

# HEILA DOWNEY

## I Bow to All

*(raises stick and hits table)*  
If you understand this world—  
everything in this world is just like this.

*(raises stick and hits table)*  
If you do not understand this world—  
everything in this world is just like this!

*(raises stick and hits table)*  
An eminent teacher said: The spirit is clear and bright  
True nature bares no tint  
Only without thinking just like this—is Buddha.

*Holding stick above her head:* Do you see?

*Bringing it down on the table:* Do you hear?

KATZ!

Today is April 7, 1996. Thank you for coming.

An eminent teacher once said: “Only without thinking—  
Just like this is Buddha.”  
The “Bergie” in Cape Town said: “This is just the way it is!”



Some time ago on a cold and wet wintry night, Rodney, two members of our sangha, and myself braved the elements to go and have dinner in Cape Town. Having enjoyed a delicious meal in the comfort of a warm and cozy restaurant, it was soon time to leave, only to be greeted by howling wind and rain. As we approached our motor vehicles, we noticed two “Bergies”—street people who make their homes in caves on the mountain, often using boxes as bedding. One of the men motioned that he wanted to talk with us. His gesticulation was greeted by a very cool verbal “off with you my man,” from Rodney, as well as using his hands to encourage the two “Bergies” to be on their way. It was obvious that the tone of Rodney’s voice and body language was lost in the cold of the night, because at this point I became the focus of this man’s attention. However, before he could say anything, I asked him what it was that he wanted. His very swift response was: “Two Rand (\$2.00) please!”

At the time of this incident, I was doing crisis counseling and had a very big “fix it” mind! So instead of parting with my money unconditionally, I wanted to know why he needed the money. Truly, in light of the circumstances, this was not skillful in the least. His reply came without thinking: “To buy wine, Ma’m!!” Having not learnt my lesson yet, I suggested to him that perhaps first he should buy food, then wine. His response once more—very clear: “Ma’m, you’re right! But, tonight it is very cold and wet, and the wine will make us warm. Then Ma’m, if we get really lucky, maybe some food will appear!!” Without further ado we parted with our money. In addition to this they did get really lucky, because I went to buy them food. Returning with the food—he asked if we could stand in a circle with two more of their buddies joining us. Arms around shoulders, in the middle of a busy sidewalk, he started praying:

“Dear Lord, thank you for allowing these people to allow us to be just what we are. Amen!” Requesting each of us to hold the two-rand coin—so that he would in turn have a bit of each of us—was quite touching. Time to let go and move on, but not before the same man gently tugged at Rodney’s jacket. However, before he could say anything, Rodney said: “I am sorry, I have no money.” The “Bergie” responded by saying: “No sir, I wasn’t going to ask you for money, just something to remember you by!” Hands palm to palm, Rodney bowed to the “Bergie” and said “Thank you for your teaching.” His reply: “NO SIR, THIS IS NOT A TEACHING, THIS IS JUST THE WAY IT IS!!”

An eminent Teacher said: “Only without thinking – just like this is Buddha!”  
A Cape Town “Bergie” said: “This is just the way it is!”

In celebrating this Ji Do Poep Sa Nim certification ceremony, we commemorate our ancestors and honor our Teachers, past, present and future. I bow to our Dharma Centre and dharma family back in South Africa. I bow to the “Bergies,” and our neighbors on the block—The African Christian Faith Mission, their church bells and “Hallelujahs!” I bow to all present at this assembly today for your Great Vow and effort.

*(raises stick and hits table)*  
On one corner towers the Christian Faith Mission.

*(raises stick and hits table)*  
On the diagonal corner—Poep Kwang Sa.

*(raises stick and hits table)*  
Christian, each moment getting older; mountains always blue—Buddhist, each moment getting older; mountains always blue. “Hallelujah!” and “Kwan Se Um Bosal!” fills all the sky; church bells and moktak swallows all.

Which do you like?  
Where did they go?

KATZ!

Inside many faces, faces shining bright, down the hall to the right, lunch is ready!

*(Kwang Myong Sunim’s Inka talk continued from page 10)*

Sometimes we step into an acupuncturist’s office. Sometimes we step into golden colored bath water and sometimes we step into a formal dharma speech!

In our school, we have many practice gates;

*(raises stick and hits table)*  
Sitting.

*(raises stick and hits table)*  
Bowing.

*(raises stick and hits table)*  
Chanting.

Which is best?

KATZ!

Thank you for coming through the dharma room door this morning.