

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: February 6, 2005

Location: Chicago

Event: Unknown

Transcriber: Bopkyong Lisa Newton

Date of transcription: November 27, 2022

(NOTE: Audio starts with below, perhaps no poem before hand, or cut off from the audio)

Wherever you would be sitting, or standing, or lying down that would always be the rightful place for you. If you can fix your mind on that, then you have peace of mind and you are at home in the universe.

We did contemplation on three qualities of our mind or of our Buddha-mind, that is your mind being peace, your mind being love, your mind being happiness. So you breathe in and out all the time, that's why you are here. You are alive, you are among the living. So you breathe in and out, each time you breathe in and out, you breathe in peace and you breathe out peace to the world. And at the same time you breathe in love and you breathe out love. And you breathe in happiness and joy of your living and you breathe out joy and happiness. So all beings, all living beings, share peace, joy, happiness, and love. And knowing this deeply from the bottom of your heart is called wisdom or wisdom heart. And the realization of the three qualities of your Buddha-mind and wisdom heart is called humility. And the first sign of your spiritual humility comes in the form of gratitude, grateful heart. You feel grateful, that means you stop complaining and become free from complaints and just be grateful. If you feel grateful, then you become free from complaints.

Here, aside from our meditation practice, we also do prostrations and we do chanting. We do prostrations as cultivation, but also as a prayer. So when we perform prostrations we mobilize three packages, that's body, mind, and speech. So you involve the body doing prostrations and your mind, keeping your spiritual focus, which is cultivation, and then with your speech we recite Gwanseum bosal or Jijang bosal or Munsu bosal depending upon the occasion. And so prostrations as a prayer, we use Gwanseum bosal. So it's prayer, but it's also a prayer to yourself as well as to the world. So prayer to yourself is cultivation, in other words, you have to cultivate a true and sincere heart in order to deliver your good will to the world, that the message is as you care for yourself, so you care for others, you care for the world because all life is one of which we all partake over and over and over again. Buddhists, they would love to say life after life. And that is actually the bodhisattva's vow. So it helps for you to pray for others, for the world from time to time. And also those of you who practice meditation, who practice hwadu, it helps to say out loud, not too loud, but at least your body-mind should be able to listen to your practice from time to time during the daytime or in the midst of daily activities so that you would stay awake, so that you'd be able to maintain a modicum of wakefulness, a modicum of sanity. Otherwise

you get so easily consumed in what you're running about. Sometimes we run around for unlofty reasons and waste a lot of time worrying about things. So we're supposed to be, each of us, when we say our mind is Buddha, our body-mind is Buddha, means we are a living embodiment of something that is true and noble and infinite. We say living embodiment of love and wisdom, so you should not forget that in your everyday life, at least Monday through Friday. You see, to Westerners, I give you the weekend off like today, it's the Super Bowl!

It's something like this, there's this one fellow was keeping, you know, five monkeys. So it was wintertime, the food supply was low, you see. So he had chestnuts to feed them, you see. So he'd say, "Okay for your breakfast..." so one morning since the food supply was running low. It was a long winter like in Chicago. It's quite a while until spring comes, like we have to wait out until April, right? So okay it was a ration. So "Okay for breakfast you'll get only two chestnuts each of you and for lunch you have three. And then for dinner you have five." They got all upset, you see, and angry, and they were unhappy. So he said, "Okay, okay, okay. In a couple of days" he said, "you'll have four chestnuts for breakfast and five chestnuts for lunch and three chestnuts for dinner." And they were very happy! But sometimes, you're the same. So just say, well you know, seven days a week is too much. You're not happy. But weekends off, you're happy! Right?

So, but anyway, remember that your spiritual practice, I always say, you know, like Buddhist practice and cultivation is based on threefold chain. The first is ethical awakening, the Buddhist practice, the final [unclear] is all about waking up, awakening. Awakening to your Buddha nature and awakening to the Buddha nature of other people, even awakening to the Buddha nature of, you know, our President and Rumsfeld. You know they got Buddha nature too. So you have to honour them, and then they would help you. Then they would do more good things. So they need to be encouraged, right? And so ethical awakening, in order to be, in order to attain ethical awakening you have to cultivate a true heart, you know, a true mind with a sincere heart. That's the first step, over and over again, not like just a few times a year, you know. And then concentration, that's spiritual awakening, and finally social awakening. That's important, social awakening, because you are actively involved in the world. I am too. You know in a sense the temple is a shelter for me, but I have to deal with you, so ... Ok? So it comes with a responsibility. Buddhists are not numerous, but it's a self-help culture, you know, meditation is self-help culture, it's something like prayer, even Buddhist prayer is self-help because you have to cultivate true and sincere heart in order to develop a message in order, you know, to send a message and good heart for others. So it comes with a responsibility, we take responsibility, voluntary, for our community, for what's going on in this country and the rest of the world.

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: February 27, 2005

Location: Chicago

Event: Sunday public service

Transcriber: Bopkyong Lisa Newton

Date of transcription: February 25, 2023

Sunim: Verse in Korean/Sino-Korean

Sangha: Namo prajna paramita

Good morning. Please sit comfortably.

*The thousand-fold universe is just froth on the ocean
and wise men and saints are like a flicker of lightning.*

Let me recite it to you one more time:

*The thousand-fold universe is just froth on the ocean
and wise men and saints are like a flicker of lightning.*

When you get disappointed and disillusioned, when you get upset and angry, you can recite this line to you out loud as a dharma pill. It will help you.

Our mind is capable of becoming infinitely small, but also our mind is capable of getting infinitely large. You are all familiar with the title of the book that sold pretty well a while ago, *Don't Sweat the Small Stuff*, an American expression. Well, there is such a climate where even the title of the book would make strong appearance, a loud [unclear?], just the title. You don't even have to read the whole book. That's what I would do sometimes, because actually you can get more out of the title than going to the trouble of reading the whole book. And also you're also familiar with this environmental catch phrase, "Act locally, think globally." These days I don't get much opportunity to get myself involved with other ethnic monks from Asia doing Buddhism in the West or in the USA. But a while back when I had more time, in Toronto and also traveling around in the United States, I became quite a bit involved in talking to ethnic Buddhist teachers and visiting. Whenever I visit towns and cities in the country I would also make a point of visiting the local temples to learn from their own experience and also to see with my own eyes how they are doing Buddhism, to become a witness or to bear witness to the Buddhist movement at this time. And they also were curious of the kind of Buddhism I would be doing with Americans. And also sometimes, you know I come from South Korea, so the Korean monks lacking experience of teaching and working in the US or in the West, they wonder why I renovate rundown buildings and undergo all kinds of troubles to open temples in the cities like

this. Sometimes I listen and don't respond or don't say anything, but sometimes I point out, well you're lucky staying where you are, doing Buddhism where it is very well established going back 2,000 years and you're well protected. But here I am. I'm living in big cities, in Toronto and in Chicago, dealing with urban dwellers and I'm trying to prove doing Buddhism with you folks. I'm here to prove to these guys that I can train and the Buddhism as well as you guys can do up in the mountain monasteries, well secluded, well protected from, you know, worldly outcries. And if I cannot prove, if I fail, then Buddhism will fail, so I must somehow succeed. I may be a poor example, that I leave it to historians later on, but somehow I have to succeed moderately to bring the Buddhist movement forward so that the next generation or further generations of Buddhist teachers will do much, much better than I do or at least build upon what I did.

So it's true that over the years I got my own earful of complaints and sorrow and pain coming from Dharma students, and also just general members, practicing members or non-practicing members. It's yours to hew and sow, that's the path given to us while working in urban centres. Literally you have to wrestle with hundreds of problems every day, particularly living in a country like this you see, in the USA, the mighty country, the mighty kingdom, the mighty empire. It's like always you're doomed. But you wish you would be somewhere else, but I heard that once you're American, you're forever American. That I heard from an American compatriot in exile in Toronto, you see. This guy, he was a draft dodger, a war resister, this was during the Vietnam War when I first arrived in Canada. There are quite a number of war resisters who took refuge in Canada, you know. And this guy was running a secondhand bookstore in Toronto, you see. And so one day we sat down and he was telling me about how he ended up in Canada and then at the end he said, "Well, I feel like once you're American," I mean he sometimes didn't like to be American anymore, but he said, "unfortunately, once you're American, you're born American. Damn!" So whatever troubles we create, you have to deal with them, you have to become responsible and the others will always point the finger to you. So we better work it out here for the sake of the world. So wherever you go, you're on the hot spot being American.

Now many of you know Koseya. Koseya has been a member I think seven or eight years and, he would not mind me telling him about this, you can check with him later on. He was very enthusiastic and, as you know he's a puppeteer, so he's the guy who loved to perform on the street, like you know a street artist. And then he embraced Zen and meditation practice wholeheartedly from the very beginning. And not long after he started coming to temple, maybe a year later or so, he wanted to move in and live at the temple so that he would be able to practice mornings and evenings. And at that time he was, and I think he still is, he's teaching at the Art Institute of Chicago. He had one or two classes each week to teach. Well he had some conditions so like he would not be full-time, but he would not be part-time, but he'd like to be full-time with conditions. He'd like to be a full-time person, whatever he does, wholeheartedly. So that's ok, that's ok. Then he said with a little reluctance, "Well Sunim, I have a partner. So if I'm here week after week, she would not like it so I have to go visit her, you know." Well, I forgot, maybe something like Friday evening or something like that. So that's ok. So I think he

was here for about five months. Initially he came for six months and then the scenario went something like this. “Well Sunim, my partner does not like me living at the temple.” So I think he moved out after five months. And then I think during this period he became a Dharma student, so he continued with his Dharma student, very faithfully. He came to talk to me a number of times about the relationship and then finally they decided to get married. And also things became more hectic and getting married, and then also I think he was hired by the Art Institute as a teacher. When he moved in actually, he had a theatre running. Is that correct? With Sanchul? I saw Sanchul around. [From the Sangha: I think he’s downstairs with the kids]. [Laughter] Oh ok. See he has kids and now Koseya has kids. They all have kids. And then he sold the theatre or something or handed it over to his friend but then he started another theatre company. He got involved. [To Sangha] You did volunteer work, yeah? So it was getting busy. So eventually he had to take a break from Dharma Student training. And eventually he had twins. At first I thought they’d end up with quadruples but two. Now the two boys are now about a year old and they were here at the Lunar New Year celebration, our annual general Sangha Day meeting, and they just started walking. So we’re all standing like it’s a party, you know the Lunar New Year celebration, we’re standing and talking to each other and these two kids started walking, going from people to people grabbing their legs like a railing. So all of a sudden I felt we all became trees for these kids. Holding trees going from one tree to another. And he said they were boys running like rodents. But he still comes faithfully. You don’t get to see him because whenever he has time. And he comes actually regularly on Sunday mornings 6:00 am. And still he has full intention to finish his Dharma Student training and become a teacher. But of course, in the meantime, he has to fulfill his obligations to family and to his theatre, you know, and to teaching and all that. But at the same time he has been developing informal practice, that’s the practice you carry on in the midst of daily activities, particularly during the daytime. Because since you are not monastics, it’s very important. You have to somehow. Well, for you too, you have to develop, given your situation, you have to develop informal practice wherever you are, out on the streets, at home, at the workplace. That’s where Buddhism goes, and if you fail, Buddhism is at stake in this country.

So it’s true you can become infinitely small. When you feel hurt, often you say you got fired for unjust reasons and you can come up with a host of complaints. Or the president is running the country without our mandate, or something like that, can make you very unhappy or whatever. If you end up with that you can become infinitely small and miserable, more and more miserable, you see, before you even become aware. It’s scary. But then at the other extreme, you know these monks, it’s ok, the thousand-fold universe is just froth on the ocean. That’s another extreme you know. So of course your mind is capable of embracing, encompassing maybe the whole galaxy world. And even can go beyond. It’s true.

That’s why I say the Dharma name Koseya means ... One thing, how much at least, even though he’s not doing Dharma Student training, how Dharma practice has been keeping him in good balance, that is avoiding two extremes. Getting infinitely small is one extreme, getting miserable and unhappy. But then the other extreme is getting infinitely large. So it’s avoiding the two

extremes. That's why it's called the Middle Way, but the Middle Way is not like half way! It means trying, the Middle Way is emptiness. Being emptied out of both extremes. So the name Koseya literally means, "Get Higher." When you get higher, whether you climb a mountain or whatever, you get perspective. You can see the pitfall of both extremes. Also this guy's tall you know. He's like a mountain and a bird. [Laughter]

Right now Buddhism in the West is appealing to people in the healing and psychology professions, so there are a lot of books on the interpretation of Buddhism to their taste on the book market. It's going through that phase, but I hope you won't think that's all Buddhism is about. That's not true. It's just going through that phase. It helps though. It helps Buddhism appeal to certain segments of people. You know there's the laughing Buddha with a pot belly. That's called Chinatown Buddhism. That has its own appeal to certain people. People who are actually indifferent or not interested, that kind of Buddhism comes commercially marketed. You can see that Buddha on paperweights and all kinds of [unclear?]. So anyway it's Buddha in the marketplace, and it's interesting that Buddhism is appealing both to people disillusioned with capitalism and people who promote capitalism. Well, there's danger too. Buddhism is a vast ocean, so they just take from Buddhism what appeals to them most. But of course it would be wrong to think that's all Buddhism is about. Buddhism is much more than that. They all know that they somehow relate to meditation. In a sense if I use the psychology Buddhism, it's a space therapy, particularly for urban dwellers. It can be very unwholesome to get stuck in an urban setting of lifestyle. And sometimes you do go on vacation, but even vacation can be a bad experience. We need some space either in the form of solitude or silence, so that's what meditation comes as a coping strategy. You say, "I am" but then "I am not." "I am this, and I am this, and this," but "I'm not this or that or this." I am what I am, but at the same time, I am not what I am. So if you read a Dharma sutra, it says a lot about that. You relate to space therapy and somehow get out of that infinitely small, miserable state of mind or the other extreme.

Well, the other day I was listening to, I think it was NPR radio, sometimes I listen to NPR radio while driving, the guy said, I think you've all heard about it, "A zen-like state of mind." What they mean by that is calm and cool. Is there more to that? You tell me. Or maybe inscrutable? We cannot all, particularly living this lifestyle as you do, you cannot always be aloof. It's not just possible. You wish you could. You have to be involved, whether you like it or not, you don't have a choice. But at the same time, you don't have to get stuck in whatever misery or unhappiness is around. There is a culture, at least the meditation culture I come from, I know the Zen folks discourage reading, because already people read too much. The Diamond Sutra is, if there's any scripture which at least in the culture I come from, honour it's the Diamond Sutra. On the surface it's full of paradoxes just like what I said somehow you identify yourself with this and this and that but then you learn, that's not really what I am truly. That's very helpful. Whether you're miserable or excited or happy. I'm not saying, sometimes people like to say Buddhism is neither joy nor sorrow. Yes, there is sorrow. There is misery. There is conflict. But there's also Dharma. So there's dharma of sorrow. There's dharma of conflict. There's dharma of joy. So meditate and struggle on and contribute to the Buddhist movement in the making through

your dharma of joy, through your dharma of sorrow, through your dharma of misery. [Big Sunim Laugh!]

Korean/Sino-Korean verse

Sangha: Namō prajna paramita

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: May 8, 2005

Location: Chicago

Event: Sunday public service

Transcriber: Nahago Sergey Zharikov

Date of transcription: ??

Sunim: Verse in Korean/Sino-Korean

Sangha: Namō prajna paramita

Good morning

Please sit comfortably

[korean]

The power of Kwansum-bosal's wisdom and compassion makes udumbara bloom in the thorn forest.

Udumbara is an imaginative flower and it is said that this flower blooms when Buddha makes appearance. According to the same legend, Buddha appears every 3000 years, so this flower is supposed to bloom every 3000 years when the Buddha appears, but then this gatha, this prose which has a three side says the power, the power of Kwansum-bosal's wisdom and compassion, marvellous wisdom and compassion, makes the flower bloom even in the thorn forest. So if you have such power, the flower can bloom any time. For instance, when you feel happy, you smile, then you become good, you feel good, so everybody has such a power. When you just don't indulge in your selfish cravings, that is, when you show up like this on Sunday mornings, for the reason that is other than your own selfish cravings, then you become Bodhisattva, like Kwansum-bosal is a Bodhisattva. There are many different Bodhisattva, because there are many people of different dispositions, capacities. So we are beings, living beings, but living beings with special longings, living beings with awakened heart or with spiritual aspirations, they are called Bodhisattvas, because they have a Bodhi heart. Sattva beings or living beings. So Bodhi

means awakening or wisdom or wisdom heart or awakened heart, so beings with awakened heart or wisdom heart, they are Bodhisattva. So, for instance, each of you, you are a Bodhisattva, because I don't think you are here just for your selfish cravings. You must have some reason better than your own selfish cravings to be here, right? So such a person is a Bodhisattva. So in other words you are good, you have a good heart, a Bodhi heart. And when you take this seriously that you have a good heart, that you are good, that's Bodhisattva, and then your journey begins from there, your Buddhist journey begins from there. And you think about this and you cultivate this, through meditation, through chanting, through reading sutras, through performing prostrations, you know to render yourself more selfless. And then special innocence grows somewhere in your body-mind. People may use different languages, that, you know, does not matter, as long as you relate to the quality, not the picture, that's what it matters, but it's called the special innocence or purity of heart, does not matter. There is something about it which comes with cultivation. If I'm sitting just for five minutes, you can only concentrate for only a few minutes, right, you can concentrate only one minute, right, then you become a "one-minute Buddha". [laughter] That's your hope, right? [laughter] So everybody has hope. You become your own hope, that's good, that's called, hope is not just the future, because the future is here, you're shaping your future, right now, right here. So in the thorn forest, of course, that refers to difficulties, everybody has difficulties and conflicts, you all know that, so even in your midst of difficulties, even in your midst of melodrama, you can still make your flower, your udumbara flower bloom, your Bodhisattva flower bloom, in your everyday life or weekly life or monthly life. So such is a power of self-cultivation. There's some people rely on special power other than their own for help or for salvation or for awakening. Then other people, still other people, rely on their own resources, on their own special power cultivation. That's Buddhist classification, meditation, that's the difference between meditation and prayer. You can always pray to somebody else for help, but also you realize you have to learn to help yourself. In other words, some people just like to wait until after they die and then hopefully go to heaven, you know, but then other people are impatient and they don't like to wait until after they die. [laughter] They'd like to do something about, you know, their life right here right now. We can all go, you know, astray and we commit wrongdoings, we all know that, but also we have the power to look over things, to reflect upon things, to repent and make amends and correct ourselves. And here people who rely on other power and people who rely on self-powers, you know, repentance is their basic practice, and, also, in our tradition, is a form of awakening. You have to wake up from your own wrongdoings, you have to learn to rise from that instead of going down with that. So repentance has power, it's also important form of special cultivation. But then it means you save yourself, but then when you rely on other power, then you cannot save yourself, you must rely on someone else, wait for their forgiveness. What's that word? There's actually a difference there. There's my lawyer. [laughter] It's like, you know, you have to repent so you'd be forgiven by God, right? [confession] [saving grace] Saving grace or confession, yeah, I guess, confession is the word. It's hope there. So you'd be saved. Otherwise you'd not be saved. In other words, you could not be saved by your own repentance, right. [multiple voices, indistinct] That's right, Achala, [he's the son of the preacher man] [there's an intersection by the priest on your behalf]. There is a theological term for that. [absolution]. Absolution, right, absolution. In our tradition, we don't have such word, because you are responsible for your own wrongdoings, you see. Anyway, that

could be the main difference between meditation and prayer. Let me just recite that verse again. The power of Kwansum-bosal's wisdom and compassion makes udumbara flower bloom in the thorny forest. So such is the power of self-cultivation or self-power. Of course it's purification and self-help, but in that process, when you get into that process, helping yourself, then also you end up helping others, particularly helping people close to you and then also further away. So that's salvation, the power of salvation by self-help. So we always urge that each of us not neglecting, not denigrating, not belittling whatever you have, because you have good heart, you're good, you're Bodhisattva. So you cultivate, you become a little light in your life within and also at the same time without. So self-cultivation, meditation comes with such a responsibility. At a societal level, there is not much difference between inner cultivation and societal transformation. In other words, between personal transformation and social transformation.

[korean]

namo prajna paramita

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: May 15, 2005

Location: Chicago

Event: Unknown

Transcriber: Bopkyong Lisa Newton

Date of transcription: March 27, 2023

Sunim - Dharma verse

Sangha - Nammo prajnaparamita

Sunim - Sabaha!

Sunim - Dharma verse

Sangha - Nammo prajnaparamita

Sunim - Sabaha!

The first Dharma verse, "A running stream, the mountain path, lost in the cloud, the old temple bell." This is a poetic description of visiting temple on Buddha's birthday in the olden times in the eastern setting. Today in our setting, I would rather say, "Fragrant are snow white pear blossoms, the window branches swaying in the spring wind with a timid reluctance." The second Dharma verse, "Reason, at its limit, feeling an intellect forgotten. What can be likened to this?"

The month of May, the month of Buddha's birthday celebration, comes somewhere between spring and summer. The month in transition. So, the flowers are gone, the pear blossoms, they bloom around this time. Snow white pear blossoms, fragrant, and we say in Chicago we have a very strong wind. We had strong winds yesterday, so you see, we call pine winds. The reason it's called pine winds, pine blossoms, essentially pine polyps carried by the wind, you get allergies from that too! Uh, now reason and thought reaching the end of its road, the end of their road, feelings and emotions forgotten. What can be likened to this? We say meditation and concentration does not begin until your thoughts and reasons and emotions are put aside or abandoned.

Recently I read in the Korean newspaper, they're a little ahead of us in time so they just celebrated Buddha's birthday a couple of days ago, and during this time some of the devoted Buddhist families have their young children shave their heads to become Buddhist monks, both male and female, for just one week. It's an ancient popular custom, particularly in Southeast Asia and Theravada Buddhist traditions. They give an early taste, an early education of unworldly life. It's called an imitation of Shakyamuni Buddha. He was a prince, a little prince, in the little kingdom up in the Himalaya in those days. So first, before they make a show of renunciation, they were entertained as a prince. They were dressed in the princely garb and a banquet was prepared in their honour so the young boys would not miss all this good food, dainties when they renounce. And then their head is shaven. That's symbolic of renunciation. And then they are given a begging bowl. They beg for food. And then enter the temple or monastic life. So they learn to get up early in the morning, wake up early in the morning, and then follow their teacher down to the village on begging rounds. So they learn to eat whatever they get from their begging. It's like following in the footsteps of the tradition of their teachers. The boys can stay at the temple for three days, a week, two weeks, or several months, or a couple years, and if they continue to like it, they can stay there forever, for this lifetime anyway. [Laughter] In Korea it's like a ritual, child monks, and they pick up early discipline, a little discipline.

Now this time, the reporter of this newspaper decided to look for real child monks, not temporary ones, real ones. He did some research and eventually he found about 47 real child monks actually living together in the temple under the guidance of this monk, way in the countryside. So according to his report, the name of this temple is called Haeinsa, one of the very famous Buddhist temples in South Korea. It's also known worldwide for its collection of Tripitaka Koreana, Korean Buddhist canon in wooden blocks. It's a national treasure. It's a huge complex but the name is exactly the same, but this is a completely different temple. It's a very small temple in a rundown situation. What happened was this monk who has been running this temple raising these children, child monks, he was a meditation monk for years. According to the tradition, the meditation monks spent three months in training during the summer time and three months training during the winter time, and then three months in fall and three months in spring they wander around. They go on a pilgrimage or they visit teachers. They travel. He led such a lifestyle. It's called Unsui or cloud and water monk. They travel free like floating clouds and they travel free like flowing water, so unencumbered and unhindered. And then somehow he decided to pick up children to raise future monks.

These children are orphans, abandoned by their parents who are alcoholics or their mother died early or their father had a difficult time raising the child. So he has been raising now about 47 child monks. And I saw a series of pictures. Each morning during the week, it's up in the mountains so it takes a while for the children to get to school, the public school, so he led them, he leads them every morning. Twenty-seven of them are in public school. The rest, they call it plastic house. There are not many buildings. There is the Buddha Hall and living quarters, and then he built a couple of, they call it vinyl house, with plastic sheets. It's a wobbly place. And they're almost captive on a permanent basis. They live, study, and play all day. There's plenty of outdoor space for them to play around. Each morning he leads them down to the bus station where the bus will take them to school. His intention is to raise 1,000 child monks to become Buddha, so he needs their education to start early. These child monks tell the reporters that their teacher, the monk, addresses them as child buddhas. They don't really know what that is, but that's the beauty of it! We are child monks, child buddhas.

So particularly on this occasion celebrating the Buddha's birth, we honour children as future buddhas and future bodhisattvas. Of course as they grow up and mature they will go into different fields. But wherever they would be living and working, either as artists or labourers or in the factories or laboratories or in the administration works, they would become like 10% buddhas. Usually you start out as 10% buddha or 20% buddha or 15% buddha. If you become a bodhisattva that's already 5% more, that's 15% bodhisattva. That comes with vows. When you make vows that's powerful. You see when you make vows and when you run into certain situations, you remember, "I made a vow" and you come up with vow power and then you get empowered to do the work. So you learn, the Buddhists they use different words, so from early on you learn to relate to your Buddha within, and we call it embryonic Buddha or baby Buddha. So there are dharma skills that can remind you, they can point you to that direction to learn to relate to the Buddha within, to your embryonic Buddha. And eventually from there, to Immanent Buddha, or they call it Vairocana, [?19.30] Buddha. Everybody has the Buddha within which needs to be cultivated, which needs to be put to work.

Now yesterday we had this Public Forum and one of our members gave a talk and people in attendance, they were mostly members, so the ensuing discussion was very interesting. And the speaker was Chongsan Rob Pearl. He's a social worker. He's more than a social worker, he specializes in immigration issues, but when both of them, they are married and have two children, they took part in the parade. They were seven or eight or ten and they were very happy. They were passing out candies you see to passersby. And so both of them were working and then somehow they lost their nanny and that's, if you're a working couple, that's a pretty serious blow finding a good nanny. And then they decided well you know, and also even finding nanny sometimes it's not, you have to keep an eye on it. So then away from the hassle, they decided to work at home. So he has been working out of home. So his story was based on that experience, how he made that decision. And it is exactly the same kind of work he has been doing, at home. Then, of course, it's a family issue, so Buddhism is new. He used to be Roman Catholic for many years, and he still visits a Catholic church for his meditation because he's more familiar

and for other things. He was pointing out what is lacking at our temple is like a family. And then when someone asked what would help our members bring their family, whether it is at the Sangha Day meetings or once a month Family Service, at first he said food! [Laughter]. Food is usually, you can bring the family for food. And then he said for like companionship or fellowship. And then he said alcohol. Catholics get together and drink alcohol. [Laughter] It's interesting, and he still kind of hangs out with them occasionally when he needs companionship and all that. But it was interesting listening to him.

From my own experience in the Buddhist setting in the East, it's usually the temples, now it's different the temples are usually located in the cities and towns, but they used to be located away from towns and cities, usually up in the mountains. Also they used to celebrate the Visiting Temple Days, according to the lunar calendar like New Moon and Full Moon, so twice a month. Their lunar month is a little bit shorter. On these holidays, actually the whole family would visit the temple up in the mountains, so it's almost like a picnic. They like that, an outing. So there was that aspect like a family outing coming, of course, for spiritual cultivation. And also, of course, meditation is difficult for children, always. Earlier I had this experience of a married couple, actually Haju Sunim now. She and her ex-husband, and I think Korima was very, very young and they were living at the temple. And then early in the morning, Korima would wake up. She was something like 2 ½ years old. So when she wakes up, her parents were missing. So she would come to the temple, to the meditation hall and everyone was sitting quiet. And she would come to her father, "What are you doing?" [Laughter]. He didn't know what to say. He's supposed to observe silence. So that was funny, you know.[Laughter]

We have these prostrations. When you perform prostrations, your mind is large, not only your body is performing prostrations, your speech, you chant like Gwanseum Bosal or Sogamoni-bul or Jijang Bosal depending on your situation. And also you learn to direct your thoughts. All this is called body, mind, and speech practice. You have to mobilize this called three mysteries, and it becomes a religious practice. The children, they think it's fun. Just up and down, up and down. Their grandmother does it, their mother does it, so like children they spontaneously follow. And then they get a little tired and they run around and they come back and join again. They run around and it does not disturb. So we, our temple staff, did some prostrations. Actually I'm trying to promote prostrations as healing, even as a stress-reduction program, and of course it's empowerment practice, and it's also excellent, if you like, workout! [Laughter] It's like mountain climbing. It strengthens your heart condition, very good physical benefits.

I think not long ago Robert Thurman, some of you may have heard of his name or read his books, he got interested in Buddhism while he was in college. There was Robert Thurman and another fellow and these two guys came up on top when they graduated from Harvard University. And right after they graduated, they joined some obscure Buddhist monastery that was set up by Mongolian refugee monks in New Jersey. It was big news. These two brilliant young guys coming out from Harvard on top and then going to shave their heads and become monks! What would happen to the future of the United States! [Laughter] And from there, they went to India and the two became monks in the Tibetan tradition. And eventually they returned

and both of them actually went back to Harvard, this time to study Buddhism. When they got doctoral degrees, they began to teach. Now he's some kind of, he has been teaching at the Columbia University in New York, and he's a very well-known spokesperson. I think one of his daughters, his daughter is Uma, I think she's an actress. He was interviewed in the *LA Times* and said Americans, all Americans, can benefit from Buddhist practice and cultivation without becoming Buddhist. That's quite attractive, right? [Laughter] And the Dalai Lama would say it too. You don't have to become a Buddhist to learn Buddhism, but you can still benefit. Buddhism is a practice and cultivation-based religion instead of prayer and asking for salvation. You don't ask for salvation. You have to work out your own salvation and not only your own salvation and the salvation of the world.

Maybe once a month we organize prostration meetings. We can start with some of you who are going to take precepts this year in Toronto have been doing 108 prostrations following the Sunday morning public meditation service. But you can do 360, 360 well you place this big cushion so this helps you in such a way so that up and down, up and down you go like butterfly [Laughter]. Fun! And here you get into the American spirit like fun-loving people. Not for the land of McDonald's. If you think you've done your limit, you can always quit. But everybody doing it, usually if we do it together, 10, 15, or 20 or 30 people together, you kind of support and motivate each other. When you do things together in a fellowship spirit, in a sangha spirit, usually your work is already 50% done. So you just have to push your own 50% to do work. But if you're left alone in your apartment, forget about 360, it'll be more like 54. You try to do 54 prostrations without opening your refrigerator door! It becomes not just 100%, 150% more difficult. Such is the power of sangha. You empower each other. You always have options to quit. Also you can do standing bows. There are ultimately ways still of joining.

As this Dharma verse says, you somehow have to reach that state, ok? This reasoning, this reason is at its limits. Reasoning, thoughts, and feelings, somehow they reach the end of their road. That's where you do your practice. Initially, you have to have some feelings, some feelings for Dharma, some inspirations, helping yourself, physically, spiritually. That's why I talk about, I researched the five seasons, but usually, in summary, it's called the three-fold training. The first training is moral and ethical discipline, so it's awakening. All Buddhist practice leads to some kind of awakening. It's all about awakening. Whether you're awake or confused or misleading your life. It's a moral and ethical awakening with the five precepts, when you take precepts, five or eight precepts, taken as moral and ethical guidelines. Of course you'll stumble. You'll stumble many times, but while stumbling you learn to go forward not sliding back. So you go into that process, which is very important. And then concentration, that's spiritual awakening. Even in meditation and concentration, in deep concentration where your reasoning, thoughts, and feelings somehow have disappeared. That means somehow you slipped out of time and space frames, past, present, and future. It could last a split second or one minute. That's infinity. That's your infinity here and now. That's what gives you power. Somehow you have to be content with what you are. And then, the last stage is social awakening. You live your life with a helping hand. That's vow power. You have a vow.

Yesterday after the speaker's presentation they were doing the discussion period, and one of our members said, he also comes from a Christian background, so on Sangha Day we get together and actually there's always food, good food, for the family. So we encourage members to bring their friends and their family members. We have not been very successful in this. He confessed that he has been very reluctant to do that because it would seem like I'm trying to proselytize somebody. Of course, we don't have such a concept, but of course he brings the Christian culture into Buddhism. It's there somehow feeling guilty, that's another thing. [Laughter] He needs to be encouraged, so it was good they were talking about it like this. Anyway whatever language we use, I mean language can fly around, it does not, it should not have the lexicon correct we don't have to get bolted down by the lexicographical definitions. Somehow if there's original sin, but in the Buddhist origins everyone has a good heart. And if you have a good heart, you must have good will.

The first precept out of five precepts, non-violence, do not hurt, do not harm, but cherish all life. You all know you should not be doing any violence either to yourself, like committing suicide, or to others, harming. Because if you do that you get locked down or even committing suicide is actually terribly harmful because your life is very precious. All life is precious. But then we all know that. What about verbal abuse with language? Divisive language, flowery language, exaggerating your academic achievement, for instance. Sometimes you get, if you're discovered, if you're appointed to a high government position, sometimes you exaggerate the academic record, you sometimes read in the newspaper they get locked up for that. And so divisive language, flowery language, and of course, untrustful language, and violent language, so you work on that. But finally, thoughts. Thoughts are always private and secretive. Nobody knows if you hate somebody or if you're resentful or angry or jealous. We go through all these emotions and become really a slave to these emotions and private thoughts. So it's a good heart as in The Way of Bodhisattva, even those who become jealous or harmful to you, you wish them to be taken, to lead somehow to their awakening. So that's good will, good heart. So mirror the Buddha within if you relate to the Buddha within and mirroring Buddha that's your good heart, your good will. That's why once a year on this occasion we encourage you to dedicate lanterns to give expression to your good heart either for your family, for your spouse, for your children, or for your grandparents or parents who may have passed on and give expression, either regrets or joy or sympathy, or for the cause, the social cause for which you care, for poor people, people who are suffering in distress. Give expression at least once a year. And that's also one way to call out your Buddha within and grow Buddha into something maturing.

Sunim: Dharma verse

Sangha: Namo prajna paramita

Sunim: Sabaha!

Namo prajna paramita is perfection of wisdom, that's the English translation "perfection of wisdom." Namo means homage or praise for the perfection of wisdom. Perfection of wisdom is

like full enlightenment for the entire world, enlightened society. And Sabaha means hail or salute the perfection of wisdom personified in each of us.

Thank you.

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: June 19, 2005

Location: Toronto

Event: “Treasure Island”

Transcriber: Tana Thom Vacca

Date of transcription: ??

[Chanting]

Good morning.

Opening Gatha:

(Korean) 여득인신 불수도하면 여입보산 공수래하는도다!

(Chinese) 汝得人身 不修道하면 如入寶山 空手來하는도다!

(MR system) Yödük insin pulsudo hamyõn, Yõip posan kongsurae hanündoda!

(New system) Yeodeuk insin bulsudo hamyeon, Yeoip bosan gongsurae haneundoda!

Namo Prajnaparamita

*If you do not cultivate your mind after attaining human life,
it will be like coming home broke after visiting Treasure Island!*

If you go and visit Treasure Island, you share riches and bring some home to enjoy your life. You don't come home empty handed. So, you attaining human life, you being in a human body without cultivating your mind is comparable to coming home broke, empty handed, after visiting Treasure Island.

Now what is this “cultivating mind.” In Buddhism, in Mahayana Buddhism in particular, mind is all-embracing experience. It means pretty much everything. We say your mind is religion, there is no other religion, whether it is Buddhism or Christianity or Islam. Your mind is Buddhism, your mind is Christianity, your mind is Islamism. So your mind is religion, your mind is philosophy, your mind is science, and so forth. So, you have to learn to fix your mind, to heal your mind, to cultivate your mind, to use your mind. You have to learn to cultivate your boundless heart and use it generously to help all beings you come to associate with.

Now, so cultivation, cultivating this mind so that you would help yourself and you would be of help to all others. In our tradition, in Zen and Seon tradition, it's hwadu study. So, "What is this mind?" It comes down to inquiry and questioning.

There are thirty-six varieties of mind inquiry. Usually it comes in the form of "What is it? What is it?" I'll give you the three representative ones. What is this mind? It simply says, "What is it?" Because if you use the word "mind" so frequently it can also turn into a kind of knowledge or concept, then it does not work. So, it says simply, "What is it?" Actually, there is this hwadu called, so we say "Mind is Buddha". So, "It is not Buddha, nor is it Mind, nor are there things that sustain your life. It is none of these things. Nothing at all that keeps your life ticking everyday, day in and day out. What is it? What is it that keeps your life ticking like this everyday?" So that's inquiry. That's questioning. It's not even Mind, not Buddha, not God, not scripture, not government. What is it?

So the thing with this inquiry and cultivation is, inquiry itself becomes awakening. It becomes awakening only when the inquiry becomes wholehearted. We say, "Wholehearted inquiry". If it is haphazard, it is not cultivation. So, actually we use the word "live inquiry", which means wholehearted, all encompassing inquiry. Half-hearted inquiry is "dead inquiry".

So, the three representative is, "This Mind or this It, this Mind was before the universe. This Mind will be after the universe." So this means above all. This Mind is above the universe. So then, from this you can actually see that it is not your mind or his mind. This Mind is already heaven transcended your birth and death. And so, "What is it?" That's one hwadu, one inquiry.

But you don't have to worry about it, because sometimes I survey people who come to temple, you know. "What are your reasons for coming to Buddhist temple for meditation?" you see. And once I came up with this summary. This I mean, after going over all these reasons, you bring your form for your coming to temple or coming to Buddhism or Buddhist meditation is, Buddhism is something useful in your everyday life. So, with Buddhism you can make something out of it in your everyday life without waiting until after you die, right? (laughter) Is that true? [Attendees: "Yes"] Yeah? But then, it's also, if that is true then you have to learn to wake up from capitalism too, right? (laughter) No matter how good that is or free market economy. So, then also in your everyday life you develop, you raise a lot of anxiety, right? And you think a lot, you worry a lot, and you eat a lot. So all this gives birth to endless anxiety or even paranoia, right? So, the "What is it?" has to become everyday wake up from all this. In other words, ok this inquiry being awakening itself, so it's everyday awakening, so if you develop live inquiry, wholehearted inquiry, which is awakening itself, that puts, that stops, that puts an end to all this anxiety. So that somehow you could become from being slave, you know, to all this anxiety and paranoias or melodramas. So, What is it? What is it that keeps me ticking? Like, I'm alive. I breathe. Also, I worry. I fail. What is it? So, you can build here from simple, so like waking up you know, whatever the major problem you wrestle with given your situation, so you would wake up say from community violence. So that you would wake up from prejudice. So that you would wake up from hatred. So that you would wake up from capitalism. So that you

would wake up from injustice you may be inflicting upon you know. Creating violence, you see. So, What is it? What is it what I'm involved in all this? So you come out with a live question, you see. What this thing is all about. What is it?

I give you meditation formula. Meditation is Concentration. Concentration is Oneness. That's the fifth paramita, you know. May I practice meditation and attain concentration and oneness to serve all beings. So, Meditation is Concentration. Concentration is Oneness. Oneness is No Self, No Other. No Self, No Other is No Birth and No Death. No Birth and No Death is True Suchness. Now this meditation formula is comprised, made up of two parts. The first part is Meditation being Concentration, Concentration being Oneness. Now, what is this Oneness in your everyday life, being one? Well, first, being one means bring everything, you have to turn everything into one. You have to fold everything into one. All this different anxiety, you have to put everything into one, and put them under your bum and sit on it, tight! Don't let them escape, you know? You have to turn everything into a single piece. In other words, being one with this whole anxiety or paranoia and melodrama or whatever it is that you are wrestling with. Questioning. And turn it into questioning, live question and live inquiry. You become completely at one with the situation you are in. That itself has transcending power. That's why I say Oneness is No Self, No Other. No Self, No Other is transcending. So that you would be able to function free from being self, being other. Break free from self and other dichotomy, or from past, present, and future, and all these pluralities. If you have enemy, you become one with your enemy. There's even this advice, your worst enemy can be your best friend, your best teacher. So that your life becomes an authentic one. So that you will rise above all this. So, True Oneness is No Self, No Other. No Self and No Other is No Birth and No Death. Then you can come back to discover true suchness in your everyday life.

So the true inquiry or Oneness in your everyday life is you have to bring everything into One. You don't have to be all over the place, you see. I mean sure, there is the environmental, "Think globally and act locally." But the real problem you bring, you localize everything. Bring it all together, and make it deep and profound, and sit on it tight, and wake up, and rise above! So that your life will become full and rich and profound. Wholehearted. So this true inquiry is waking up, everyday.

What is it? What is it that makes you unhappy? What is it that turns you warm and cold and hot, exciting and all that? What is it that makes you emotionally unstable? What is it that puts your life into all these pieces?

Closing gatha: (@20:28)

Namu Prajnaparamita

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: July 10, 2005

Location: Toronto

Event: Sunday Dharma Talk

Transcriber: Bopkyong Lisa Newton

Date of transcription: May 22, 2023

Opening Verse

Good morning. Please sit comfortably.

[Repeats verse] Your wealth when alive, your wealth is dew on the grass. After death your fame is the flowers by the roadside.

People seek wealth while alive and people seek fame after they die, but usually they seek both while alive. Some people may sacrifice their life and they would enjoy the fame after die, but usually they would like to have them both while they're still alive. But then wealth or success or accomplishments, they are like dew on the grass. Dew on the grass is not bad, it's okay, it's nice. But the thing is it does not last. That's the message, it does not last. It lasts for a while. The fame being the flowers on the roadside, that's also nice, but also the flowers by the roadside, they don't last. They last for a while.

Buddhism teaches these four states of all phenomena. These four states of all phenomena are birth or formation, duration, decay, and destruction or death. They go through this cycle. So all phenomena they go through these four states of birth or formation, duration, change or decay, and death and destruction. But they get, sometimes this death or destruction, it's like winter-like period, so you get recycled and spring returns. So we all get recycled. That's nice. And also along with these four states of all phenomena, Buddhism also teaches three marks or characteristics of all conditions of phenomena. They are impermanence, suffering, and absence of a self or non-self, in other words, lack of any enduring entity or self. They appear separate, but they're actually interrelated. How are they interrelated? Because it's impermanent, it involves suffering. And also because it is impermanent, it doesn't endure, so there is no real enduring self over there. And these two things, they go together you know, they are intertwined. And now, these three marks of all things, these three marks of all conditioned beings or phenomena, they are actually somewhat elaborated in the Four Noble Truths, particularly in the first two Noble Truths, the truth of suffering and the truth of the cause of suffering which is a selfish craving. So, it's speaking about fame and wealth. It could be any other thing which we desire, a lasting relationship when you are in love with someone or like your family. You wish that your relationship would last. Lasting relationships bring happiness and stability which you desire, but the truth is it does not last.

Of course, in other sense, you know, like, if a couple stayed together for 40 or 50 years, that's a great achievement. Occasionally you read in the newspaper these guys stayed together for 40

and 50 years. Wow. But it does not last, like other things. But in our craving, in our greed, we get deluded and we fail to see the truth. So that's why, you know, Buddhism also comes up with this **four ?**, Four Invisibles. The Four Invisibles are water to the fish and air to the human being. I mean water is the home of the fish. If they see it, they would be uncomfortable. Air it's like we breathe in and out. It's very natural that these things are invisible to the fish and to the human beings. But then the teaching goes on to say that the true nature of things become invisible to the deluded. So they fail to grasp the truth and go deluded. So it says, the true nature of things becomes invisible to the deluded. And emptiness, in Buddhism, the word emptiness is not a negative thing, it's kind of a positive thing, it's like liberation, emancipation. So emancipation or liberation or emptiness is invisible to the enlightened because it's their home. They are at home.

Now, the absence of self or absence of an enduring self, also the impermanent nature of all things, it has actually great teachings when you think about. If you're rich and if you're rich all the time that means, the other truth means that if you are poor, then you will be poor all the time. Things will not change. And if you live under a dictatorial government, what kind of suffering would that be? So things are impermanent means things are in flux, things do change, and things don't remain the same. That means there's hope, there's opportunity. The deluded can get enlightened. There's opportunity and hope in the future for improvement, to get better, you know, justice, we can work for justice. And now, this absence of one's self, the cycle going through the cycle. And also Buddhism comes with a truth overload. You may be familiar with this eternal life, not necessarily through redemption of God, but life is infinite through this cycle. Even the universe eventually, of course, goes through this cycle, formation, duration, no matter how long the duration lasts, and it goes through destruction, some form of destruction or decay, and death and rebirth. But in this process, we all participate actively in Life with a capital L, in Life over and over and over again without a self transmigrating from one life to another.

When I was a little, when I was very young, I was afraid to go to sleep at night. My main fear was I was afraid that I may not be able to wake up the following morning and that meant I would not be able to see my mother. I was living with my mother. She's my hope, my entire being. It was very, very painful. It really hurt my heart that there is some chance that if I don't wake up, then I would never be able to see my mother. That kind of darkness was, you know, kind of seeping into my veins as a form of fear, so I feared when the day comes to an end and when it was getting dark. There was no, ... we had a little lamplight, but it was really pitch dark when the sun set. So in the darkness, the fear would grow you see. Everything would be dark and I would never be able to wake up the following morning. So I tried hard not to fall asleep but, you know, eventually you fall asleep. I really fought in our little minds not to fall asleep. But then, you know, eventually I realized that I woke up, you know. And so, then I said, well, you know, when you fall asleep you die, and then you wake up means you get reborn. So somehow you go through this process day after day. So I settled my mind with that, and you die, but you always, you know, come back you see, you get reborn. So that's how it works. In other words, you never die, you always come back. It's not the end. So then eventually peace returned. So, and to grown ups death and dying, this, you know, it's not the final act. You just get recycled, but the Life goes on. And we participate in this one Life many, many times, going through all different forms. And

somehow you cannot reconcile with that. That's the trick delusions. And so there's this beautiful dharma verse, "Mind changes with its myriad environments. The way it changes is truly mysterious. If you only follow its flow," meaning selflessly you follow its flow, "If you only follow its flow and recognize its true nature, then there's neither joy nor sorrow." I agree with everything, but I don't like the last line. So if I were you I would change this last line this way, "neither joy nor sorrow will trouble me anymore," because after all, you are not monastics, you know, you love to have joys and sorrows, right? Every day and every week and if someone takes that away, your life would be pretty empty, right? So you can have lots of joys and sorrows, that's okay. Enjoy that. You both enjoy sorrows and joys and make sure they don't trouble you so much. It's the practice of waking up, practice of waking up from our joys and from our sorrows and not getting stuck. If you get stuck you don't really enjoy.

Closing verse

Four Invisibles:

Water to the fish.

Air to the bird.

Mind to Mankind.

Enlightenment to the ignorant.

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: July 17, 2005

Location: Toronto

Event: Sunday Dharma Talk

Transcriber: Bopkyong Lisa Newton

Date of transcription: May 27, 2023

Opening Verse

Good morning. It's pretty warm and sticky, right? That's what summer is all about. There's a Zen saying, "Don't refuse what comes, don't go after what goes away." So you accept whatever comes with summer. And then fall season will come around, so you accept things as they come.

[Repeats opening verse in Korean]

"The wind stops, but the flowers still fall. The bird sings, and the mountain is quieter still." This dharma verse, this Zen poem, has a visual quality displaying movement in stillness and stillness in movement. "The wind stops, but the flowers still fall. The bird sings, and the mountain becomes quieter still." Here the movement and stillness, they completely harmonize with each other, enhancing their qualities, their qualities of movement and stillness.

Meditation has three ingredients: silence, concentration, and awareness. So when you meditate, you have to experience the power of silence, the power of concentration, the power of pure awareness. In silence, you have to lose words and thoughts. In concentration, you learn to keep at bay or you learn to keep at a respectful distance your defilements and distractions. In awareness, in penetrating awareness, like moonbeams penetrating the bottom of the ocean on a full moon night, you cultivate your wisdom heart or you cultivate your wisdom eye. So the mediation tradition or Zen tradition is sometimes called wordless tradition. You wake up before the words. You wake up where your words and thoughts fail. So in meditation, in such waking up, you don't become subject to the past, to the future, and even to the present. In mediation first you have to realize, you have to learn to depart from what you are usually used to. This applies even though you sit for five minutes, ten minutes, or twenty-five minutes. Your time becomes timeless. So five-minute meditation, in other words five minutes of pure silence, five minutes of pure concentration, and five minutes of pure awareness, that's just good enough. Your mind will always wander away. That does not count. It's unimportant. You don't have to worry about it. So we say you don't just sit like a potato bag. In other words, you have to sit fully charged with the power of silence, with the power of concentration, and with the power of pure awareness. Even just one of them, pure silence. The power of silence. In your meditation where the power of silence prevails, that's very successful meditation, at least for beginners. And then you learn to concentrate over and over again.

Why do you have to do all this, you ask yourself? The ordinary, everyday life is the Way of Buddha. In other words, apart from your ordinary, everyday life, there is no sign of the Way of Buddha. That's why you are here.

Closing verse

Dharma Talk

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: July 24, 2005

Location: Toronto

Event: Sunday Meditation Service

Transcriber: Zack, Toronto

Date of Transcription: April 29, 2024

Opens with three strikes and chanting

Good morning.

Please sit comfortably.

I was told that the months of July and August, people go on vacation. 80% of people, they take, they go for vacation during the months of July and August. Perhaps some of you have already taken vacation or plan to go on vacation. And the reason why people choose the month of July and August for their vacation is, I guess, discomfort in [unclear] is rising, right? It's hot, muggy and sticky. So, and I'm wondering why you come to temple, which is not air conditioned (laughter) to endure, to suffer, sitting in silence for quite some time. What is your purpose of doing that?

Your purpose of doing this is pretty much, pretty well stated, when we recite Three Refuges. You come here to [de-sin?] and to take Three Refuges to resolve that with all beings. To resolve that with all beings, you will develop a heart of enlightenment. To resolve that with all beings, you will penetrate the teachings. Penetrate the teachings is experience the teachings. And to resolve that with all beings, you will seek great peace and harmony to bring about an enlightened society in our midst. That's why you are here. That much should be clear. That's quite a purpose, right? And also, and then after meditation, after listening to Dharma Talk, we recite, you hear, the way of the Bodhisattva. So follow the way of a Bodhisattva and imbibe the spirit of the way of Bodhisattva. That's why you're here. So realizing that is an awakening. So that should be your vow, your way, and your awakening. So remember that, please remember that. Why you are here. And also you are here to support the Buddhist movement in the making in the West, in Canada, in Toronto. And to participate, to actively participate, in the making of this historic Buddhist movement.

The Dharma verse which I recited this morning. "In the quiet, in the awesome quiet between Heaven and Earth, standing free or sitting free, where is there an end?" This verse sums up your meditation experience. "In the awesome quiet between Heaven and Earth, you sit alone." Of course, you sit alone with others. That's to make resolve with all beings, you show that solidarity.

But you sit alone, with your back straight, like a mountain soaring up in its majestic beauty. “In the awesome quiet between Heaven and Earth, sitting free or standing free, where is there an end?” What does this “an end” mean? “An end” means when you get stuck, you know, we often get stuck with our self, like self-centredness. That sometimes we feel *you’re* right. When you feel righteous then definitely somebody else is wrong. And with your anger and unhappiness or hatred or disappointment or delusion, that’s your “an end.” So asking, where is your hatred? Where is there “an end?”

The Buddhist life, or a good Buddhist life, is measured by how much you become free from the three unwholesome roots. These three unwholesome roots give rise to all negativities. Your harmful karma. These three unwholesome roots, often in the Mahayana scriptures it’s called the three poisons, because it’s like a poison that hurt and do harm to your body-mind, to your own life. The first one is greed, the second is anger and hatred, and the third is delusion. So your good Buddhist life is measured by how much you become free from these three unwholesome roots. That’s from greed, and from anger and hatred, and from delusion. So in other words, in your everyday life, you just become blindly following the dictates of your three unwholesome roots. In other words, you become a slaver to the dictates of your three unwholesome roots. You don’t even become aware of that. It has become so much part of your life, you see. Or are you trying something about it, to reduce your greed, to reduce your anger, to reduce your hatred, to reduce your delusion? Or are you trying to wake up from the suffering and pain of your greed, unhappiness, of your greed, anger, hatred, and delusion? So that’s how you can measure, yourself, your Buddhist life.

The quality of your meditation is, last week, last Sunday I mentioned the three ingredients, the three main ingredients of your meditation practice: silence, concentration, and awareness. And with silence you don’t, you don’t practice your meditation with knowing mind. Particularly the kind of meditation I teach, or we practice here, which is concentration. If you try to practice your meditation, that is concentration, with your knowing mind, you would have lots of problems. But you might as well just do contemplation, then it’s okay. You can use your, even in doing contemplation meditation you have to learn to concentrate your mind. In other words, you have to direct your mind with your positive force. The so-called contemplative Catholics, they know that pretty well.

So, in concentration meditation, you give a vacation to your knowing mind, even if just for a little while. Of course you need knowing mind, just while you’re doing meditation, this 5 minutes, 10 minutes, and 3 minutes, 30 minutes, you have to come up with your knowing mind. Power of knowing mind, unknowing mind that’s it. Power of unknowing mind, to be able to concentrate your mind.

With the power of your unknowing mind, you can put a stop to your anxiety, to your old defilements. This also comes part of the Śīla, you know, there is ethical discipline or purification.

Finally you can reconcile with yourself. In other words, if you can forgive yourself, you can forgive others. So that you would be able to concentrate and develop a Wisdom Eye. So it's very important to cultivate unknowing mind.

We say, "If you gain a Wisdom Eye with the power of unknowing mind, you would experience pine wind blowing with such refreshment and you would see with your own eyes the light of your wisdom penetrating the bottom of the ocean." And Bodhisattva Manjushri, that's the Bodhisattva known for his or her great wisdom, and Samantabhadra, known for his great deeds and courage. So, Bodhisattva Manjushri and Samantabhadra, that's [unclear], they'll come to your aid.

So with silence, with silence and awareness, you can even count one breath, two breath, three breath, waking up with your unknowing mind. It is the power of your unknowing mind that can pull you, pull yourself out of the mess of karmic involvement. That's because your, your unknowing mind has transcending power while your knowing mind does not. If you try to figure out with your knowing mind, you will create more and more entanglements. Well you know that from your own experience.

Three strikes to close and chanting

Dharma Talk

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: July 31, 2005

Location: Toronto

Event: Sunday Meditation Service

Transcriber: Zack, Toronto

Date of Transcription: April 30, 2024

Opens with three strikes and chanting

Good morning.

Please sit comfortably.

[poem in Korean]

If people would seek the Buddha wisdom, let them attain Bodhicitta, let them attain a heart of enlightenment or thought of awakening, I would say. If people would seek the Buddha wisdom, let them attain a heart of enlightenment, a thought of awakening, I would advise.

When we did Yebul, the first refuge we take in the Buddha, we honour the historical Buddha, we honour all the Buddhas of the past, present, and future, and also we honour Buddhas among us. And finally we honour our Buddha within. Now, and then it goes on to say the first refuge. Then, you resolve that with all beings, that you will develop a heart of enlightenment. That's called Bodhicitta. Citta is heart or mind, Bodhi means enlightenment, like Bodhi tree. So Bodhicitta, a heart of enlightenment.

Now this Bodhicitta, or a heart of enlightenment or a thought of enlightenment, is a key teaching, key term, in Mahayana Buddhism, denoting the state of mind of a Bodhisattva. There are three kinds of Bodhisattvas. When I talk, when I mention a Bodhisattva here, it refers to the person who announces his or her intention to follow and pursue the path. That's what you do when you take precepts, you know. You set out on a Buddhist journey as a Bodhisattva. Also, indirectly, sometimes people, when they take introductory meditation course or come for retreat with such intention, that's also the state of mind of a Bodhisattva. Such a person is a Bodhisattva.

But now, the Bodhicitta or heart of enlightenment, has two aspects, one is relative and the other absolute. The relative aspect is the mind of a Bodhisattva directed towards enlightenment, while the absolute aspect is the mind of a Bodhisattva whose intrinsic nature, whose intrinsic quality, is enlightenment. Now this, speaking of [unclear], two aspects, relative and absolute, Buddhists often say the, you know, absolute aspect, you know, all beings are Buddhas. And people think, "Oh, that's pretty good!" you know. But still, you have to earn it. This is like unearned income. You have to earn it in the relative world.

So it's, and relative aspect has, relative aspect is two-fold. One is aspiration. We call it a heart of enlightenment aspiration. That's when you say to yourself or promise to yourself or announce your clear intention to follow and pursue the path, the way of a Buddha. Many people do that sometimes but that's not good enough, you see. We say, you know, when you visit graves, the graves are full of good intentions, you know (laughs).

And then, then the second, the second relative aspect is called the Bodhicitta or heart of enlightenment as application. So here, application by which you actually engage in the path. So without such application in your everyday life, intention alone would not be good enough. But also, intention, you go through states.

We, annually for the last few years, we would receive visits by different groups. We, like this year too, like last year and the year before, we received visits of a Christian missionary group. There's this kind of a world religion centre run by Christian mission group and the purpose of this centre is to educate missionaries on world religions before they set out to Asia and Africa, you know, to convert the infidels (laughter). So it's nice (laughter). And so they, you know, visit Buddhist temples. Usually they visit one ethnic temple, that big Chinese temple in Thornhill, and then they come to us, you see. So this year, in the morning, they visited the big Chinese temple in

Bayview and Steeles. And then in early afternoon they came to visit us. We spend about an hour teaching meditation and I give a little explanation and then I take their questions and then they go and visit Chinatown and have a Chinese dinner or something. And then the following day they would go visit Mosques and Hindu temples and so forth. So, and two different ones, so another kind of Christian group, and also they bring, you know, groups, you know, it's kind of international groups. Not just the Canadian missionaries but a lot of them come from US, you see. It's kind of, they have an education pro – some programs. And from different denominations, including Catholics, you know. So they are all interested, you know, they are charged with, you know, missionary fervour, you see. So I'm also interested in what kind of work they would be doing, you know. So it's nice to engage them in conversation, you know. And I must say, I had some poor impression of them, like, education-wise. And some of them are overweight. I mean, this country they have to work hard, you see. Well I don't know what areas they go. Then I realized that, I mean, it's nice they are charged with aspiration with their, you know, mission, you know, to spread gospel or to convert them, you know, to the faith. Or actually bring them within their fold, or whatever. But in that process, actually, you know, visiting, you know our temple or Islamic temple, you know, actually they broaden their view. It's not like 19th century missionaries, they just go and, you know, convert them. So they go, everyone goes through that process. Like kind of a pluralism, pluralist, you know, pluralism project, you see. We do live in, you know, in pluralistic society. And then also, you know, I wonder, you know, if they go to Asian countries. And some of them go to Sri Lanka or, you know, Korea or, you know, Myanmar or whatever, or African countries, they also would face realities. So while, you know, struggling to spread gospel, also they have to, you know, in that process, they have to learn their ways too, you see. So it's, in any, like, teaching vocation, you know, while teaching you learn. And while learning, you don't just learn while training, you know. Sometimes you learn as much as you, you know, more by teaching, you see. So in that process they learn to become humble. And they have, they learn to improve or mend even their own ways, if they are arrogant, or whatever, you see. So, actually, hope is there for everybody.

So this, back to this application Dharma, it's, I mean, I'm not saying you have to go out and do the missionary work or anything like that. But, you know, in your own lifestyle, you know, it's applying, you know, the Dharma in your everyday life, you know. So, like if you have an aspiration, like, you know, through meditation or whatever, whatever inspiration or, you know, aspiration you can come up, you know, like developing, there's called developing a heart of enlightenment and actually arising, they call it [unclear]. Arising is not a word strong enough but it comes close to application, you see. You feel like doing something. And with helping hand, you see.

I just learned the Dalai Lama, actually we have a member who comes from Buffalo and she informed me this morning Dalai Lama would be visiting Buffalo next year. I mean, he was here last year and when he was visiting I was not here at the temple. But he says, you know, our religion simply teaches kindness, you know. So if you can be kind, first to yourself, if you're not kind to yourself you cannot be kind to people around you, so you have to be kind to yourself.

Not hard on yourself, you know. That's, being hard on yourself is, you know, if you are charged with anger and, you know, greed and, you know, I mean, delusion, it can be pretty hard, that itself is hard on yourself, you see. In other words, hard on your Buddha-mind. So it can, you know, to be kind to yourself is, you know, like, something like opening communication channel with your Buddha-mind. So from there you can be kind to your spouse or to your children and to your neighbours and to your coworkers. That's how it spreads, you see. That's, it's in the message that it says, you know. How kindness or peace of mind and peace spreads, you see. So it's a simple message but it has a big implication, you know. And also it's easy to relate because, you know, you can be kind. Everyone can be kind. It's no big deal, you see. So it's, it's very accessible, you see.

So that's where you start, you know. Just be kind, and be kind to yourself, be kind to others. That's helping yourself and helping others. Coming together, you know. Helping, in other words, helping yourself and helping others becomes identical and then transformation takes place. So it's Bodhicitta, a heart of enlightenment, as aspiration and then as application. So engagement, we engage ourselves every day, you know. So you don't have to seek something, you know, fantastic, you know, in a very meaningful way. This is a meaningful way, you know. Just be kind.

Three strikes to close and chanting

Dharma Talk

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: August 21, 2005

Location: Chicago

Event: Sunday Meditation Service

Transcriber: Zack, Toronto

Date of Transcription: May 01, 2024

Opens with three strikes and chanting

Please sit comfortably. Good morning.

[poem in Korean]

Stones stand in mid-air. Fires burn underwater. Fire burns underwater.

It may take you a little poetic imagination to get at this (laughs). There's something called a landscape understanding, it's like a birds-eye view. When you look at landscape painting, you know it's, you take the whole thing in, like you **conduce** up the whole thing. You don't go piece by piece, you know, analytically. You understand the whole thing instantly.

Stones or rocks or boulders standing in mid-air. That's the sign that autumn, fall season, is around the corner. Because when, when grasses wilt and leaves fall then finally the rocks get exposed, like say in the mountains, and then you can see, even from a great distance, the rocks and boulders standing tall or jutting out from the mountain in mid-air. And finally, heat and humidity is under control. So it's called fire burns underwater. So that means fall season is around the corner or it's on the way.

Now, but actually this is a description of your meditation. Your head, or upper part of your body, standing in mid-air. Finally freed from your calculating mind or worldly thoughts or confusion. You know, fresh. While the heat, while your heat is under control below your naval (laughs). It's a description of your meditation.

Words and language are interesting thing. So we often get stuck with words and bogged down, which influences your way of life. A lot. It's 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, we understand that. That's the world of business. Business world. The world of profit gains and loss. We're used to that. In Zen literature it says 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 (laughs). But then, strictly speaking, or intuitively or correctly speaking, it's something like 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 0. That's what meditation does, reduce you down to 0 which is all embracing number. It's like 0 is emptiness. It's a, it's a great discovery by Indian civilization. Emptiness. Where there are no profits or loss or gains prevail. All the numbers come from 0. It's like cutting a bundle of thread. One cut cuts all.

So once a week on Sunday mornings, we get together to sit in silence. I guess for some of you it's your weekly commitment to come to temple and sit with others in silence. And you take refuge in the Three Jewels of Buddha, Dharma, Sangha. It's like taking refuge in peace, love, and happiness. Those are the three qualities Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, or Three Jewels, represent, among others. And, then when you sit in silence, you cultivate unknowing mind. You get a little break from your knowing mind. That's important. You have to take some breaks from your anxiety. From your, you know, business world. From your worldly mind and confusion. Or from your neurosis. It's important. For your sanity. You need that in order to deal with your worldly life. In order to gain fresh eyes. We call it Dharma Eye. To understand another dimension of your life.

So this unknowing mind, that's like 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 0. Usually, you know, when we teach meditation, the beginners, that's where they begin. Counting their outgoing breath from 5 to 1 to 0. With each outgoing breath. So that, at least in the midst of hustle and bustle which you have to

endure at least 5 days a week, you must make some sense out of this world. That's unknowing mind.

Unknowing mind is transcending mind, which your knowing mind does not have. To transcend conflicts. To transcend love and hate. To rise above all that comes with your anxiety. That's what concentration is about. Concentration is not contemplation. So your knowledge, thoughts, and reasoning, they are put aside. You put them, place them, under your bum. You sit on them (laughs). Actually in the monastery they say that. You sit on top of them (laughs). It's, at least once a week, you have to recover yourself and recover your fresh original mind. So that you would be able to deal with your relationships. There are a lot of conflicts coming out of your relationships, whether it is personal or business or all kinds of relationships. It's called relationship practice.

Today, actually we celebrate Ullambana Day. And I'll be officiating the ceremony at 11 but I – it's a day of remembrance but also a day of reconciliation and making peace. And learn to forgive yourself and particularly learn to forgive others. A lot of people, they have difficulty forgetting some people who are, whom they associated with or lived with for a while in their life. That's a terrible thing. Many people suffer a lot because they cannot dissolve these feelings. So, well eventually, sooner the better, you have to learn if you can, if you'd like to forgive yourself, you should also be able to forgive others. No matter how hurtful or painful that may be. You have to. Otherwise it can be destructive. Self-destructive. It hurts you. And also sometimes memories or remembrances, well those are important but you cannot carry them too long. Sometimes you have to part with, because you have a life to live today and tomorrow. Not, you cannot live in the past all the time. Feelings or emotions are important, but they need to be reconciled and purified. So that you would not get really, you know, mired up. It's, when you offer service, it's actually 60% or even, you know, 70%, that means actually for yourself, for those of you who are offering the service.

The stones standing in mid-air while fire burns underwater. It's meditation, but whatever you do with meditation and cultivation, it should make sense in your everyday life. In other words, whatever you get, the benefit, you take it with you to the world and apply it in your everyday life.

The qualities of unknowing mind, it's like innocence. You cannot, we cannot, you know, being adults we cannot be 100% innocent like children. But like purity, innocence is important. Even to forgive and forget, it requires a little, the power of innocence. Not always remember. So those qualities are the realms of unknowing mind. That's transcending and liberating mind. So when you meditate, when you sit in silence, you rise above. Like a [unclear] mountain, soaring up.

Three strikes to close and chanting

Dharma Talk

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: October 09, 2005

Location: Chicago

Event: Sunday Meditation Service

Transcriber: Zack, Toronto

Date of Transcription: May 02, 2024

Opens with three strikes and chanting

Good morning.

[poem in Korean]

Flowers bloom, then fall. Blown by whirling gusts. Quietly, their fragrance permeates Earth and Heaven.

This verse is dedicated to Peace Movement. To all those Bodhisattvas devoting their lives to the cause of peace and justice. And also to all common, ordinary people who are just kind and helpful to each other without ever becoming aware of it.

There's this line coming from Buddhist scriptures. "Ten thousand times we die and ten thousand times we are reborn to promote peace and happiness for all beings." So we, we may not become successful in promoting our cause in your lifetime, but you never get defeated. (laughs) Such is the vow of Bodhisattvas. Such is our everlasting hope. Could you agree to that? Then you are good Buddhists (laughs).

I remembered this while I was watching news. I don't know this, there was, I think a PBS program or something. When I come to Chicago, I watch that from time to time. And I don't know who was the host but he said, "Can George Bush produce a rabbit out of his hat?" (laughter). Well there was a long debate and conversation going on so as a kind of hwadu, as a koan, he threw that out (laughter).

Now, we had a, at our Toronto temple, we had a member whose Dharma name was [Payu?]. I forgot his legal name. He passed away two and a half years ago. And he's Canadian, but actually he was educated, I think I may have told his story to you one time before, so bear with me if you've heard it before. He was actually educated here in Chicago, Illinois at one of the universities of Illinois campus. He was 82 when he passed away. And he taught at university for a number of years and then he took early retirement, you know, to devote himself to peace and

justice and also in, to make himself available in the community service. And he was a Toronto temple member for many, many years. You know, because I had known him since we were at 46 Queen Ave. That was, must have been 1983 or 4. And towards the end of his life he was hospitalized. So he spent a couple of years, three years, in hospital. And I was not there when this happened, but I heard it. He was, he was kind of bedridden, so he was not allowed to leave his bed or just a small area.

Then some of our members were visiting him, so from one of them he learned there was a peace march just going, you know, you know, would be going past the hospital complex. So he could not contain himself, he must join that peace parade, you see. He has to be part of it. So somehow, you know, he changed his clothes, you know? From hospital (laughs). And then was able, he was successful in getting out to the back door (laughter) without the nurses ever noticing. And then ooh la la! He would join the peace march for quite a while, you know. And he was so happy and uplifted about that, you know. When he got back nobody noticed (laughter).

And, so he, also he wanted to be reborn as a peacemaker. He didn't really mind in what form of life he would come back. So, you know, we had, we met and so I gave him three instructions when the time comes when he would breathe his last breath in this lifetime. It's that his mind would become completely free. His Dharma name [Payu?] is "dismantling attachments." Both attachments and detachments. So it's something like dismantling your ego. So he would, his mind would be free from any enmity or ill feelings or regrets or any kind of these obstacles. And also, as possible as he can he would, as much as he can, he would not lose his awareness.

Particularly his awareness of his vow, and his vow was he would, wherever he would be reborn, because he still feels that he has a lot more work to do, you know. That one lifetime was not good enough. So he would devote his life again to doing things in various ways. He had also more concern but really didn't have much time to stretch, you know, to stretch himself in this lifetime. So, and I could see he was under medication, painkiller, so, you know, he was, even bedridden, he would do prostrations, he would have got up and do prostrations. Just to make sure his body-mind would be alert. Not, you know, going under the medication.

So I always remember him. And I also remember, like, Fred Derby. Some of you would know him. And also I see, you know, we have a few children coming to Children Service. One of them I've known, there was Ismail, you know, here. I knew him for almost 7 years, 7 or 8 years. And how he changed. When he first came he was rough. Now he has become kinder and helpful to new children and to small children. So it's, it's growing up and involving ourselves actively in whatever you pursue in your life. We can all become peacemaker, or instrument for peacemaking. The Bodhisattva, called Bodhisattva.

And it's one area where Buddhism makes a difference with regards to other religion, is we are all imperfect beings. Well, well I often say and actually in Buddhism it says, "It's **given your**

predicament, given your situation, we are all entitled to be imperfect,” you know. If you do your utmost, if you do simply your best given your situation, that’s called being perfect. But it’s Western notions, you know, so we are imperfect. So that’s why the other religious traditions, they come up with a perfect being, you know. So you always rely on perfect being for everything. But here, particularly Bodhisattvas, they love to remain imperfect beings. To become friends to people who are imperfect. So imperfect beings working with each other. To help each other. It’s intermingling.

In the monastic community this becomes much more apparent. And if you are placed in such a situation with other people then that’s, itself, we say you are, your Dharma work is done 50% already, you see. You just have to do the rest of the 50% to become perfect. But if you are left alone in your apartment then it’s, you become like 150% imperfect (laughter).

So here, meditations the same thing. On Sunday mornings we come and do meditation together. I mean, you don’t know who the other guys are. So you support each other. You motivate each other. So that means you’ve got, when you step into a place like this, already, you know, for your meditation is concerned, Dharma work 50% is done. So all you have to do is sit and do your 50%. To help each other. So that’s why it’s called, helping yourself becomes identical with helping others. For Bodhisattvas, helping others becomes identical with helping themselves. So that’s the peacemaker’s effort. That’s a noble thing. So it helps you to put your life in that perspective. Then things would become much more clear. Because it’s ignoble, you know, to struggle or to wrestle with your own personal issues all the time, you see.

Three strikes to close and chanting

Dharma Talk

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: October 16, 2005

Location: Chicago

Event: Sunday Meditation Service

Transcriber: Zack, Toronto

Date of Transcription: May 03, 2024

Opens with three strikes and chanting

Good morning.

Where you are sitting is your rightful place in the universe. That’s always my message. So don’t complain (laughter).

It's wonderful weather, right? This will last throughout November (laughter). Why, because many authorities have been predicting the heating costs will really shoot up, you know. So people begin to worry about it. So then if you have such favourable weather in November, then just December, and January, and February. Then spring will come, right? Now...

[poem in Korean]

When near, it is only an inch away. When far, it is one hundred and eighty thousand miles away. Now what is this thing that is so near and what is this thing that is so far? It's, we seek, we expect, and we wait with anticipation. We're used to (doing) that. Sometimes people call that hope (laughs). So we do need hope. Now, but the Buddhist message is always, whatever you seek, you don't search far away. Actually you never search outside. That could be the difference between meditation and prayer. So when you search inside, then it's so close. But when you search outside, it is so far away. Such is the way of enlightenment, and also such is the way of salvation. So salvation is either right here, so close by, or so far away, where you will never get it.

The 12th century Seon Master, Jinul, put it this way in his famous secrets on cultivating the mind. "It is tragic. People have been deluded for so long. They do not recognize that their own minds are the true Buddhas. They do not recognize that their own minds are the true Dharma. Their own natures, they do not recognize that their own natures are the true Dharma. They want to search for the Dharma, yet they look far away for the holy ones. For holy ones. They want to search for the Buddha, yet they will not observe their own mind. If they aspired to the path of a Buddhahood while obstinately holding to their feeling that the Buddha is outside the mind or the Dharma outside the nature, then even though they pass through millions and millions of years reading holy books, contemplating, meditating, and praying, doing all sorts of ascetic practices, studying through the entire holy canon, it will be like trying to make rice by boiling sand. It will only add to their tribulations." It's pretty clear, right?

Then, one student asked him, "As you say, if it is so, if it is right here in the body, that means it is not separate from our ordinary mind, from our ordinary life. Then how come I cannot see it?" And here is Jinul's answer. "It is true. It is in your body. It is in your mind. It's right here, right now. It is not separate from your ordinary, everyday life. But you cannot see it. At least, you cannot see it with your physical eye. Just figure out, what is it that makes you upset? That makes you angry? That makes you happy? What is that? It is awareness. Awareness, you cannot see with your physical eye. You have to open your mind's eye, or Wisdom Eye, to discern it. To become aware of what you are doing in your everyday life. Cultivating awareness.

Meditation is like that. Cultivating pure awareness through concentration. As I often say, your meditation practice is based on three-fold training or three-fold learning, called trīśīkṣā. The first one is ethical training or ethical, moral discipline. And I call it ethical awakening. Well, if you come to temple and sit in meditation with others, there must be something true, something noble about (what) you are doing. You may have done all kinds of crazy things, a lot of melodrama, but at least you come and do this thing. There is something true, something noble, something authentic in what you are doing. With your body-mind. That's your hope. There's something good here. Not just for your life, but for the life of all beings. So that's the first training, ethical training. Something true, something authentic, something noble in what you are doing. And this thing is supposed to grow on your body-mind. Relating to your Buddha within.

And the second training, Samadhi, concentration, is spiritual awakening. Through concentration. That's awareness. Penetrating awareness. And then the last training, the third one, is called Prajñā. That's, sometimes I call it social awakening. Opening your Wisdom Eye.

Now it's, in the Korean monasteries where I was trained, I used to hear this. "It is difficult. If you go for what is difficult, then it is more difficult than trying to catch the star in the night sky. It is easy. And if you go for what is easy, then it becomes easier than touching your nose while washing your face." I mean, while washing your face you naturally touch your nose, right? Or they would put it more this way, you see, to make it more graphic. "It's easier than touching your bum while having bowel movement (laughs)."

Now, what is this, what is it that is difficult and what is it that is easy? If you try to figure it out with your knowing mind, it becomes difficult. Exceedingly difficult. It's more difficult than trying to catch the star in the night sky. It's impossible.

Now what is it that makes it so easy? It's, you do it with your unknowing mind. Unknowing mind is transcending mind, liberating mind. It removes all the barriers, your obstacles. So you have to come out with unknowing mind or cultivate unknowing mind for doing this kind of thing. Meditation for instance. Concentration.

Then with unknowing mind it becomes easier in your everyday life to be kind. Be kind to yourself, be kind to your neighbours, be kind to people you associate with. And be patient. It becomes easier to do that with unknowing mind. With liberating mind. Unknowing mind is liberating mind. It helps you go beyond the **ken** of your thoughts. It helps you, well that's what it says, it helps you cross the water when the bridge is broken. It helps you come home on a moonless night. That's, this is all of course, you know, the kind of, the style of saying things a several hundred years ago when there was no electricity (laughter).

And, right now I'm conducting our foreign membership meeting. The topic for this membership meeting is, "Do the Buddhists pray? If so, how and when?" And I serve as a facilitator. I usually have you go around and say whatever you like to say about the topic. Coming from prayer tradition, many of you, most of you, and you think that in this tradition we don't pray, we just meditate. Which is true. But also which can be wrong too.

But whatever it is, whether meditation or prayer, it's, Christians also, they started meditating. There's a Christian meditation group. I think Buddhist movement made a contribution to Christians to do meditation. Because it's praying to God is also discipline, you see. I mean, if your mind is so scattered you cannot establish direct channel to God in your practice, right? So you have to really learn to concentrate and direct your prayer to God. Either to be with Him or to be in His presence or whatever.

Buddhists too. I mean, they are, Buddhists, they have a prayer. Like for instance, the way of Bodhisattva. I mean, I'm sure you heard it numerous times. That's prayer. Well then eventually it comes, it's like petition prayer, non-petition prayer. Obviously Buddhists, they don't pray to God. But you learn to exercise your good heart, Buddhist heart. You learn to express and direct your good Buddhist heart, to do good.

And also there is an empowering prayer service. Many people, you know, these days you feel helpless. You know, there are so many tragedies going on. You'd like to do something but you feel helpless. But we are not so helpless. There are things we can do. I **mean, given your predicament, given your place, given your situation**, you can always do something and something more. Helpful.

So we have six paramitas. The first, no, the sixth paramita, is also prayer. "May I be generous and helpful." Ask yourself.

Three strikes to close and chanting