

GENJO-KOAN.

THE PROBLEM OF EVERYDAY LIFE.

Delusion, enlightenment, training, life, death, Buddhas and all living things are in existence when there is Buddhism; none of the above exist when all is within the Truth; since the Way of the Buddha transcends unity and duality, all of the above exist; whilst we adore flowers they wither; weeds grow strong whilst we long for their destruction. When we wish to teach and enlighten all things by ourselves, we are deluded; when all things teach and enlighten us, we are enlightened: to enlighten delusion is to become Buddha; most living things are deluded within enlightenment—some are enlightened within enlightenment; others deluded within delusion. There is no need to know that one is identical with Buddha when Buddha is truly Buddha for a truly enlightened Buddha expresses his Buddhahood in his daily life: to observe objects and voices, with complete awareness of body and mind, is very different from seeing a reflection in a mirror or the moon reflected in water; even if you see one side of something the other will still be in shadow.

When one studies Buddhism, one studies oneself; when one studies oneself, one forgets oneself; when one forgets oneself one is enlightened by everything and this very enlightenment breaks the bonds of clinging to both body and mind not only for oneself but for all beings as well. If the enlightenment is True it even wipes out clinging to enlightenment, therefore it is imperative that we return to, and live in, the world of ordinary men. When a man first sees the Truth he automatically transcends the boundaries of truth; once the Truth has been awakened within a man he is simultaneously his own Original Face. It is normal for a man, whilst sailing and observing the shore, to think that the shore is moving instead of the boat but, should he look carefully, he will find that it is the boat which is doing the actual moving: in the same way as this, it is because man observes everything from a mistaken viewpoint of his body and mind that he comes to the conclusion that they are eternal however, should he learn to observe them correctly, as a result of

penetrating Truth, he will discover that no form whatsoever attaches itself substantially to anything. The wood that is burnt upon a fire becomes ashes; it does not again become wood; you must not think that wood comes first and ashes afterwards. You must clearly understand that a piece of burning wood has both a before and an after; however, in spite of the fact that it has before and after, it is cut off therefrom: ashes, however, have before and after: in the same way that wood does not again become wood after becoming ashes so, in the very same way, man is not reborn again as man after dying; it is therefore correct for Buddhism to say that life does not become death and equally true to say that death does not become life—the Buddha Himself constantly preached this. The two above views are called non-life and non-death. The two, life and death, are simply positions in time as are spring and winter; winter no more becomes spring than spring becomes summer. The moon reflected in water is the same as the enlightenment that a man can reach; the moon is not wetted by the water and the water does not become disturbed: however much light the moon may radiate, its reflection can still be seen in a puddle; in the same way, the full moon and the limitless sky may be seen reflected in a single dewdrop suspended from a grass-blade. Man is not restrained by enlightenment and the moon is not restrained by the water; man puts nothing in the way of enlightenment and the dewdrop puts nothing in the way of either the moon or the limitless sky; in addition to this, the deeper the moon's reflection, the higher the moon—the length of time of the reflection is in ratio to the depth of the water and the fullness of the moon.

When a man has an incomplete knowledge of the Truth he feels that he already knows enough and when he has understood the Truth fully he feels sure that something is lacking. If you can see no land or mountains, when sailing, the ocean appears rounded but it is neither round nor square being in possession of a myriad characteristics. Some people regard it as a palace and others as a form of ornamentation but it is only for a very short time that it appears round owing to the distance we are able to see; this distance is constantly changing; we must view all things

bearing this in mind. There are many things within the world of enlightenment but the Zen trainee can only see as far as his present understanding permits him.

If one would know the Truth, it is essential to know that the ocean and the mountains have many other attributes, in addition to being square or circular, and that there are many other worlds in addition to this. Our immediate surroundings are of no account: it is essential to know that the ocean is contained within a single drop of water and that the Truth is manifesting itself eternally on the very spot on which we are now standing.

The ocean is limitless no matter how far fish may swim therein; the sky is limitless no matter how far a bird may fly therein: from the very beginning of all things, both the fish and the birds have been one with the ocean and the sky respectively. Understand clearly that, when a great need appears, a great use appears also; when there is small need, there is small use; it is obvious, then, that full use is made of all things at all times according to the necessity thereof. When birds are out of unity with the sky, or fish out of unity with the ocean, they die, for the life of fish is lived in the ocean and the life of birds is lived in the sky: it is equally true that the life of the sky is lived in the birds and the life of the ocean is lived in the fish; birds are life and fish are life—it is easily possible to find many examples of the above idea. In spite of the facts of training and enlightenment, and variations in the length of a man's life span, all ways of living are the very personification of Truth: should a fish try to go beyond the limitations of the ocean, however, or a bird beyond the limitations of the sky there will be no resting-place for either.

Should you touch the Truth your every action will be vital and express the Way naturally for your every action will be fully understood and digested Truth performed in the ordinary daily activities of an ordinary man. This Truth can never be understood as a result of conceptual duality such as big and small or subject and object; the Way of Truth existed from the very beginning and makes no special appearance now,



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which is just as it should be. It is because the Way of Truth is as stated above that, after taking up one thing, you understand that one thing and, after finishing a practice, you understand that practice; this is the way in which Buddhism itself is practiced. It is not possible for us to know clearly when we are giving deep expression to the Way of Truth since it is an action which arises simultaneously and synonymously with Buddhist study.

It is wrong to believe that one is fully aware of being enlightened, as personal knowledge, even after enlightenment: that which is intuitive cannot necessarily be given easy expression and definite form even though enlightenment is already ours. One summer day a Zen teacher sat fanning himself when a monk asked, “Since the nature of wind is

stationary and universally present, why do you use a fan?" The teacher replied, "Although you know its nature to be stationary, you do not know why it is universally present." "Why is it universally present?" asked the monk: for answer the teacher merely continued fanning himself and the monk bowed: the True Way of Transmission and enlightenment, which is the result of real experience, is the same as this. One who thinks that fanning is not needed, simply because wind is stationary by nature and requires no fan since it can be sensed, understands nothing whatsoever of its nature and its eternal presence: it is because it is eternally here that the wind of Buddhism makes the earth golden and the rivers run with ghee.