

Jishō-ki

SHIDŌ MUNAN ZENJI

TRANSLATED BY KUSUMITA PRISCELLA PEDERSEN

Introduction

SHIDŌ Munan¹ (1603–1676) traces his descent through the lineage of Japanese Rinzai Zen founded by Nampo Jōmyō or Daiō Kokushi² (1235–1309). As the successor of Gudō Tōshoku³ (1577–1661) he belongs to the Myōshinji branch⁴ of this line.

Our chief source for the life of Munan is the biography of him by Tōrei Enji,⁵ the chief disciple of Hakuin Ekaku. It does not enable us, however, to establish with much certainty a chronology for the major events of Munan's life. We know that Munan did not become a priest until his middle age, but that before his ordination he underwent a long period of training under Gudō, who stopped regularly as he travelled between Kyoto and Edo at the Tōkaidō road post station of which Munan was proprietor. It is not recorded exactly when the two first met, but since Gudō first went to Edo in 1621 (when Munan was eighteen) and Munan himself states that his period of training was between twenty and thirty years, we may reasonably guess that he met his teacher in his early twenties. It appears that in his youth Munan may have assumed the dress of a monk and spent a period of travel, coming into contact with various Zen Masters, but was compelled to return to ordinary life to run the family business.

¹ 至道無難.

² 南浦紹明 or 大応国師.

³ 愚堂東楚.

⁴ 妙心寺.

⁵ 東嶺圖越 (1721–1792). This biography has been translated by Kobori Sōhaku and Norman A. Waddell. See *The Eastern Buddhist*, Vol. III, No. 1, June 1970.

His actual ordination by Gudō probably took place when he was fifty-one. Tōrei, who tells the story in his biography, seems to date Munan's receiving of sanction from Gudō after his entry into the priesthood. He describes a period of wandering and discipline in the mountains which followed this. Furuta Shōkin,⁶ however, shows the possibility that Munan had already completed his Zen training under Gudō while still a layman, and went almost directly from lay life to his hermitage Tōhoku-an⁷ in the Azabu district of Edo, where he lived until his death.

Munan's main works are *Jishō-ki*⁸ (*On Self-Nature*) and *Sokushin-ki* (*On This Mind*).⁹ Both were written when he was about seventy years old. Munan's long period of lay training probably accounts for many of the characteristic features of his writing. It is mostly in the *kana* syllabary with relatively few Chinese characters, and extremely direct and colloquial. The emphasis is always on the authentic experience of enlightenment, with an uncompromising inner austerity. Although his biographer tells us that many of the nobility came to him for instruction, Munan framed his teaching with a concern for making it accessible to everyone who came to him, regardless of education or social standing.

In Munan's understanding of Buddhism, "Mind" is the fundamental principle. Mind is the single truth of all religions or "Ways" and the essence of all that exists. Mind is Buddha, and enlightenment is one's own original Mind. Innate enlightenment is obscured by impurities which cause suffering and rebirth in evil destinies. The word which Munan uses to indicate the complex whole of these impurities is *mi* 身, which we have consistently translated "body." The term does not, however, signify the physical body any more than *kokoro* does the intellectual or reasoning mind usually suggested by the English word "mind." When the word "body" occurs, it should be taken as referring to the egotistic, unilluminated being of an individual in his unenlightened state,

⁶ In his *Gudō, Munan, Shōju* (Zen Sōsho series, No. 8), Tokyo, 1941, pp. 72-75.

⁷ 東北庵.

⁸ 自性記.

⁹ 即心記. Translated by Kobori Sōhaku and Norman A. Waddell. See *The Eastern Buddhist*, Vol. III, No. 2, October 1970, Vol. IV, No. 1, May 1971, and Vol. IV, No. 2, October 1971.

including both the physical body and the personality. Thus the enlightened state is often called "no body."

Defilements are to be removed both by satori and by constant cultivation of the mind of enlightenment, once enlightenment has been attained. Both initial enlightenment and cultivation are accomplished by intense application in zazen, whether "walking, standing, sitting or lying down"—"As a medicine for the arising of deluded imaginings, nothing compares with Zen samadhi." Because the ordinary man is intrinsically Buddha, when defilements are eradicated, this reality manifests itself spontaneously and instantaneously. Enlightenment itself is not a process, but always "direct." Nevertheless for Munan purity and the process of purification are of paramount importance in Zen practice.

The text used has been that in *Sbidō Munan Zenji Shū* (*The Works of Sbidō Munan*), edited by Kōda Rentarō (Shunjūsha, Tokyo, 1956).

(Text)

Forgetting about the ridicule of other people, I have written these two books of Dharma words, *On This Mind* (*Sokushin-ki*) and *On Self-Nature* (*Jishō-ki*), which may be instructive at least for children.

If one can realize the essence of even one phrase of the Dharma words of Master Ikkyū,¹ one will transcend a long suffering and get great joy. If, on the other hand, one should add one's own words to his, one will become a laughing-stock. How full of sorrow I am, since even though great teachers have written, still this degenerate world remains just as it is. How laughable they must think what is done by a person like me, without wisdom or learning. Still, I beg their forgiveness for the addition to theirs of these words of mine. I used to be a gatekeeper at Sekigahara in the province of Mino. When I was in attendance on Master Gudō² and accompanied him to Edo, he took pity on me and gave me the teaching of "From the beginning not one thing

¹ Ikkyū Sōjun 一休宗純 (1394-1481), Rinzai Zen Master.

² See Introduction.

exists."³ Considering this to be a blessing, I practiced for thirty years, and directly became "not one thing." Thanks to my Master, I know the precious blessings of Buddha; I teach the Buddha Dharma to people and cherish it.

It is said that hearing once a single word of Confucius an ordinary man may suddenly become a sage and attain illumination. This is a blessing, but the Chinese misunderstand it. I am one who takes up his pen and writes for the sake of Confucius, trying to correct the misunderstanding and disregarding my own ineptitude.

Someone said that giving rise to the mind of the Way will make life pleasant. To my way of thinking, since ancient times there has been nothing so painful as the mind of the Way. If the actions of the body are the least bit evil, you get the punishment of Heaven. The Great Matter of the Way is extremely difficult to express in words. A person who gives rise to the mind of the Way is usually well advanced. First, stopping thoughts of wealth and the objects of desire, having no give and take with the world, he constantly purifies the mind. Not deviating from the teaching of Buddha, whether walking, standing, sitting, or lying down, not caring whether other people are there or not, he removes the karma of the body, and his own original Mind and original Nature become Buddha directly. If you should feel distressed by what may come of the defilements caused by the evil of the body, then make a great effort and illumine your mind. Knowing that even trifling things will surely have their retribution, and not giving in the slightest bit to your own egotistical will, you will come to know the preciousness of the Buddha's preaching of the Dharma.

Someone told me about how for three years in the mountains of Kamakura, he ate pine leaves and so on, sometimes coming out into the town to look for food. To practice like this is something hard to achieve for people in the world. The terrifying gleam of the eyes of wolves at night and all kinds of poisonous insects could not disturb this monk. But even if he had gone on striving this way for twenty years, it wouldn't have been of any benefit to people. Why? Because he had not met a capable teacher. What you do by yourself has difficulty in reaching to Heaven.

³ *Honrai muichimotsu* 本来無一物. A well-known koan. The phrase appears as the third line of Hui-neng's famous enlightenment verse in Sung versions of *The Platform Sutra*. See Philip Yampolsky, *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, 1967, p. 94 and p. 134.

Someone asked me, "What do you mean when you say that a person who maintains the mind of the Way doesn't care even if he is trampled upon and beaten?"

I said, "This is the fundamental meaning of the mind of the Way. Such a person will, first of all, extinguish at all costs the sins of the past, present and future. If he feels joy at the bad things people say and think about him, then the sin is destroyed. When you accustom yourself to this joy, then no matter what thoughts you have, sin disappears. If you become angry like worldly people, then sins increase and don't disappear. If you do not strive in this way, you will become an animal immediately, and be reborn as a cow or a horse. The person who wants to attain the mind of the Way should be afraid of the egotistical mind, and must remove the karma of the body. If you give food or possessions to other people even occasionally this removes karma."

Someone who had been striving for a long time on the Buddha's Way without cessation of the suffering of the body asked me what he should do. When I asked him in more detail, he said that although at times when he did zazen he became the Tathāgata, when he left his seat, it was as before. I said, "When you face things, there are three aspects to the mind. When it simply reflects things you face, this is the direct mind. When you face an old and decrepit person and see this as pitiable, then this is the Buddha-mind, the mind of compassion. If when you face an old and decrepit person you detest this as unclean, then this is the body's evil thought. If you do not transcend the sufferings of the body, it is because of error in your everyday practice."

If a person wants to attain the mind of the Way, first of all he should choose his friends. Even though he has been fortunate enough to arouse the desire for the mind of the Way, if he is invited by his young friends, it can happen that days will be spent enjoying the beauties of nature. Or if he is called by people of high position, and if his own desires for fame and gain are not yet used up, he may willingly create obstruction for the mind of the Way.

If he enters into the mountain forests and strives by himself, he may look down upon people in the world, and in this way there may be obstacles which he himself doesn't expect.

If you want to firmly maintain the mind of the Way, seek to meet a capable teacher, then see your original Mind or original Nature, and maintain this

vigorously. Whether you live in the deep mountains or in the marketplace should be decided in accordance with your own mind.

People who have patrons may be dependent on them, but the mind of the Way has nothing to depend on in Heaven or Earth. When you remove completely the evil karma of the body and become one with Heaven and Earth, it is natural for the people of the whole world to respect you. As long as you don't strive like this, it goes without saying that you will suffer over food, clothing and shelter.

A person who maintains the mind of the Way should fear all possessions. Remaining content with food, clothing and shelter, without the right actions of the body, you will surely get the punishment of Heaven, so he who maintains the mind of the Way regards all deprivations as good fortune.

The above four pages written and added in winter of 1674.

★ ★ ★

Washed by the waves of old age, I have reached a great age rarely attained. When under my lamp I think of the past, not a single one of my friends is still alive, and indeed, their fate may be mine this very night. I will write about the many people I have seen and heard, and if my words are inadequate, please overlook it.

Because of their passions (even) monks and nuns are destined to sink for numberless kalpas into the sea of samsara, born as birds or animals.

Someone asked about the great Dharma. I taught him the attainment of original Mind. He then asked how he could cultivate it. I said, "Satori is a treasure not to be traded for Heaven and Earth. The cultivation of it is in your own mind."

I said to my disciples, "The body is the great enemy. Do not be careless even for a moment."

Money is for putting an end to the suffering of hunger and cold. Satori is for removing the evils of the body.

Someone asked, "How can you teach satori to people?"

THE EASTERN BUDDHIST

I said, "If you do not open your eyes, you will not see the myriad things. If you are not enlightened, Buddha-nature will not be manifested."

Someone asked, "In the past and now it has been said that satori is difficult to attain. How can we become enlightened?"

I said, "Under the Sixth Patriarch⁴ more than forty people and under Ma-tsu⁵ more than one hundred and thirty attained great enlightenment."

Then he asked, "What is satori?"

I said, "It is original Mind."

He asked, "What is this original Mind?"

I said, "'Not one thing.'"

He asked again, "What is this 'not one thing?'"

I said nothing.

The ordinary man does not know cause and effect. When he becomes enlightened, then he knows cause and effect, and by his practice, he goes beyond cause and effect.

This country is far removed from the sages. Now it is the era of sages. To get birth in such a time is really something rare.

Someone asked, "What can be agreed on as being the sign of the era of sages?"

I said, "To turn towards the Buddha's Way is extremely precious. The harmony of the three things is not something that is up to the individual.

"First, if the rulers of the land become sages, the waves of the Four Seas will be calm. This is the first of the three things. Even though the land may be peaceful, if individuals are not at peace themselves, what can be done? Now, we are fortunate enough to be in harmony with our friends, this is the second thing. One may teach the Buddha's Way in all kinds of ways, but the true Dharma is a person's mind. This is the direct preaching of the Tathāgata

⁴ Hui-neng 慧能 (638-713). The sixth Patriarch of Zen in China in the line of transmission from Bodhidharma.

⁵ Ma-tsu Tao-i 馬祖道一 (709-788). Chinese Zen Master, eighth in the line of transmission from Bodhidharma.

Śakyamuni. There hasn't been any such harmonization of these three things attained in this country in the past or the present."

Someone asked about the teaching that there is only one Vehicle, not two and not three.⁶ I said, "The teaching of one Vehicle is a mystery, and this mystery is Mind. Mind is 'not one thing.' 'Not one thing' is the form of Heaven and Earth. Heaven and Earth have no form. 'Not two and not three' means that one cannot approach it with words."

Someone asked, "What is the reason for keeping the five precepts?"

I said, "Killing, stealing, unchastity, lying and drinking—all these are sins of the body. When you become enlightened, there is 'not one thing.'"

Someone asked about the five vital organs. I said, "The five vital organs are given the name of the Tathāgatas of the five knowledges.⁷ The six viscera are given the name of the six Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattvas,⁸ and the seven emotions⁹ are given the name of the seven Buddhas of the past.¹⁰ These are the functions of original Mind."

I said to someone, "Buddha is Mind. Hell is the body. Have Buddha remove the evils of the body. When the evils of the body disappear, you become pure."

When the karma of the self is exhausted,

⁶ The teaching of "one Vehicle" or *ekayāna* is found in *The Lotus Sutra (Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka)*.

⁷ 五知. This term normally refers to the five kinds of sense-perception but here is probably an equivalent for "five wisdoms," referring to the fivefold wisdom symbolized by the five Buddhas of the *vajradhātu* mandala in Shingon Buddhism.

⁸ 六地藏. Six bodhisattvas of the Kṣitigarbha group of the *garbadhātu* mandala in Shingon Buddhism. See Ryujun Tajima, *Les deux grands mandalas et la doctrine de l'esoterisme Shingon*, 1959, pp. 108–112.

⁹ Pleasure, anger, sorrow, joy, love, hate and desire.

¹⁰ According to Buddhist tradition, the historical Buddha, Śakyamuni, was one of a series of Buddhas appearing in the world. In past ages he was preceded by six previous Buddhas and will be succeeded by Maitreya, the future Buddha.

THE EASTERN BUDDHIST

You are pure,
You are the Buddha of Mind as it is.

In response to someone's request: " 'From the beginning not one thing exists' is the Tathāgata. If you never make use of it you get thoughts of great evil. If you make use of it constantly you get the mind of great compassion, the great perfect illumination responding to all the myriad things. When, facing things, you become this perfect Mind, then it is certain that the Tathāgata is using this body."

Money is the treasure of the whole world. With evil people, it makes other people suffer and you suffer yourself. With good people, it helps people, and you get pleasure yourself, too.

Wisdom is the treasure inside the body. If you use it from thought-attachment, you and other people both suffer. If original Mind uses it, you and other people rejoice together.

"Subhūti, if a person says that the Tathāgata comes or goes, sits or lies down, this person does not understand the meaning of my teaching. And why? The Tathāgata does not come from anywhere, nor does he go anywhere. For this reason he is called the Tathāgata."¹¹

I told someone about the real meaning of this: "It is like, for example, the reflection of things in a mirror. Seeing, hearing, perceiving and knowing, walking, standing, sitting and lying down, do not let thoughts come to a stop on any object. Just let your eye be like a mirror. Why should you dwell on the objects of desire?" He joined his hands together in agreement.

Subhūti said to the Buddha, "World-honored One, the attainment by the Buddha of unsurpassed and perfect enlightenment is regarded as non-attainment." The Buddha said, "Just so, just so. My unsurpassed and perfect enlightenment has not attained even the smallest dharma, and this is called unsurpassed and perfect enlightenment."¹²

¹¹ From *The Diamond Sutra (Vajracchedikā-prajñā-pāramitā)*, Taishū 8, p. 752b.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 751c.

This is the secret of all the sutras. To become a dead man while still alive is not something likely to become common in this world.

“Subhūti, if a person should gather and give in charity an amount of the seven treasures equal to all the Sumerus, Kings of Mountains, of the three thousand great chiliocosms, and if another person should receive even four verses of this Prajñā-pāramitā Sutra, and recite them and preach them to others, his merit would exceed that of the first person a hundred times, a million times, nay, incalculably.”¹³

Here the Buddha urges people to enter the Buddha's Way. Indeed, it is precious. How can a person who does not know the great Dharma escape from suffering age after age? The preciousness of the great Dharma is a treasure which nothing in the world can replace. How stupid it is—no matter what things are like right now, still death is in front of your eyes. From the lord down to parents, brothers, sisters and wives, not a single person will be left. We who do not learn even from this should pray to Heaven, offering prayers to the gods and Buddhas, imploring them that in this life we might at all costs attain the great Way and be born no more. People who hear me say this say, “I don't have time; it is difficult for me to strive that way.” I say in reply, “Is he who goes into the mountains and strives there, or he who in the midst of the terrible objects of desire, seeing directly and hearing directly, puts forth his greatest effort, more likely to bring the Way to fruition?” Then these people all answer that the ancient sages said going into the mountains was better.

Someone said, “Although you have a strong desire for the Way, and are in the mountains surrounded only by wind in the pine-trees, moonlight on the snow and the songs of birds, even then thoughts must be extinguished. If in the world where evil thoughts are many, you can extinguish them with a powerful effort, if you kill your own evil thoughts right in the place where you walk along the edge of the sword, then, when you get rid of the suffering of a single day, you are the one who in the midst of fire escapes the pain of fire, far more than the person who strives in the mountains for ten years.”

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 751c-752a.

THE EASTERN BUDDHIST

I asked people who pray to Buddha, each taking the Buddha's teaching in his own way, what their feelings were. They said that although they don't know whether it is true or not, because they have heard that after death one falls into all kinds of terrible hells, or that there is a place called the Land of Bliss, they implore Buddha praying that they may go to the Land of Bliss. This world is indeed wretched, but even if you sink down in tears of anguish, it is sad just to the extent that cause and effect make it so.

There are people who in this life live pleasantly, but this may be because they long for the Buddha's Way.

There are also people who, knowing nothing about Buddha or gods, pass this life in amusements.

Then there are those who, despising anything to do with gods or Buddha, pass a lifetime of misery.

Then again, some people amuse themselves with the good and bad points of others.

A hermit told this story. Passing by the ruins of the Kaga national shrine, he spent the night at a certain place. He was talking to the landlord and after it was night, suddenly he heard a gurgling sound repeated two or three times. When he asked about it, the landlord said, "I had you in this room so you would see something. Let me show you." They went into the back, and there was a young man of about twenty with two snakes wrapped around his neck, their heads facing one another. When they strained against the neck of the young man he groaned with pain. When the hermit asked how it had come about, the landlord said, "This is my son." He told how he had given a woman to his son for a wife, and how the son had become involved with the maid who was serving his wife. Then the wife, her pride injured, took the maid to the river and pushed her in, but the maid grabbed the wife's sleeve, and both of them fell in and were drowned. Later, near the crossing-place of the river, this young man stepped into the water and two snakes came and twined themselves around his neck. It was very tragic.

A certain old man rented lodgings to the rear of Gojō in Kyoto. About the twelfth month, a child came to him in a dream and said, "If you want money,

go quickly to Gojō bridge, it's at the foot of the bridge. Take it." When he told his wife that he'd had this dream, she said to hurry up and look. The moon was shining, the frost was white, and since it was the coldest time of the year, he was reluctant to get up, but was forced to give in by his wife. When he went to look, he found a leather bag and brought it back. His wife was overjoyed, saying what a blessing it was, but when they quickly opened the bag, it had in it fragments of tea bowls and broken pieces of unglazed pottery and stones wrapped in paper. Saying it was hopeless, they threw the bag away in the underbrush. At daybreak they were called by the landlord. The couple went together and he feasted them, saying he was celebrating his good fortune. When they asked what had happened, he said he had found a leather bag, and when he opened it, it was full of silver. Then the old man told the landlord the story of his dream.

Some people who heard about this said it had happened because the couple had been in too much of a hurry to open the bag, that even the good luck that they had wasn't enough for them, and so on, but although everyone said something different according to his own point of view, there wasn't one person who said that it was because of the evil of the body, and lamenting the shamefulness of evil, removed the evils of his own body, striving on the Buddha's Way. No one knows the karma of the past. It is a miserable thing.

I call satori your own mind. If you have satori, you can become completely free from the evils of the body. This is the power of past practice. The mind is like a mirror which tells us about the good and evil of our own bodies. Because if one becomes a human being one can remove the evil of the body with nothing remaining, it is a precious and rare form of existence. You should not take on the other forms of transmigration. When the evil of the body disappears, that is Buddha.

Someone asked about satori. I replied, "Satori is the eye of Buddha and the marrow of Buddha, and direct realization of Buddha is great bliss. There is nothing which is not always in accordance with this Mind. Satori is so precious, and yet it is the great enemy of Buddha. Don't doubt this! If with enlightenment a person becomes removed from the myriad things, or if there is then the slightest discrimination, this unconcern with the myriad things

is killing your parents, killing your lord, and giving in to your own desires—so satori is the enemy of Buddha.”

Practicing after satori, you should be without body, without thoughts, without things known or unknown. You cannot attain this state, if you do not make satori the basis. You should attain the emptiness of original Mind. The harmony of the three things is not something an individual can attain. The world is the way it is. If you don't attain the great Way now, when do you think you will?

The three thousand worlds have the essence of original Mind.
Never make the slightest mistake of setting up the mind of self.
If you set up the mind of self, you will get the punishment of Heaven,
But Heaven will not punish other sentient beings.
The mind of self falls into dire distress,
For kalpas and thousands of births, far from the Buddha-fruit.
Having managed to get the Buddha-mind, having attained the Buddha-body,
How can you not use the Dharma of the Mind of Suchness?
Responding to things, like the moon in the water,
There is nowhere you do not reach, nowhere you are hindered.
Transcending the myriad things, direct original Emptiness,
In the past and present unchanging, is called the Buddha Dharma.¹⁴

A disciple of mine expounded the meaning of this in Japanese instead of Chinese characters:

In this terrible world of sorrow, just as it is,
The Buddha is not hindered by anything.

Someone asked about how one should perform charitable giving in the practice of Buddhism. I said, “In the end there is no one who will really give three *sen*. And there isn't a single bonze to accept properly the charity of three *sen*.”

¹⁴ The source of this poem has not been identified. Since it is written in a Japanese-flavored Chinese style, it is possible that Munan himself composed it.

He asked, "What do you mean by charity of three *sen*?"

I said, "Who in the world would begrudge three *sen*? It means that you should give the gift of a thousand or tens of thousands of pounds of gold with the mind of one who is giving away three *sen*. Even occasional charity is a great thing. It's something you do for the dead.¹⁵ There is no one who has great sincerity and makes it the standard of his own thoughts. People are thinking of their own advantage or reputation, or they say the amount is too much, they forget propriety, and there is no one who does it for the sake of the dead. And also, if the bonze who receives it does not think of the gift of ten thousand pounds of gold as though it were three *sen*, his condolences are immediately in error. There is no doubt that he will become a beast in the next world."

Sometimes when we wait for a person, he doesn't come—why does this happen?

Sometimes we have the person we are anxiously expecting on our minds, but then suddenly something pressing comes up and we forget our waiting, and then the person comes.

When we wait for someone, he doesn't come. When we don't wait, he does come. Sometimes things don't meet with our expectations, and sometimes they do.

The acts of Heaven are not something we can know. Certainly, if we maintain the Way, we will naturally escape from evil and accumulate good. Do not doubt this.

Scraping together all kinds of things and hoping to impress others, people think only of this life. It's stupid and miserable. The form dies, thought does not die, birth is repeated, and we do not know into what sort of form we will change. When the form or condition is good we go to the limits of conceit, when it is bad and we are poor, we envy the world of flattery. Because of all this, I write about the certainties of the Way. There are so many things like

¹⁵ In this passage Munan is apparently referring to the money given to a priest for conducting a funeral or memorial service.

this, but still people do not know the great Matter. They don't appreciate the really noteworthy points of my stories, but see only the points which interest them. No one applies them to himself. It's sad and dreadful. Those who are my disciples should be unfailingly aware and cautious. They should see what is terrible and what is precious, and because they know the great Dharma forever, and strive until the end of Heaven and Earth, there is no evil for them.

The evil which the people above do not know about is much more prevalent below than they think. If the people above would correct and restrain themselves properly, the evil below would be bound to disappear. If without thinking of driving out the evil below, they would pray to Buddha for the exhaustion of their own karma, and if then their own karma were to be exhausted, there is no doubt that the evil below would become good in the end. If they think of driving out the evil people below and making them suffer, then the evil does not disappear, but becomes an evil of the world at large. In any case, you should know the faults of the body and eliminate your own evil, leaving nothing remaining. As long as those above are upright, the good will not succumb to the evils of those below. If those above are bad, even if those below are good, there is no doubt that in the end the house will fall.

Heaven has no body, no thought, no mind, no right and wrong. When there is a body, there are the eighty-four thousand evil thoughts. It is certain that suffering is on account of the body. This is the great Matter for a person seeking for the great Way.

Although it is true that the body is a wretched thing,
The real truth is that we are deluded by it.

One thousand years after the age of Confucius, the Ch'eng brothers¹⁶ appeared in the world, succeeding to the Way of Confucius, and their transmission has come down to the present. They are the first patriarchs of the Confucian teaching. In admonition they said,

¹⁶ Ch'eng Hao 程顥 (1032-85) and Ch'eng I 程頤 (1033-1107), Sung Neo-Confucians.

JISHŌ-KI

If relations are determined beforehand,
Inwardly they move accordingly.
If one controls the outer,
The inner is peaceful.¹⁷

This is very much in accord with reason. To my way of thinking, the Ch'eng brothers probably knew that people who came after them would be likely to make mistakes, and so they left us their words. I have taken their attitude. For example, if I have something sweet in my mouth, I do not try to tell others about the taste, I give them something sweet and make them know the taste for themselves. If you face the myriad things with the mind of Confucius, there is no confusion.

Someone said, "This country is the country of the gods. To stop practicing the Way of the gods, which we have been blessed with since antiquity, and to practice the Way of Buddha is a great mistake."

I said, "That is foolish. What are called the gods of this country are also Mind. A poem—

If your mind is in accord with the true Way,
Even if you don't pray, the gods will protect you.

There are many poems like this. Besides, the abode of the gods is a person's body. This abiding of the gods is what we call the illumination of the heart. This is Mind. The basis of Confucianism is also Mind. India's Buddha is also Mind. It is certain that it is Mind which has been passed down in the three countries. Confucianism and Shinto teach the rectification of the body and the illumination of the heart. India goes beyond the body and manifests Mind directly, so in India customarily the Buddha's Way is practiced. The sages of these Ways have been revered since antiquity, so if the Buddha's Way prospers, there is nothing wrong. There is no separation between self and others caused by ego; things are very simple. If one person above practices the Way,

¹⁷ The quotation is from the section "Admonitions on Seeing" 視箴 of the Collection of Literary Works 伊川文集 by Ch'eng I contained in the Complete Works of the Two Ch'engs 二程全書.

of those living below, who will suffer? People's suffering comes from the evil thoughts which give rise to self. To be faced with these evil thoughts is to suffer. The evil thoughts of one person above can produce the suffering of the whole land, in the case of provinces, the suffering of the whole province, in the case of houses, the suffering of the whole family. If one person above practices the Buddha's Way, then when he is in authority over the country he will regard the whole land as his child, and the people of the country will revere him as their parent. When the Buddha's Way is incorrectly taught, people think it has to do with things after death. This is a great mistake. People do not know this Mind which they have all the time, and thinking of the body they give in to evil thoughts. What distress results! Their own eyes, ears, mouths, noses, down to their hands and feet, become the enemy of Mind. Faced with this suffering, the grass, trees and the land are made to suffer, to say nothing of people. Within just one life, walking, standing, sitting and lying down, one actually makes one's own body into hell, hungry ghosts, beasts and *asūras*. Protecting the country, protecting the provinces is fruitless. Those below suffer over their treasure if they have money, and suffer from poverty if they are poor, and there is no doubt that after they die they will immediately take the form of beasts.

Recently, the retainer of a certain provincial lord suddenly died while acting as a bailiff for the farmers. His wife and children mourned without ceasing. They were especially distressed by the problem of what to do about the accounting. A maidservant was suddenly possessed, and leapt up into the master's seat, saying, "My wife and children are suffering because I died without settling these debts, and I have come to take care of it now." All kinds of extraordinary things took place. Feeling that it was not a private matter, the family informed the lord. Headed by the lord's advisor, the minor officials assembled in the bailiff's house. The woman in question began to call on many of the officials and question them one by one, and they would not listen to her because she was a woman. Getting angry, she said, "How can you say such things?" leapt into the back and brought out old promissory notes. She said, "Will you say no even to this?" and the officials, extremely astonished, pulled themselves together just as though confronted by the living man, and gave in. Taking the promissory notes they settled the ac-

counts, and undoubtedly they gave what they owed to the man's wife and children.

Sometimes, thinking that for those who get human birth there is something called the Way, people pass through life looking at old books and knitting their brows and looking down on other people.

Some people who think that certain things in Shinto are very important wash the body morning and evening, are always brooding over the proper thing to do, do not mix with others, recite aloud endlessly, censure the Way of Buddha and the Way of Confucius, and constantly pray to the gods for good fortune.

There are people who pass through life self-indulgently, drinking sake and not knowing before from behind.

If you look into the minds of people who pray fervently to the gods, you see that even though they have managed to be born in this world, they think there is no suffering as bad as being poor, and feel that lack of children is suffering, too. Although they pray for wealth and continued prosperity with children, still there will be all kinds of good and bad.

Do not hand over your wealth to your children. They will lose it for certain. Only entering the Buddha's Way is of real importance. There is no doubt that all kinds of good things are there if you have entered the Dharma. Even if you cannot enter the Way of Buddha, try to have compassion. Compassion brings the blessings of Heaven, without any doubt. If you want to attain real compassion, real compassion is to become like a fool, with correctness in the Way whether walking, standing, sitting or lying down.

The story of the Sixth Patriarch's zazen is indescribably precious, but children would find it difficult to understand. Taking his mind, I have written:

Zazen

When deluded imaginings arise,
 You should resolutely enter samadhi.
 You will become pure.
 This is the efficacy of Zen samadhi.

When Zazen Is Perfected

When there is no mind or body,
You know with certainty "Form itself is Emptiness;"
When you are at rest in "Emptiness itself is form,"¹⁸
There is no doubt, no evils act, all virtues function.

To someone: The ordinary man is Buddha himself, but because he does not know this, he suffers on account of the body. Become enlightened, make the Tathāgata purify the evils of the body. This is called practice. When you become pure, that is Buddha.

Someone said, "The spirits of the dead are here in the world, and I am sure that they cause the destruction of both individuals and families."

I said, "There are four kinds of spirits. The first are 'ghosts of the country.' These are rulers of the country from long ago, who still have the desire to communicate with their successors. The second kind are called 'ghosts of the yard.' The third kind are called 'ghosts of the house.' Castles also have the same thing. As far as these three are concerned, if you leave the place where they are, there is no danger. 'Ghosts of the family' you can't escape no matter where you go, but if you call a virtuous Master and hold a memorial service for them, everything will be all right."

I gave someone instruction in cultivating original Mind, saying, "When you find original Mind, you should nurse it like a baby, walking, standing, sitting and lying down, mindful and undefiled by the spirit of the seven emotions. When you maintain original Mind, eventually it grows, and there is nothing in all the myriad things which is not in accordance with Mind. This is such a precious thing, but people think that it's foolish. How sad and miserable. This is the great Matter of men, the essence of the vow which clears away the doubts of a lifetime. There is no doubt that thinking it is foolish will bring retribution. It is definitely true that getting birth into the world of men is rare and precious. This birth is for the sake of attaining liberation. People think

¹⁸ From *The Heart Sutra* (*Prajñā-pāramitā-bhāṣya*).

JISHŌ-KI

that getting on in the world is important, and are lead on by deluded thoughts. Suddenly they are confronted by death, and cry, not knowing what to do. There is nothing they can do then. The Buddha appeared in the world and taught original Mind, directly transcending birth and death and the myriad things. This body is certainly there—he knew with certainty it is not. Sight, hearing and perception and knowing certainly are there—he knew with certainty they are not. Such blessings are the merit of practicing this Way. If you think it is foolish, it is difficult to attain it.”

If you think deeply about practice and look at it closely, you see how many errors there are. You should know original Emptiness. It is where the thoughts of the mind have been completely swept away. The Sixth Patriarch said, “Use the self-nature of *bodhi* and the original purity, and with direct enlightenment, become Buddha.” This is rare and precious.

To people who adore the Buddha, offering flowers and incense, I say, “This is something really precious, and should never be neglected.” I also say, “The Buddha whom you think should be revered is a copy and is bound to be just provisional. The real Buddha is inside the mind.” When I go on to say, “Neglect the Buddha in your mind and you will suffer the retribution,” people are amazed. Then they lament the misery of not knowing the true Buddha, and say “When we face the Buddha-image on the altar with our hands together, we feel this is very important, but usually we are thinking of wretched and impure things. We have made such great error in defiling the mind—how sad!” and are greatly distressed.

To anyone at all entering the Buddha’s Way—
Make your own mind pure!

The man who knows the Buddha Dharma will always be punished.
The man who practices the Buddha Dharma will always get a life of
benefit.¹⁹

Also,

When one feels shame and is fearful toward men, one errs greatly.

¹⁹ 知佛法者必得罰 行佛法者必得利生。 Source unidentified. Possibly composed by Munan.

When one feels shame and is fearful toward Heaven, there is no error.

When one feels no shame and is not fearful toward Heaven, this is the Way.

Then a person is one who knows well.²⁰

A certain old nun said she had doubts about the statement of the Tathāgata Śākyamuni in the *Verses of the Self*: “Should I depart taking with me this great assembly, even though I leave, I shall still be here.”²¹ I said, “If we speak about the manner of this mystery, we call it no-thought. This itself is the mystery that fills Heaven and Earth. It is the eternal abode of the World-Honored One.” The old nun joined her hands together in agreement and departed.

Someone asked, “What is meant by the words of Confucius, ‘To study and at times to practice what one has learned?’”²²

I said, “This one phrase can be applied to all the myriad things, and is truly the utterance of a sage. It means that when studying any Way whatsoever, one should learn it well.”

“What is meant by ‘Is it not after all a pleasure?’”²³

I said, “It means that in whatever Way one follows, one rejoices when ripeness is attained.”

“What is meant by ‘Is it not after all a joy that friends should come from far away?’”²⁴

I said, “It means that the friends whom we like come. ‘Is it not after all a joy’ means to enjoy ourselves learning the Way with them.”

“Not to resent the fact that other people do not know—isn’t this what a

²⁰ 恥恐人時過多 恥恐天時無過 不恥恐天時道 人能知者也。 Source unidentified. Possibly composed by Munan.

²¹ From a verse section in Chapter V of *The Lotus Sutra*, Taishō 9, pp. 43-44. This is not an exact quotation, but apparently a misquotation, misattribution or rough paraphrase of ideas occurring in the verses.

²² The opening phrases of the *Analects* of Confucius.

²³ *loc. cit.*

²⁴ *loc. cit.*

gentleman does?"²⁵ Why did the great sage Confucius use this one word 'gentleman' for one who has no resentment if others do not know something? Will even an ordinary man resent it if others do not know? I felt that there was something odd about this, and when I looked carefully I could see that there was a big mistake in my interpretation. What Confucius said was, "A person does not know but does not become angry." Everyone has within himself something he does not know, and that thing doesn't become angry. This is his teaching of original Mind. It is a rare thing. If you read it properly, this is in accord with the mind of Confucius.

Someone said, "When Confucius said 'Not to resent the fact that people do not know,' the sage meant that if, for example, you have done a great good for someone and that person doesn't know it and instead gives evil in return, you should not resent it."

I said, "It is exactly so. That is just why if all the people in the world reach the state of not knowing the self, they will not resent the not knowing of others. If there is the slightest bit of self, one will certainly resent it. Because one looks to others, one goes against the mind of Confucius. Confucius speaks to each one personally."

"What is meant by 'The Way of Great Learning is to clarify illustrious virtue?' "²⁶

I said, "To clarify the mind."

"What is meant by 'To be intimate with the people?' "²⁷

I said, "When the mind is clarified, one is intimate with the people."

"What is meant by 'To abide in the supreme good?' "²⁸

I said, "Intimacy with the people results from abiding in the ultimate good." He agreed. "When one knows where to abide, then one can determine the goal. When the goal is determined, then one can be calm. When one is calm, then one can rest at ease. When one rests at ease, then one can reflect, and when one reflects one can attain the goal."²⁹ When one considers this, one

²⁵ *loc. cit.*

²⁶ Beginning of the opening passage of *The Great Learning*.

²⁷ *loc. cit.*

²⁸ *loc. cit.*

²⁹ *loc. cit.*

sees that this is because of abiding in the ultimate good.”

“What is meant by ‘Things have their roots and branches, affairs have their ends and their beginnings. Knowing what is first and what is last brings one near the Way?’ ”³⁰

I said, “This refers to what follows it.”

“‘The men of ancient times who wanted to clarify illustrious virtue in the world, first controlled their countries. Wanting to control their countries, first they ordered their households. Wanting to order their households, first they disciplined their persons. Wanting to discipline their persons, first they rectified their minds. Wanting to rectify their minds, first they made their wills sincere.’³¹ What is meant by this?”

I said, “By a transition in stages the passage comes to rest in the mind, in order to show the workings of the mind. This corresponds to the statement, ‘Affairs have their ends and their beginnings.’ ”

“What is meant by, ‘Wanting to make their wills sincere, first they extended their knowledge. The extension of knowledge is in the investigation of things?’ ”³²

I said, “This is a correct teaching. Reaching the truth of things—this is the secret. It is original Mind. Confucius calls original Mind not knowing, Tzu-szu³³ says the nature of the will of Heaven, and Ts’eng-tzu³⁴ says to reach to things. In any case, it is original Mind and original Nature.”

“What is meant by, ‘What is willed by Heaven is nature?’ ”³⁵

I said, “What is outside the body is Heaven. The nothingness inside the hearts of people is bestowed from Heaven, and this is nature.”

“What is meant by, ‘To be in accord with nature is the Way?’ ”³⁶

I said, “The state when the body is without thoughts is nature. It means that you should see, hear and perceive the myriad things with an undefiled mind. When the lord of seeing, hearing and perceiving is illumined, then what

³⁰ *loc. cit.*

³¹ *loc. cit.*

³² *loc. cit.*

³³ 子思. Supposed author of *The Doctrine of the Mean*.

³⁴ 曾子. Supposed author of *The Great Learning*.

³⁵ Opening passage of *The Doctrine of the Mean*.

³⁶ *loc. cit.*

comprises the myriad things is also illumined.”

“What is meant by, ‘The cultivation of the Way is teaching?’ ”³⁷

I said, “It means that real striving and attainment become a person’s teacher.”

“What is meant by ‘The Way cannot be left for a moment. If it can be left, then it is not the Way?’ ”³⁸

“There is no need to explain this.”

“What is meant by, ‘Therefore the gentleman is cautious about what is not seen and apprehensive about what is not heard?’ ”³⁹

I said, “Nature is not seen, and this is ‘From the beginning not one thing exists.’ It means to be cautious and apprehensive in mind.”

“What is meant by, ‘There is nothing more visible than what is hidden, and nothing more manifest than what is subtle. Therefore the gentleman is restrained even when by himself?’ ”⁴⁰

I said, “The gentleman cultivates original Mind and original Nature. Cultivation means that he is undefiled by the evils of the body. It is a terrible thing to be defiled by the evils of the body. Mind is called gods, is called the Way of Heaven, and is called Buddha. Although the word is different in the three countries, the essence is one. Here it is called directly the rightness of nature. It is when you have become ‘not one thing.’ The mistake of the ordinary man is here: he thinks that if it’s ‘not one thing,’ then there is no seeing, hearing, perception and knowing. For the sage, ‘not one thing’ actually is seeing, hearing, perception and knowing. This should be well understood.”

“What is meant by, ‘When joy, anger, fear and pleasure have not yet arisen, this is called the Mean?’ ”⁴¹

I said, “The state of nothingness is called nature, is called Mind, and is also called the Mean.”

“What is meant by, ‘When they have arisen and attain their proper degree, this is called harmony?’ ”⁴²

³⁷ *loc. cit.*

³⁸ *loc. cit.*

³⁹ *loc. cit.*

⁴⁰ *loc. cit.*

⁴¹ *loc. cit.*

⁴² *loc. cit.*

THE EASTERN BUDDHIST

I said, "When they come forth from original Mind and original Nature, they are all straightforward. When they come forth from the thoughts of the body, they have the errors of words, and when people hear they suffer."

"What is meant by, 'That which is the Mean is the great foundation of the world?'"⁴³

I said, "'Not one thing' is the form of Heaven and Earth."

"What is meant by, 'That which is harmony is the universal way of the world?'"⁴⁴

I said, "When original Mind and original Nature extend to things, this is illumination and goodness."

"What is meant by, 'When harmony and the Mean are attained, Heaven and Earth find their proper places and the myriad things are nourished?'"⁴⁵

"When a person acts towards the myriad things with the realization that original Mind and original Nature are the essence he is a sage. Even when people have such a precious thing within their own bodies, they still hold on to evil thoughts and torment themselves and others. It is extremely foolish. First their children will suffer the consequences, and afterwards their lineage will come to an end, without a doubt."

In ancient China there was a man skilled at the lute named Po Ya.⁴⁶ There was a man who listened to the lute called Tzu-ch'i. One time Tzu'ch'i went to Po Ya's place, listened to him play the lute, and then went home. Later, when he was asked why he had gone back, he replied, "In the sound of the lute I heard something being killed so I went home." Then Po Ya said, "I saw a bee caught in the web of a garden spider and I had a feeling of danger. It probably echoed in the lute."

A disciple of mine listened to the time-bell being struck. Somehow when it was struck it seemed to resound to Heaven, and it was as though evil

⁴³ *loc. cit.*

⁴⁴ *loc. cit.*

⁴⁵ *loc. cit.*

⁴⁶ Po Ya 伯牙 lived during the Spring and Autumn period. It was said that after the death of his friend Tzu-Ch'i 子期 his lute would no longer give any sound, and he stopped playing. The story is told in the *Lieh-tzu* and elsewhere.

spirits were withdrawing. Another time the vibration was bad, and it was as though evil spirits were approaching. When the person who struck the bell was asked about it, he said that sometimes when he struck the bell he had things on his mind, and sometimes he struck it without thinking of anything at all. This kind of skill in the Way is hard for ordinary people to reach.

In the chapter "On Skilful Means" in *The Lotus Sutra* it says: "Enough, enough! This is not to be explained. My Dharma is mysterious and difficult to conceive."⁴⁷

The mystery is difficult to express in words. For example, when you are with people and don't have any special thought, even if you talk for a whole day the talk isn't used up, you aren't even aware of talking, there is total agreement, and forgetting everything, your mind is really at rest. When you leave, you don't even know what you have talked about. This is what is done by this mystery. If you hear something which is not at all harmonious with Mind, your spirits are adversely affected; you become that thought itself. This is something which is not done by the mystery. The mystery is like Mind and thought is like the body.

"The arrogant who hear will never believe."⁴⁸

The mystery fills Heaven and Earth, but still there is self. Whatever you do, this is the direct acting of the mystery. I hear people agreeing with me, but I see that because of their habitual evil thoughts, they make light of this mystery because it cannot be described in words. They will pay the penalty without fail. When you attain to this mystery, you are directly the Buddha-body. This is the rarest thing in the world. That is why if there is the slightest bit of deliberation or discrimination, it differs from the mystery. Retribution is certain.

"Even though one extinguishes all seeing, hearing, perception, and knowing and maintains quietness deep within, still there is a trace of the discrimination of the dharma-dusts."⁴⁹

"Quietness deep within" is not something attained by the ordinary man,

⁴⁷ *The Lotus Sutra*, Ch. II, Taishō 9, p. 6c.

⁴⁸ *loc. cit.*

⁴⁹ 緣滅一切見聞覺知，內守幽閑猶爲法塵分別影事。 Source unidentified.

but although it is very rare, still it is difficult for one in this state to reach Buddhahood.

Someone asked, "The living beings in the world all have various forms. Are their species determined from the very beginning?"

I said, "There are species, but Mind is the one essence of Heaven and Earth."

He said, "What is the sign of one essence?"

I said, "We see the moon, we see flowers, we hear a bell. Who doesn't? This is the sign of the one essence. Although in thought there are eighty-four thousand transformations, first they are divided into four: birth from a womb, from an egg, from moisture, and by metamorphosis.⁵⁰

"In the womb-birth, one takes the form of being born from a womb. This is the species of men and animals. Because of their feelings of lust and thoughts of greed they come into the world. Those who had little lust and many roots of merit in the past are now born as human beings and abide in the nine grades of existence.⁵¹ Even an emperor or a king, to say nothing of those below, will get birth as a beast if in the past his lust was great and his roots of merit few.

"In the present world, people who do not know the Buddha's Way and give themselves over to lust, full of selfish thoughts, die and their bodies return to the earth. Their evil thoughts remain and they become hungry ghosts or beasts.

"People who in their present life prize the Buddha's Way, who place compassion above all, who go beyond right and wrong, and remove the evils of the body, who make no distinction between self and others and whose thoughts of the body have utterly disappeared, transcend birth and death and the myriad things and attain liberation.

"The egg-birth is the species of fish and birds. People of deeply evil desires,

⁵⁰ Traditional Buddhist classification.

⁵¹ 九品. According to the Meditation Sutra (觀無量壽佛經 Taishō 12, 340c) beings are born in nine stations in the Paradise of Amitābha according to their past karma. The sutra has been translated by Takakusu Junjirō under the title *Amitāyur-dbyāna-sūtra* in the volume *Buddhist Mahāyāna Texts, Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. 49. For a description of the nine grades see pp. 188-199.

because they do not know the repayment of an obligation, will make repayment in their own flesh after they die.

“As for the birth by humidity, when the folly of people is extreme, because they die having given themselves over to evil feelings and evil thoughts, they become insects born by humidity, and unable to hear the Buddha’s teaching, they fall into countless eons of suffering.

“In the birth by metamorphosis, one takes various forms from the evil energies of one thought. Mind in all the myriad things adapts itself to various forms, there is no doubt of this. It is like this: if you get the form of an ox, you will pull a cart. If you get the form of a horse, you will carry things on your back.”

Once I happened to be in the room where a person of an extremely evil consciousness had fallen asleep. Suddenly he woke up and started telling about his dreams, describing terrifying experiences and torments. It made me think of the sutras. The evil thoughts of a person’s life manifest themselves in a terrible way in the moments before death. To a person of sinful eyes Heaven and Earth become raging flames, all kinds of beings of hideous form appear and carry him off, and he becomes aware that he is falling into hell. And the Buddha has taught that it is the same with sins of the mouth and ear. The story of this bad person’s dream brought clearly to mind the Buddha’s teaching. Even when a person is asleep for just a short while, although this body does not move his evil thoughts fly from here to far off, and he suffers repeatedly. How much greater is the suffering when the body disappears, the evil thoughts fall into hell and there is no waking up from this condition. We should always be mindful, and come to a real understanding of this.

Teaching someone, I said, “If you say bad things about people higher than yourself, people practicing the Way, or people who have virtue, you are sure to suffer the retribution.”

Someone asked about retribution. There is past and present retribution. People usually say that if a person dies, or has no children, or loses his health or his income, that it is retribution. Things never accord with our desires, though they may be reasonable, but differ this way and that way, and we suffer unexpectedly in unseen ways. This is the retribution people don’t know about.

Mind

It is Buddha. It is gods. It is the Way of Heaven. It is the lord of seeing, hearing, perception and knowing. Beyond the myriad dharmas and pervading the myriad dharmas, beyond birth and death, it is the great, eternal peace and bliss.

Thought

It is the lord of seeing, hearing, perception and knowing. Because we constantly think of the body, lost in lust, covetousness and jealousy, we suffer. We anticipate the future and regret the past and show each other tremendous contempt.

To a certain person—

As a medicine for the arising of deluded imaginings,
Nothing compares with Zen samadhi.

To a certain person—

If you always maintain the five precepts,
In the end you will become a precept-breaking monk.

In response to someone's request—

Although people are still far from the Dharma-Way, no matter what you
do,
Let there be those at least who understand the truth of death.

To someone who is always smart—

Cleverness is your own enemy;
When you become stupid, you are a god of Sumiyoshi.⁵²

To someone who feels that life goes on too long—

Life is just like a game of hide-and-seek.
You take the world of delusion for your own.

On a picture of Bodhidharma—

⁵² A Shinto shrine in Osaka.

JISHŌ-KI

Thanks to your teaching of the true Dharma,
We make ours what we do not know.

To someone asking about the great Dharma—
Mind itself is the truth of the true Dharma.
No matter what happens it can't be known.

To a certain person—
No matter what you do, other than dying
There is no way of entering the Way.

To one who asks sincerely about the Way—
If there is a person who truly dies morning and evening,
He goes directly beyond this floating world.

To someone concentrating on the Buddha's Way—
When you leap upside down and sideways,
There is nothing of yours that is not yours.

To a person who talks too much about the virtues and faults of others—
You add the burden of others' faults and virtues
To your own delusion, which is bad enough even if you don't.

To someone who thinks his life will be long—
How long do you think this life will be yours?
For "today" is constantly changing into "yesterday."

To a person who, while praying to become a Buddha, does not know the
truth—
The evil thoughts which defile the Buddha within one's own heart
Are signs that one will become a beast.

Confucius said, "My Way is run through by a single thing."⁵³ This means

⁵³ *Analects*, 4: 15.

that Mind permeates Heaven and Earth. This is the *mahā-prajñā-pāramitā* of the Buddha's Dharma.

Someone asked why "Confucius did not speak about strange phenomena, feats of strength, disorders or spirits."⁵⁴

I said, "These things do not exist for the sage."

The person who was asking said, "Chinese people say that he didn't speak about them because strange things, feats of strength, disorders and spirits are not authentic."

There was a person who received an inheritance from his parents. Although his father, because he was his own child, took good care of him, his stepmother hated him. The child did not know this and felt grateful for his father's love. Then, even though he got the inheritance, he soon became poor. This was because of the effect of the resentment of his stepmother. After his father died and the stepmother was left, she felt sorry for him as though he were her own child, but she went against her feelings. Anyway, even when we know how terrible thoughts can be, still we don't get rid of our own evil thoughts.

As for people who did not get inheritance, in one case out of very many, a person who had not the slightest resentment toward his parents gave his wealth to his younger brother and lived simply, and in the end his house became rich. If only the path is right, Heaven will give wealth. If you don't know this, and thinking that you're smart, always try to do things your own way, things will always go badly.

A person who cared deeply about practice was lamenting the fact that he had no teacher, and said he would go into the mountains. I asked him whether the Mind of Buddha had appeared. He said that among people there was so much commotion that it was difficult to attain it, and that he would go into the mountains and search for it in the silence. I said, "After knowing Buddha, go to the mountains for cultivation," and composed this poem:

If a person goes into the mountains without satori,
It is a sign that he will become a beast.

⁵⁴ *Analects*, 7: 20.

JISHŌ-KI

Composed for those who are practicing—

When you see a beautiful form, this is Mind.

The delusion comes from your own body.

The person practicing should be far away from the relation of man and woman;

Even a sharp sword becomes dulled in the fire.

The things that become excellent in leaving the world

Are a bonze, lust and greed.

In the houses of warriors, some people said that the Buddha's Way was contrary to their Way; people would become soft and lose the family traditions. I said to them, "Why do you say so? The Buddha's Way won't necessarily be any different; it is a person's mind. And with the mind of simplicity, you should be able to rule the country well. For example, even when at the lord's command you die in his place, if the great Way is sure, you directly get free from birth and death, and your mind will be at ease. In this world of turmoil, when friend and foe are set apart, for an upright general whose mind of compassion is deep there will be many followers. Even in military strategy he is not likely to lose the help of Heaven. Uprightness in simplicity is Heaven itself."

There is nothing so pitiable as man. He prays to the gods and to Buddha and asks for wealth and rank. He doesn't know that when he gives up his demanding attitude, then riches and rank will come.

We like to eat delicacies, but we don't know that our best appetite comes when we are hungry.

If instead of wanting things that are pleasant to the body, we don't concern ourselves with the body, we will be more at ease.

You should never neglect the anniversary day of your parents' death. There will be retribution without fail. To be unfilial to parents who are alive is even more of a sacrilege. It goes without saying that there will be retribution for irreverence toward lords and teachers. It is a terrible thing.

Although you may without any doubt have found the “not one thing,” still the evils of the body come forward, and it is as though clouds were covering the sun and moon. Night and day you should remove the evils of your own body. When people say or do evil to you, you should be glad that the evils of the body are disappearing. If you strive and strive like this, when the karma of the body is exhausted, then when you are in contact with wealth or involved with the objects of desire, it is certain that you are not defiled. Then, if you conduct a funeral, the spirit rests; if you teach, people agree. As long as your own karma is not used up, if someone asks about the Way, you should talk with him feeling that this is the practice of both of you. If you have the slightest consciousness of having achieved something, there is no doubt that there will be retribution.

The wretchedness of the prayers of an ordinary man! Although he knows that nothing in the world is fixed, he prays for the permanent, although he knows the repulsiveness of old age, he prays for long life, although when he is young he dislikes old people, he wants to mix with people when he himself is old, and although he knows that his wishes can't be granted, still in his thoughts and speech he prays to the gods to hear him.

Teaching someone, I said, “Nothing compares with really practicing at the origin. For example, if rather than praying to the gods and Buddha about the suffering of the body, you realize that it is created by your past karma, it will stop.”

When a possessed woman later came to her senses, someone asked me, “It is said that in the true Dharma there are no miracles. How can there be a miracle?”

I said, “There are no miracles in the true Dharma. That a calm-minded person becomes possessed is miraculous. That the person becomes the same as before is not any further miracle.”

He agreed.

I said to a person who asked about “Deluding passions are *bodbi*,”⁵⁵ “This

⁵⁵ 煩惱即菩提. The statement is found in *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, p. 148.

is in every way in accord with the Buddha's preaching."

He said, "If the acts of an ordinary person like me are *bodbi*, then there's no sense in the Buddha Dharma."

I said, "It makes sense. Buddha is Mind, and as for the functions of Mind, there is no doubt that 'Deluding passions are *bodbi*' and 'Samsara is Nirvana.' For a person who does not practice, '*bodbi*' is deluding passions. When the thoughts of the body appear, there's nothing good. It's something wretched."

I met an old woman. I asked her, "What koan⁵⁶ are you practicing?"

She said, "*W'bo*."⁵⁷

"I can tell you about it," I said, "There is something that utilizes everyone, even Śakyamuni and Maitreya." I said, "Please come over here," and she came as I asked. Then I said, "What is the thing which has just now utilized your body?"

The old woman said, "Not one thing."

I said, "We give various names to the very 'not one thing' which utilizes you, and call it koan. Not knowing this, we search outside, and so there is delusion."

The old woman said, "Thank you. How can I cultivate it?"

I said, "By the practice of not being defiled by the evils of the body."

Teaching someone: We came into this world to die. Because we think we came to live, we suffer on account of death. A person who thinks constantly about death, concentrating his mind on the one Great Matter of death, sees what it is that dies and what it is that lives, and so realizes that Mind itself is Emptiness, free from birth and death and the myriad things. It is the body that lives and dies. If you think about what makes up the body you see it is thought which goes from birth to birth. If you think about what thought is, it is the state of Mind when Mind is stopped. When a single thought-attachment occurs forcefully, you have no regard for the death of the body. It is a dreadful thing. It is because of thought that you have preferences. When you clarify cause and effect, you see that it is all thought.

⁵⁶ 本則.

⁵⁷ 阿難.

Long ago I used to think that after death there was probably nothing, and I thought living itself was the most important thing. But when I considered that a dead person could possess a woman and settle accounting, or become a snake twined around someone's neck, I was astonished at the certainty of existence after death. I also thought that some dead people are born in Paradise and get great bliss, but if in this world you have no evils of the body, that is great bliss. There is nowhere to go to and nothing that remains here. Facing the myriad things, you respond to each one without error. If you set at naught the great grace of the Buddha's appearance in the world, your very tongue will split in two. And as far as hell is concerned, it is not far away, it is right in the suffering caused by the body. Unless you get free from these evils in this life, when this body comes to an end, those thoughts go on and are reborn. There is no doubt that he who has evil thoughts will take the form of a beast. To say this is sad is insufficient. As long as your body's karma is not exhausted, do not talk to people about the Buddha Dharma. There is no question that you will suffer retribution for making people confused. To get rid of the karma of the body you should, in accordance with the teachings of the Buddha, pray fervently to Buddha about your own faults and forcefully remove them. The faults of the body will disappear without fail.

A certain person was talking about Shinto and making it complicated in all kinds of ways, so I said to instruct him, "For instance, Susano-o-no-mikoto is a great storm-god. He was chased to Izumo, and when Amaterasu-Ōmikami became ruler of Japan, it was beneficial to the myriad things. Here the body of a person is compared to Susano-o-no-mikoto. When the thoughts of the body arise, we have no regard for death and do great evil. When there is no body things are constantly in harmony. This compares the mind of people to Amaterasu-Ōmikami."

The Buddha Dharma has deviated from the teachings of the Tathāgata Śakyamuni. The Pure Land of Mind-Only is his teaching of the simplicity of Mind, and the Amitābha of one's own body is his direct teaching on the body. With things like the descent in purple clouds of Amitābha, Avalokiteśvara

and Mahāsthāmaprāpta⁵⁸ confusion arises about skilful means. Zen gets excited with debates about doctrine, and the wonderful doctrine of the letter *A*⁵⁹ is mixed with worldly prayers. It is shameful to go on this way.

To pray to the gods about things that are not discussed even between master and retainer, father and son, husband and wife, brothers, or friends—this is an attitude that will bring retribution.

To pray to Buddha for the eradication of deluded thoughts and for realization of Buddhahood will extinguish sinful karma.

The sage has not the slightest wisdom. The wise man has supreme wisdom, but even with supreme wisdom, it is very difficult for him to understand the sage.

Sagehood pervades Heaven and Earth and the myriad things. Even when the sage happens to take human form and we say that he knows things, that knowledge appears as a wisdom which overshadows the sun and moon.

The sage knows nothing of this life and future lives.

The ordinary man knows about this life and future lives.

★ ★ ★

I was born in a poor neighborhood and when I was a child was awkward in appearance and weak in constitution. We lived in the village of Fujikawa in Sekigahara in Mino, and my usual occupation was tending the cattle. When I reached the age of fifteen, I traveled with my father to Kyoto and passed the time there until I was twenty. I saw the vicissitudes of this transient world, and pondered the teaching of the “special transmission.” To attain it I shaved off my hair and beard and dyed my robe, and visited teachers asking about the

⁵⁸ In the Pure Land sects, it is said that the “three Holy Ones” 三尊, Amitābha and his attendant Bodhisattvas, appear from the West in purple clouds at the time of the devotee’s death to guide him to Paradise.

⁵⁹ Refers to Shingon Buddhism. The letter *A*, first letter of the Sanskrit alphabet, is the seed-mantra of Mahāvairocana in the *garbadhātu*. See Yoshito Hakeda, *Kūkai: Major Works*, 1972, p. 239, and pp. 247–250.

Way. I wandered east and west, sleeping in the dew and lodging in the grasses, and was growing older. Then I heard of a teacher in the mountains northwest of Mino who was a man who could "draw out the nails and pull out the wedges." I immediately went to him, and entered his room. For twenty or thirty years since I received his instruction, whether drinking tea or eating rice, I went on cultivating this matter.

One time a guest who was a Confucian came to visit me. He was an old friend. Together we drank coarse tea and ate my humble food, we talked, and he stayed overnight. My visitor said to me, "The Buddha's Way exalts Emptiness and says that there is no reality in anything. How can you have fallen into it?"

I replied, "Look at the books of Confucius. There is no place where it says to praise yourself and blame others. Why do you say something different from what Confucius says?" But I didn't know whether what my friend said was right or not, so often I have taken up the sayings of Confucius, and have written my comments. In this way I penetrate the meaning and laugh with satisfaction.