but phantasmal.

²³ The rankings of practitioners by the kinds of good acts they perform—such as the three classes of the *Larger Sutra* or the nine grades of the *Meditation Sutra*—are taken as exhaustive classifications, indicating that the Name embraces all beings without discrimination and without exception.

²⁴ *Hōjisan*, T47, 432c, 24.

²⁵ *Shogyō ōjō* 願行往生, usually indicating the attainment of birth through practices other than the utterance of the Name and contrasted with “birth through the nembutsu.” The Chinzei branch affirmed such attainment, while the Seizan branch asserted that self-power practices can be fulfilled only through the Name, i.e., Other Power. Cf. section 11.

56. Further he said, All dharmas (i.e., good acts) can also be true and real. For when it is realized that the myriad dharmas are furnished with the Name, then they are all true and real merits. Here again, it is not that the merits as they are are true and real; when they are consummated by the Name, they become true and real. What we call "merit" does not constitute the essential path of liberation; merit is performing good acts. Hence the *Meditation Sutra*, summing up the myriad dharmas, teaches them as the three kinds of good acts. They are called the true cause and true practice only when they are of one taste with the Name.

57. Further he said, The *Larger Sutra* states, "[Bodhisattva Dharmākara] abides in the samādhis of emptiness, no-aspect, and no-wish."²⁶ This is nothing other than the Name. For ourselves, there can be no fulfilling the meditation of no-aspect and freedom from thinking. Nor can we attain the realization of self-nature as [pure and originally] of no-thought. [Nevertheless,] though we are the basest of ignorant beings, bound about by our folly, when we wholeheartedly say the Name, casting away body and mind and simply entrusting ourselves to the Primal Vow, this in itself is the meditation of self-nature as no-thought. It is the realization of no-aspect and freedom from thinking. In the *Meditation Sutra* this is taught: "Spaciously and fully realizing great enlightenment and attaining receptivity to the unborn nature of all existences."²⁷ When we have taken refuge in the Name, there is no insufficiency of merit. This itself is taught to be the "supreme merit";²⁸ it is the practice of Other Power.

²⁶ T12, 269c, 16-18, following the declaration of the Vows: "With these great adornments [of virtue and wisdom, Dharmākara] fulfilled his bodhisattva practices and brought all sentient beings to the perfection of merits. Abiding in the dharmas of emptiness, no-aspect, and no-wish, and free of all [purposeful] doing and making, he perceived all existences as phantasma."

²⁷ From the close of the sutra, T12, 346a-b: "When the Buddha had finished preaching these words, Vaidehī, . . . hearing what the Buddha had taught, was able to see the greatness and vastness of the world of bliss, and to behold the Buddha-body and the two bodhisattvas. Joy arose in her mind . . . and spaciously and fully realizing great enlightenment, she attained receptivity to the unborn nature of all existences."

²⁸ *Larger Sutra*, T12, 279a, 1-3: "When a person, having heard the Name of that Buddha and dancing and rejoicing in his heart, says the nembutsu even but once, know that he gains the great benefit—that he is possessed of the supreme merit."

THE RECORD OF IPPEN

58. Further he said, It is totally impossible for foolish beings of shallow wisdom to distinguish "evil" and "merit". Kūya's explanation states: "The grave offenses of the man of wisdom are transformed into the direct path to Buddhahood, while the sincere efforts of the foolish man may be in error, and so become acts which cause him to be born in the three low paths." Thus, although the foolish man may think an act meritorious, it is evil before the man of wisdom, and what the foolish man believes to be evil is merit before the wise. This is exceedingly fine and subtle. How should it be possible for us, who are foolish and ignorant, to discriminate between them? Obviously the two paths of good and evil can hardly be the essential way of liberation for us. Simply because when we commit wrongs we receive severe suffering and when we accumulate merit we are born in agreeable circumstances, [these two paths] but state that we should "desist from evil and perform good." Thus Shan-tao has explained: "[Say the nembutsu] without bringing into question the greatness or scarcity of your evil or good."²⁹ In short, you should singleheartedly recite the Name, without debating over evil or merit, without holding to your own opinionated wisdom, and without cherishing your life; beyond this there should be no deliberation whatever.

59. Further he said, The two paths of good and evil indicate the varieties of living beings; they are an inverted, empty, and transitory dharma. The Name, on the other hand, is the true and real Dharma that embraces both the good and the evil.

60. Further he said, "Mindedness" is the path of birth-and-death; "no-mind" is the castle of nirvana. "Parting from birth-and-death" means to part from thought. Thus the Pure Land is described as "comprehended in no-mind and known spontaneously."³⁰ It is also explained: "[In the Land of Bliss, enlightenment is attained spontaneously,] without relying on the effects of a moment of deliberation."³¹ And it is also stated: "[The

²⁹ *Hōjisan*, T47, 437b, 4: "Without bringing into question the greatness or scarcity of your evil or good, or of the time [you have given to the nembutsu], say the Name whatever your state of mind and do not give rise to doubts."

³⁰ *Ōjōraisan*, T47, 446c, 23: "All the adornments preach the Dharma, they are comprehended in no-mind. . . ."

³¹ *Hōjisan*, T47, 433b, 9-10.

THE EASTERN BUDDHIST

bodhisattvas praise the virtues of the Buddha] without cherishing any discriminatory thoughts.”³² Through the raising of dichotomous thinking, birth-and-death comes into being. Hence it is said, “The mind is the greatest enemy. It will bind a man and deliver him to Yama, the king of hell.”³³

61. Further he said, In the practice of the Buddha’s teaching, there is “direct treatment” and “indirect treatment.” Direct treatment indicates right-mindfulness at the point of death, in which one overturns illusory thought and attains singleness of mind unperturbed. Indirect treatment means that the person who aspires for enlightenment casts off all evil entanglements beforehand, so that not a single one remains. It is impossible for us to abandon them for the first time when facing death. Our everyday way of living will arise without fail and manifest itself at the point of death. Hence Shan-tao explains, “The anguish of impermanence will then suddenly come upon you, so that for the first time your spirit will be confused and terrified. Abandon and free yourself now from all things and all daily concerns, and singleheartedly awakening your aspiration, turn towards the West.”³⁴

62. Further he said, To shun suffering means to despise and cast away suffering and joy both. Of these two, suffering is easily rejected, but joy is abandoned only with great difficulty. Nevertheless, abandoning joy is the essence of rejecting suffering, for there is no suffering apart from joy. Hence Shan-tao explains: “[The five desires of men and devas] may be called joy, but they are great suffering also. Ultimately we know not a single moment of true and real joy.”³⁵ Further he declares: “All are encouraged to shun the joys of men and devas.”³⁶ Thus, since there is no suffering apart from joy, it is the renunciation of joy that is meant by rejecting suffering.

³² From the verse of Vasubandhu’s *Treatise on the Pure Land* 淨土論 (j. *Jōdoron*), T26, 291b.

³³ From the *Shōbōnenjōkyō* 正法念處經, T17, 29c, 21–22; quoted in *Ōjōyōshū* 往生要集, T84, 33c, 12–13.

³⁴ *Hōjisan*, T47, 431b–c.

³⁵ *Jōzengi*, T37, 269b, 4–5. The five desires are those for possessions, sexual love, food and drink, honor, and sleep.

³⁶ *Hōjisan*, T47, 435a, 6.

63. Further he said, Since the three realms of desire, form, and formlessness are the sphere of the karma-created and impermanent, all things within them are unfixed and phantasmal. To desire to abide eternally in these realms, or to seek peace of mind here, is like trying to keep a boat from rocking when it is out on the boundless waves.

64. Further he said, Concerning the statement, "When a person utters the Name of Amida Buddha once, /Incalculable karmic evil is eradicated immediately; /In this present life he receives incomparable joy, /And afterwards he is born in the land of purity":³⁷ people ordinarily consider this "incomparable joy" to be worldly happiness, but it is not so. It is joy free of desire. For when one becomes a being whose birth in the Pure Land is settled, there is nothing in all the three realms and six paths for which one feels envy, nothing that one covets. In the span of our transmigration in birth-and-death through many lives and worlds, we have experienced all things, and have passed and come [to the present]. It is to be free of all attachments, then, that is "incomparable joy." Since worldly joys are all suffering, how could the Buddhas and patriarchs fall into the foolishness of calling them the incomparable joy?

65. Further he said, Joy is without real substance; the cessation of suffering is joy. Suffering is without real substance. The cessation of joy is suffering.

66. Further he said, The statement that the recognition of things apart from the mind is to be designated a non-Buddhist path means that to establish an object outside of the mind and to have thoughts about it is illusion.³⁸ With the mind of original nature, solitary and single in the eradication of all objects, there are no delusory thoughts. From the time that we first distinguished mind and object and thought of them as two, we have been transmigrating in birth-and-death. There are a variety of metaphors for this.

³⁷ Quoted in *Kōyōshū* 考要集, a Heian period compilation of Pure Land writings. The verse is apparently of Chinese origin, but the author unknown.

³⁸ The last section of *Kongōhōkaishō* (see fn. 15) has: "There are some who seek Buddhahood apart from the mind and aspire for the Pure Land apart from self-nature: such are to be known as evil persons and deluded persons; they should be called slanderers of the Three Treasures and followers of a non-Buddhist path" (quoted in Ōhashi, *Hōnen, Ippen*, p. 337).

THE EASTERN BUDDHIST

Day and night, such were his words. We must, then, completely abandon the evil entanglements and evil objects [of delusory thought].

67. Further he said, You may, in an attitude of desisting from evil and performing good by establishing an objective situation outside of the mind, pass through kalpas countless as minute particles, but you will still not be able to free yourself from birth-and-death. In every one of the [Buddhist] teachings, a person attains emancipation from birth-and-death through entering the stage of the extinction of subject and object. This Name I am speaking of is the Dharma of the oneness of subject and object.

68. Further he said, There is the expression, "While living, die, and quietly await Amida's coming."³⁹ To become solitary and single in aloneness, totally unconcerned about the multitude of worldly affairs and abandoning and disentangling yourself from everything—this is to die.⁴⁰ We were born alone; we die alone.⁴¹ Hence to live together with others is also to be alone, for there is no one who can accompany us to the end. Moreover, saying the nembutsu in the disappearance of self is none other than to die. To be apprehensive in your own designing about your attainment of birth is totally pointless.

69. Further he said, Prepare no foundations for saying the nembutsu. The manner of practicing is not born in the Pure Land—not the manner of voicing, nor the deportment of the body, nor the attitude of the heart and mind. Only Namu-amida-butsu is born.

70. Further he said, Concerning "hearing the Name and aspiring for birth":⁴² when you hear a person reciting the nembutsu somewhere, Namu-amida-butsu surfaces in your own mind; this is "hearing the Name."

³⁹ Cf. Zen sayings such as Bunan Zenji's poem: "While living/ Be a dead man,/ Be thoroughly dead—/ And behave as you like,/ And all's well" (trans. D. T. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture*, 1959, p. 102).

⁴⁰ *Genshaku* cites the Chinese Zen classic "Song of Enlightenment" 醒遣歌 (j. *Shōdōka*), T48, 395c: "Knowest thou that leisurely philosopher who has gone beyond learning and is not exerting himself in anything?" (trans. D. T. Suzuki, *Manual of Zen Buddhism*, 1935, p. 89).

⁴¹ *Larger Sutra*, T12, 274c, 24

⁴² *Larger Sutra*, T12, 273a, 22–23: "Through the power of the Buddha's Primal Vow,/

THE RECORD OF IPPEN

It is the Name, then, that hears the Name. Apart from the Name there is absolutely no other way of hearing.

71. Further he said, Even though you may recite the nembutsu of your own accord, at times it will not be [true] *Namu-amida-butsu*. For to say the Name with thoughts of your own self-being as basis is to take illusory thinking for the nembutsu. Further, although you may be reciting the Name with your lips, since you have this basic thought [of self-attachment] in your heart, surely that thought is what will emerge at the point of death, and the nembutsu will be lost. Hence, you must harbor no such illusive thoughts in your heart. This does not mean, of course, that you must completely rid yourself of all other thoughts whatever.⁴³

72. Further he said, Concerning the statement, "West from here, past a myriad billion Buddha lands [there is a world called the Land of Bliss]":⁴⁴ actually, it is not at a distance of a myriad billion Buddha lands. These words are concerned with the barrier of the deluded attachment of sentient beings. Shan-tao's Commentary states: "Separated by a papery husk of bamboo, they take it as a distance of a thousand *li*."⁴⁵ "Past a myriad billion" is stated simply with reference to illusory attachment. In reality, it is not a matter of covering a certain distance. Hence the [*Meditation*] *Sutra* teaches: "Amida Buddha is not far from here."⁴⁶ This means that Amida is not at a remove from the hearts and minds of sentient

Those who hear the Name and aspire to be born/ Will all reach that land/ And attain naturally the stage of non-retrogression."

⁴³ I.e., what is to be eliminated is any clinging to one's own will in self-power. Cf. Genshin's *Yokawa hōgo* 横川法語: "Illusive thinking is to begin with the basic nature of foolish beings. . . . The nembutsu uttered from amid illusive thoughts is like a lotus unstained by the mire, so have no doubts about the decisive settlement of birth."

⁴⁴ *Amida Sutra*, T12, 346c, 10-11.

⁴⁵ *Jōbunji* 序分義 ("On the Introductory Section") of the *Commentary on the Meditation Sutra*, T37, 260b-c: "The karmic obstructions of sentient beings are such that in vision we are like those born blind, pointing to the palms of our hands and saying they are far off, or, separated by a papery inner husk of bamboo, taking it to be a distance of a thousand *li*. How could it be possible, then, for foolish beings to get a glimpse into the transcendent realm of the Buddhas? Unless we receive the aid of the sacred power, how should we be able to behold the Pure Land?"

⁴⁶ T12, 341c, 5-6. Śākyamuni, in response to Vaidehī's wish to learn how to be born in Amida's Land: "Now, do you not know that Amida Buddha is not far from here?"

THE EASTERN BUDDHIST

beings. According to the Buddha's teaching of the great vehicle, there exists no dharma apart from the mind; in the Path of Sages, it is taught that all dharmas are the one mind, and in Pure Land Buddhism, all dharmas are established as *Namu-amida-butsu*. The myriad dharmas are virtues of mind which exist originally from the beginningless past. However, covered over by illusory dharmas of self-attachment, their essence cannot manifest itself. Now, at the moment these virtues of mind of all sentient beings are established as *Namu-amida-butsu* through the power of the Vow, the unfolding of the mind-virtues of sentient beings takes place. Thus the Name itself is the original nature of mind. This is expressed by the words, "Not far from here," and also, "Do not think that the West is distant; simply have the mind to recite the *nembutsu* ten times."⁴⁷

73. Further he said, Illusion is a single thought-instant; enlightenment also is a single thought-instant. Just as wandering out from the capital of Dharma-nature is a single thought-instant of illusion,⁴⁸ so overturning illusion is again a single thought-instant. If you do not attain birth in one thought-instant, then neither will you attain it in a countless number of thought-instants. Therefore it is said, "If a person voices the Name once, all his karmic evil will be removed,"⁴⁹ and further, "If one has been able to say Amida's Name a single time, he will return [to the Pure Land] and be the same as the body of Dharma-nature."⁵⁰ *Namu-amida-butsu* is simply free in itself from birth-and-death. If, in spite of this, you sigh while you utter it, "I wish I could attain birth, I wish I could attain birth," it is like eating rice and at the same time wondering whether there is some medicine that can ease a faintness from hunger.

These were his constant words.

74. Further he said, Once you have encountered the Name embodying supreme merit in a single utterance, there is nothing for which you must

⁴⁷ From a hymn included in *Ōjōraisan*, T47, 444b, 9.

⁴⁸ *Ōjōyōshū*: "Through the illusive mind of a single thought-instant one enters the sea of birth-and-death" (quoted in *Genshaku*).

⁴⁹ *Hanjusan*, T47, 448c, 24.

⁵⁰ Fa-chao's *Gos-hōjisan*, T47, 487b, 11-12: "The utterly foolish person of the ten transgressions and the five damning acts has long been sinking and long abiding [in birth-and-death], but if. . ."

THE RECORD OF IPPEN

live to the morrow. It is wishing to die immediately that becomes your fundamental desire. Nevertheless, there are those who resolve to recite the Name as often as possible while living in this *sahā* world, believing that by doing so they will somehow not die, even though death is certain; because of this way of thinking such *nembutsu* practitioners of many-calling fail when it comes to the point of death. In the Buddha's teaching, unless you cast away your body and life, there can be no realization of benefit. In the Buddha's teaching, there is nothing of worth; casting away your body and life itself is worth. This is what is called returning one's life (i.e., taking refuge).

75. Further he said, Food, clothing, and shelter are the three evil paths. To desire and make a display of clothing is karma for the path of beasts. To seek greedily after food is karma for the path of hungry demons. To set up a shelter is karma for the path of hell. Hence, if you aspire to free yourself from the three evil paths, you must free yourself from food, clothing, and shelter.

76. Further he said, The character for faith 信 (*shin*) should be read "to entrust." Since one entrusts to another's meaning, it is written as "a person's" 人 "words" 言. For us, this means that we should entrust ourselves to the Dharma. Hence, there should be no seeking after food, clothing, and shelter on our part; we should leave them to heaven. Kūya Shōnin said, "Entrust the three modes of action to fate; yield the four forms of deportment to bodhi."⁵¹ Having taken refuge in Other Power is precisely so. Zen master Kotan said: "Do not trouble yourself over the mending of clothes; simply entrust everything to nature."⁵²

77. Further he said, Since "from the first not a single thing is,"⁵³ you must never, under any circumstances, indulge in the thought that there is really something of your own. Cast away and abandon all things.

Such were his constant words.

⁵¹ Three modes: acts of body, speech and mind; four forms: rules governing walking, standing, sitting and lying.

⁵² Kotan Zenji 古湛禪師 is unidentified, and his sentence is obscure. I have followed the interpretation in *Genshaku*.

⁵³ Cf. the *gāthā* of Hui-neng in the *Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*.

78. Further he said, Concerning the nembutsu at the last moment of life: people all worry that, tortured by the pains of death and of sickness, they will fail to utter the nembutsu at the final moment. This is completely without reason. While making a show of their practice of the nembutsu, such people look ahead with anxiety to the moment of death. Saying the nembutsu is already the power of the Buddhas' protection. Attaining right-mindfulness at the point of death is also the supporting power of the Buddhas. All the forces that bring about birth in the Pure Land are the power of the Buddha and the power of the Dharma. Aside from the utterance in this present instant there is no nembutsu at the final moment. The point of facing death is itself ordinary life. The instant before becomes ordinary life, the instant after is held to be the point of death. Hence it is said, "May every person wish constantly that at the time of death [all excellent conditions and excellent circumstances for birth will appear before him]."⁵⁴ The person who cannot say the nembutsu in this present instant will not be able to say it at the point of death. You should say the nembutsu constantly and diligently, avoiding all abstract debate about the moment of death.

79. Further he said, Though you are taken and held by the Name, do not seek to take hold of it. The myriad dharmas are the one mind, but they cannot by themselves give expression to that fundamental nature—just as the eye cannot see itself, and wood, though fire lies inherent in it, cannot burn with that indwelling fire. But bring forth a mirror, and the eye will see itself. This is none other than the power of the mirror. This "mirror" signifies the one called "great and perfect mirror wisdom,"⁵⁵ which sentient beings possess originally. It is the Name which all Buddhas have themselves realized. In the mirror of the Name, then, we can see our original face. Hence the *Meditation Sutra* states, "It is like taking up a gleaming mirror and looking into one's own face."⁵⁶ Or, if one sets the

⁵⁴ *Ōjōraisan*, T47, 440b, 22.

⁵⁵ 大圓鏡智 *daienkyōchi* (skt. *ādarsa-jñāna*). Wisdom in which all things appear in their true suchness. One of the four wisdoms of Yogācāra Buddhism; in Shingon, one of the five wisdoms, represented by Akṣobhya Buddha (j. Ashuku).

⁵⁶ T12, 341c, 20–22: "It is solely through the power of the Buddha that one can, as though taking up a gleaming mirror and looking into one's own face, behold that land of purity. When a person perceives the most wondrous bliss of that land, he rejoices in his heart, and immediately attains receptivity to the unborn nature of all existences."

THE RECORD OF IPPEN

wood alight with fire from without, it will take flame immediately. This fire and the fire inherent in the wood are not different in essence. Thus we see that the myriad things of the universe are not self-replete; they are brought to fulfillment through a concordance of causes and conditions. Although the fire of Buddha-nature lies within each of us, by it alone the brushwood of our blind passions will not be consumed; it can be consumed only through the power of wisdom-fire of the Name. In Pure Land Buddhism there is the expression, "The being is embraced apart from himself."⁵⁷ You should consider what I have said here with these words in mind.⁵⁸

(To be continued)

⁵⁷ Seizan teaching that faith is not a state which we conjure up from our own changeable and insincere minds, but the true and real mind received from Amida.

⁵⁸ D. T. Suzuki translates this section in *Essays in Zen Buddhism, Second Series*, 1933, pp. 187-8.