

Song of Zazen

All sentient beings are plainly Buddhas.
As ice and water are one essence,
Beings and Buddhas are also one.
Without water, no ice, and without beings, no Buddhas--
This truth is so close,
Yet we seek Buddhas in far places.
What a sad waste—
Like a man immersed in water who cries out in thirst,
Or a child of wealth lost among the poor.

In our ignorance, we've strayed in the dark
And transmigrate through the six realms,
Drifting deeper into the darkness.
When shall we be free from birth-and-death?
In this regard, we cannot speak too highly
Of Zazen practice in the Mahayana.
The great virtues of kindness, rectitude
and calling forth the Buddha's name,
confession and ascetic practice
and all good deeds,
These all come home to Zazen.

Just one sitting of Zazen
Sweeps all our transgressions
And all evil paths away--
Then the Pure Land is before us.

If we hear this truth and praise it,
and take it to heart, we shall be truly blessed.
But if we know from deep within
That self nature is no nature,
we've gone beyond mere talk.

The path ahead is free and clear.
Through one gate only, not two or three,
Cause and effect go straightaway.
Coming or going, form is no form,
And singing or dancing, thought is no thought;
Nowhere but here, we are the voice of Dharma.

The clear sky of Samadhi opens infinitely.
The moon of wisdom is in full bloom.
What more could we possibly want?
As the truth emerges every moment,
This earth we stand on is Nirvana,
And this body is the body of the Buddha.