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CONTINUATION OF EKO II

July 11, 1970

Last night I explained already about the second sutra. The second sutra reciting is for *arhats*. And in the *Eko* it says "*Aogi koinegawakuwa. Shokan, fushite kanno o tare tamae. Jorai, Maka Hanya Haramita Shingyo o fujusu, atsumuru tokoro no kudoku wa.*" Some people say, "*Jorai, Maka Hanya Haramita Shingyo,*" but some other people say, "*Jorai, Hanya Haramita Shingyo*" without saying "*Maka.*" That is more usual. When the *Kokyo* starts the sutra we say "*Maka Hanya Haramita Shingyo.*" and in the *Eko* we say "*Jorai, Hanya Haramita Shingyo.*" That is more usual. But you can say, "*Jorai, Maka Hanya Haramita Shingyo o fujuso, atsumuru tokoro no kodoku wa, jippo joju no sambo kakai muryo no kensho, juroku dai arakan, issai no ogu burui kenzoku ni eko su.*" I explained already this much, and tonight I have to explain about the *arhats* so-called "supernatural powers."

"*Sammyo rokutsu.*" "*Sammyo*" is the power of clairvoyance, to see things through various obstacles. The *arhat* can even see his past life. The next power is to hear everything from a distance. That is the *arhat's* power. And the last one is the power to put an end to the karmic life. So for *arhats* there is no *karma* because he extinguished all the desires and he doesn't cause any *karma*. That is the third power. "*Sammyo.*" "*Sam*" is "three." "*Myo*" is "clear," clear, powerful power. That is "*Sammyo.*"

"*Rokutsu,*" "six powers." The "three Powers" are included in "*Rokutsu.*" The first power in "*Rokutsu*" is to see everything (clairvoyance) and to have ears capable of hearing everything. And he has the power to lead someone's mind, to have insight into others. And he is able to observe the cause of the various sufferings. And he has the power to see people's past life, including his own past life, and he has a kind of supernatural power to fly or to cross the river without a boat, that kind of supernatural perfect freedom from everything. This is a more subjective power. You cannot say this kind of power is some objective power. It is more objective, but the *arhat* has that kind of power. He thinks he has some conviction like this. The way he attained this kind of power is from the power of practice, and this kind of practice is the practice to attain some supernatural power.

The last power, to extinguish all the cause of *karma*, is a more Buddhist practice and the power only Buddhists have. The purpose of Buddhist practice is to be free from *karma*. This is why Buddhists practice the Buddhist way. So the last power is the most important one. There is a koan about this power. Gedo, a sage or hermit, called on Buddha and said, "We have five supernatural powers, but I heard that you had six supernatural powers. What is the last one? What is the power which we do not have?" Buddha didn't say anything. Without answering his question Buddha asked the hermit-

sage, "What do you think the last power is?" Buddha knew that even though he explained it, the hermit-sage would not know what was the last one, the power to be completely free from *karma*. Usually people, even Buddhists, think that after attaining arhatship they will have that sixth power, including the power to be free from *karma*. But that last power, the power to be free from *karma* is not any special power. It is quite an ordinary power. But we do not care for that power so much, and we ignore that power always. Although we have it, we ignore it, and we think we have no such power. But actually we have. So the sage thought, "Buddha must have some special power." The five powers he has are already supernatural, special powers, but he thought Buddha had one more special power. But Buddha didn't have any special power. But Buddha knew what kind of power he himself had.

Usually, because we don't know what is that power, we are involved in karmic practice. If we know that we originally have that kind of power we will not create any *karma*. But just because we are ignorant of it we create *karma* for ourselves. So even to practice to attain some special power is actually to create *karma*. So even though, because of those practice the *arhat* can fly to the heaven or to go to the heavenly body without any trouble, still if he goes to some heavenly body he has to come back to this world. If he takes a bath in the heavenly body he should die in the heavenly body. That kind of supernatural power does not possess any power to be free from *karma*. But the last power, which the Buddhist has, is the power to be free from *karma*, and for that purpose we practice our way.

Dogen Zenji, in his *Shobogenzo*, the fascicle of supernatural power, *Jintsu*, wrote about this last power. We say "*Roku jintsu*." "*Roku*" is "six." "*Jintsu*" is usually translated "supernatural powers," but "*Jin*" is "true." Something that is true is "*Jin*." "True power." "*Tsu*" is the power which is omnipresent, or wherever you go there is that power. It is the power which everyone has. That is "*Tsu*" in its true sense. But when we say "Five Powers" or "Six Powers," those powers are the power to work for some purpose. But the true power is the power to work everywhere under various circumstances. That is "*Tsu*," "*Roku jintsu*," six, true, universal powers (not universal, but something you can apply to every circumstance).

In his *Shobogenzo* Dogen referred to the Zen story between Issan and his disciple, Kyozan. Issan one day was taking a nap, in his cabin maybe. He was sleeping. And his disciple, Kyosan, opened the door and saw the teacher was sleeping. So Issan, the teacher thought, "Oh, someone came. Oh my!" So he turned to face the wall. His disciple, Kyosan said, "Oh, I am sorry, but don't be disturbed. I am your disciple. Don't worry. Don't be so formal."

And he started to go away (?), but the teacher said, "Hey, Kyosan!"

And Kyosan came back. "May I help you?" he said.

“Yes, I had a good dream, so I want to tell you about my dream.”

So the disciple sat down and said, “What was the dream?”

And Issan said, “What do you think it was?”

That was the story. Then what is supernatural power? Supernatural power is already there, and moreover his disciple, because he was asked, “What do you think my dream was?” went to the kitchen and brought some water in a basin with a towel. And he offered them to Issan.

And Issan thought, “Oh, this is very good,” And he washed his face and wiped it with the towel. And as soon as he finished wiping his face, Kyogen, another disciple came in. And Issan again said, “we were talking about my good dream. What do you think it was?” Kyosan went to the kitchen again and brought a cup of tea.

“Please have a cup of tea because you washed your face already.” How about a cup of tea?” That was Issan-Kyosan’s supernatural power. That is the koan.

This kind of power can be extended everywhere. There is no end to this kind of good relationship between teacher and disciple. There is no end to the relationship. Even though he is the teacher, he has no idea of being the teacher. Even though they are disciples, they feel as if their teacher is their friend. But they know exactly what their teacher needs and what he means. Dogen Zenji said that is the real power teachers and disciples have. We ignore this kind of practice. You may rigidly practice zazen. But you ignore this kind of practice. Sometimes your rigid ideas of practice will be a hindrance to your real practice, the kind which was going on between Issan and Kyosan. Dogen Zenji admired their practice very much. That is real practice.

When you continue this kind of practice without any idea of teacher, or disciple, or practice, even, then there is no way to create *Karma*. Even though you see things, things do not create any problem for you because you don't feel you saw them. Even though you see something you don't even remember what you have seen. If it is necessary it will be in your mind, but when it is not necessary that object you saw will vanish. So no *Karma*, or no trace of practice, or no trace of activity remains. That kind of practice looks very easy and common, but actually this kind of practice will go on between a good teacher and a good disciple. This is, actually the last power of “*Sammyo*,” and the last power of the “Six Supernatural Powers.”

“*Samyo Rokutsu*.” And in the *Eko* it says, “*Sammyo rokutso mappo o shobo ni kaeshi*.” “*Mappo*” is the last stage in Buddhist history where there is no more Buddhism. According to the scriptures, the first 1,000 years after Buddha’s death is “*Shobo*,” “the age of right dharma.” There they practice our way very hard, and there there is teacher and teaching, and so they can attain enlightenment in the first 1,000 years after Buddha passed away. And the next stage, after 1,000 years, the period of “*Zobo*” will start. In

that period there is teaching, and there are teachers, but teachers who have no enlightenment. So teachers know what Buddhism is, but actually they do not practice so hard. But they know what Buddhism is intellectually. So there are no students who attain enlightenment. That is the time of “*Zobo*,” which will continue for 1,000 years more. And to the last period is after 2,000 years from Buddha’s death, and in that period there is no Buddhism. There may be some relics of Buddhism, but there is no Buddhism at all. Even if there is teaching no one reads it. No one knows what Buddhism is. According to some scriptures it is so.

That period in history of Japanese Buddhism, “*Mappo*,” the last period, started in the Kamakura period when Nichiren and Shinran appeared. Dogen appeared in the same age. It may be about 1200. And so Shinran and Nichiren thought because this is the time of the last period of Buddhism when Buddhism will vanish, the teaching should be changed. The teaching should be something which could be applied in the last period of Buddhism. That is why, by Nichiren and Shinran, a kind of reformation of Buddhism was done. But It is not actually a reformation. It was more of a restoration. They tried to restore the Buddhism of the time of Buddha. Shinran thought, because it was not possible for the people to attain enlightenment anymore in this period, the only way was to ask the help of Buddha, and by means of Buddha’s help they would be saved, reciting “*Namu Amida Butsu*,” and with strong faith, believing in Amida Buddha’s power, he thought in this way people would be saved. That is, in short, Shinran’s way.

And Nichiren thought that it was the time of “*Mappo*” also, but according to the *Lotus Sutra*, if we recite the *Lotus Sutra*, or if we recite it for others, or if we obtain the *Lotus Sutra* even, the merit of obtaining the *Lotus Sutra*, or the merit of reciting the *Lotus Sutra* will save us even in the period of “*Mappo*.” He actually believed in that way. So he wanted to prove the power of the *Lotus Sutra*. So that he could prove the power of the *Lotus Sutra* he tried many things. Once he was almost killed by the people who were sent by the government at Kamakura, but their swords broke when they wanted to kill Nichiren. So he said, “This is the power of the *Lotus Sutra*.” And he said, “Because no one believes in the *Lotus Sutra*, which is the only sutra for the period of “*Mappo*,” something terrible will happen to Japan.” And several years later the Mongolians came to conquer Japan with many ships. But Nichiren thought, “If I believe in this sutra, Japan will not be conquered.” And as he said this, the Mongolian ships were destroyed by a hurricane before they arrived at Hakata in Kyushu. So the people were terrified by the power of the *Lotus Sutra*. In that way the Nichiren School was established.

After many years of war, when people did not know what to do, Shinran said, “If you just say, “*Namu Amida Butsu*” you will be saved. Amida Buddha will save you. So why don't you recite the name of Amida Buddha?” Sometimes he was sent to some lonely island, like Sado, but he did not stop his practice. He strongly believed in Amida Buddha and his power of faith.

In this way, in the Kamakura period, even if it was already the last period of Buddhism, a new Buddhism arose. Dogen’s Buddhism was one of them. But Dogen’s

attitude was quite different. He did not believe in "*Mappo*." He said that was just the skillful means of Buddha. Actually, there is no such thing as the last period, or the second period, or the first period. That is just Buddha's way to encourage people to believe in Buddhism. Buddha said so. So that is just skillful means. So even if it is the time of "*Mappo*," if we practice hard we will attain enlightenment, and Buddhism will not die. Dogen believe in his practice, the practice of nonpractice. That is Dogen's practice. There is nothing to practice, especially. Whatever we do that is practice. If so, there is no special practice.

By *shikan taza* you will not gain anything, but you will be you yourself. So by *shikan taza* you will establish yourself on yourself. You will be you. A tile will be a tile. A mirror will be a mirror. That is our practice. There is no secret in our practice. If that is our practice there is no special teaching like Buddhism. Buddhism was already there when Buddha appeared in this world. It is not because Buddha appeared in this world that Buddhism was established. That is Dogen Zenji's understanding of Buddhism. So the last power of practice is how we should practice our way without being involved in karmic practice. So Buddhist practice starts from nothingness, not from 'somethingness.' we start our practice from nothing to attain nothing. That is Buddhist practice. You may think that is very strange, but that is, in short, Buddhist practice.

"*Sammyo rokutso mappo o shobo ni kaeshi, goriki hachige...*" "*Goriki*" is "The Five Powers," faith, exertion, mindfulness, contemplation (*zazen*) and wisdom. These are the Five Powers. "*Hachige*" is rather complicated. It is related to Theravadan practice. I explained, last night, about primitive Buddhist practice, the four stages of *zazen*, the four stages of Zen, of the form world, and the four practice of the non-form world. That makes eight. And in each stage there is attainment, realization. Eight kinds of meditations to free one from attachment, to free one from everything. As I explained last night, in the first stage you have no anger, or you have no drowsiness. Because you are not angry and your mind is very calm, you can think clearly. And you have physical joy and spiritual joy, and concentration. So in the first stage you have clear thinking which can be contemplation of the teaching, dharma, or you can observe things clearly. That is the thinking mind. And there is physical joy, and mental joy, and concentration.

And in the second stage, you don't think so your mind is more clear because you don't even think. There are no waves in your mind, so physically and mentally, or emotionally you have a kind of joy free from emotional disturbance or thinking faculty. And you have good concentration. So you have there, inner purity of mind, free from thinking, and you have physical joy, or mental joy, and concentration. In this stage the power you will have is to see all things. In order to get this kind of power the primitive Buddhists practiced various practices, such as putting a skeleton in front of them and concentrating on it, so even if a beautiful lady appeared in front of them they would say, "Oh, that is a skeleton." In that way they became free from the objective world. (laughter). You may laugh, but they actually did it. Sometimes they sat in front of a fire or in front of water. Or sometimes they contemplated our physical being, observing our

physical body as a bag of nasty things. This is mostly a practice for men, maybe. A woman looks very beautiful, but inside a woman is nasty, containing five organs and many things. They practiced that way. And in that way they wanted to be free from the objective world.

But in the second stage they changed their way, not to contemplate on objective being, but to contemplate inward. They directed their concentration inward. And by inward contemplation they could make themselves sure that we are not permanent anymore. So it is foolish to attach to ourselves. If it is foolish to be attached to ourselves it may be more foolish to be attached to something outside. If he himself is not worth being attached to, then outside people are even more worthless to be attached to. In that way they wanted to be free from outward objects. So their practice was the power of practice to see all things as impure, and thereby remove their lust or desires. So the second power is to remove attachment to external phenomenon. Those powers will be gained in the first and second stage of practice.

And the third stage is the power of not having desires arise even if phenomenon looks beautiful. After attaining detachment from themselves, and from the outside world, the *arhat* wanted to be quite sure that he had the power of detachment. So to test his power he tried to see something beautiful and if he became attached to it or not. They tried. They opened their eyes and saw some beautiful lady to see if they were attached to her again or not. And if they were not attached to beautiful things then they really had the power of detachment. In that way they tested themselves. That is the third stage. And in this way, in each stage, they obtained more power of detachment until they attained arhatship.

It is described in this way, but if you take this description literally it doesn't make much sense. But later, in the formless world, when they attained the world of formlessness, their powers obtained by their practice, was to contemplate the boundless space of form. They contemplated the limitless consciousness of ourselves. That is a more inward practice. So their practice became wider and wider, and until their practice came to the area of void. That is the fifth stage. The fourth stage was to contemplate the boundless space. And the fifth stage was to contemplate the limitless world of consciousness inwardly. The sixth stage is to contemplate non-substantiality. There is nothing, nothingness, complete voidness (not voidness) nothingness. And the seventh stage is to contemplate the stage beyond thought. The seventh one is to contemplate on non-substantiality in terms of substance. Non-substantiality is a kind of idea isn't it? So to go beyond the idea of non-substantiality is the seventh one. And the last one is "*Metsujinjo*," which is the same as the third one of "*Sammyo*." To obtain "*Metsujinjo*" is to have no karmic activity, cessation of all the activity.

For a long time they practiced zazen literally in this way. This is a kind of psychological analysis, but actual practice cannot be like this actually. You can analyze your practice in that way, in four or eight stages of practice, or practices of form world, or practice of non-form world. But actual practice cannot be like that. So more and more

Buddhists started to put more emphasis on actual practice, without analyzing practice, without being involved in these kinds of stages. But if you carefully understand these kinds of stages, and the interpretation of the stages, as I explained last night, there is a very important key to the actual practice. But if you miss that point you will be easily caught by it. Step by step. We call it step-ladder practice. There is no end to step-ladder practice. At first you may say there are three steps, but in each step there is three steps, and in each of the three steps there are three steps (if you carefully analyze it) so at the least we have eighty one steps or more. Eighty one to two hundred and forty one stages. We shouldn't be caught by this kind of interpretation. But we should have eyes to see what it actually means. And the people carefully set up this kind of teaching, and we have a great amount of commentary on those step-ladder like practices, so that it cannot be step-ladder practice. We should understand this point.

So Dogen Zenji did not ignore this kind of practice, and this kind of commentary, and this kind of step-ladder practice. But he put more emphasis on everyday practice such as the kind of practice Issan and Kyosen practiced when Kyosan brought his teacher water and a towel and a cup of tea.

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