

Editor's Note: Two major events occurred since our last issue. The first was the global pandemic. *Primary Point* solicited brief reflections from our worldwide sangha about practicing in the pandemic. The response was so rich that we are printing only about half of it here. The other essays can be found at <https://kwanumzen.org/primary-point/covid19>.

The other event happened after the previous issue had started to go to press. The murder of George Floyd has consumed the United States—and the world—as never before with the flames of racism. Our statement about that is at <https://americas.kwanumzen.org/on-racism>.

On another note, we would like to thank Zen Master Ji Kwang (Roland Wöhrle-Chon) for his years of service as European editor of *Primary Point*. He will be turning over these responsibilities to Barbara Pardo JDPSN. We welcome her to our team and look forward to her participation and contributions.

The Song of Zen

Zen Master Kyong Ho

Suddenly, I realize that everything is but a dream;
Countless heroic leaders now all in their graves,
Words of honour without any use
For how can death ever be escaped?
Ah, this body is but a single dewdrop hanging on a blade
of grass,
A flame fluttering in the wind.

The words of Buddha, the great teacher of the Three
Realms,
Are thus transmitted through the Eighty Thousand
Sutras:

Upon seeing our true mind, become
Buddha.
Cutting off the cycle of samsara
Each of us are able to dwell in the land beyond life and
death
Functioning in non-action.

If you cannot attain this right now as a
human being,
Chances are bleaker than ever, so make haste!
There are many ways to attain one's true self,

But in short, here it is:
When sitting, standing, seeing, hearing,
Dressed, eating or in conversation

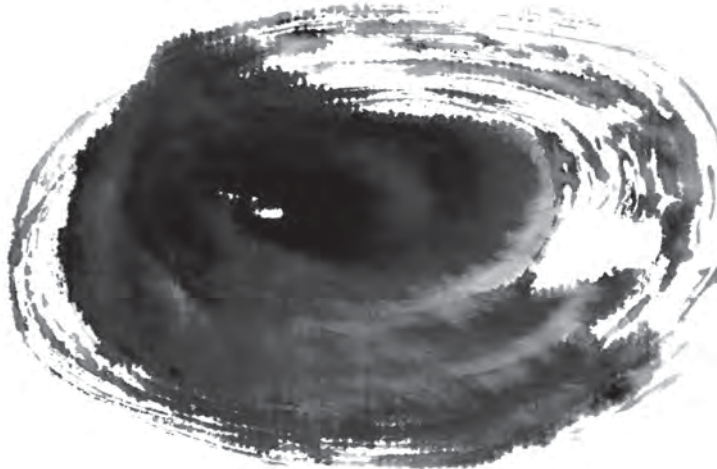
At any place, any time, what is this that brightly
perceives?

The body is a corpse, all thoughts
originally empty.
My true face, already Buddha:
Seeing, hearing,
Sitting or lying down,
Sleeping or working,
Within the blink of an eye, coming and going
Ten thousand miles and back in an instant.
This mind, in all its mysterious functioning
What is its form?

Questioning and still questioning,
Like a cat stalking a mouse,
Like a starving beggar searching for food,
Like a thirsty wanderer seeking only water,
Like an old widow awaiting her only lost son,
Without eating or sleeping—
Never letting go,
Looking deeply into this One Question
For 10,000 years nonstop.
Then Great Enlightenment is right before you.

Attaining enlightenment at once,
Finding that Buddha is already within,
Isn't this already Amitabul and Shakyamuni?
Neither young nor old,
Big nor small,
One's own true light from within
Is the whole universe.....

Heaven and hell are both originally empty.
Life, death and rebirth never existed.
Find an enlightened teacher, get inka
And do away with any doubt once and for all.



Not touching any worldly
concerns,
Cutting off all attachments,
Be an empty vessel floating along
Saving all beings that appear
before you.

What better virtue is there than
this to repay Buddha?

Keep precepts steadfast and
heaven grants merit.

Make a great vow, always study
the Buddhadharma.

Have mind of Great Compassion
Never making distinction between
the poor, sick or homeless.

When the five skandas appear,
recognize them as empty like
foam bubbles.

With any outside appearances,
perceive them as a dream,

Not following like or dislike

Looking deeply into mind, empty as space.

Not moved by the eight winds or five desires

Use this mind like a great big mountain.

Wasting day after day with idle talk,

Letting so many years go by, how is practicing possible
now?

Upon great suffering at the moment of death, how
pointless is regret then?

When limbs are torn off, the skull crushed and all organs
ripped out,

At that moment in total darkness and
utter suffering

Who could have imagined such a fate?

Hell and animal rebirth are truly
unfathomable.

Having wasted eons of chances and now
too old,

Getting a human body again is not easy

The Person of the Way who practices
Zen diligently

Lives long and chooses life and death accordingly,
Able to change this mysterious form as often as the
grains of sand by the sea.

Always using happiness or sadness as needed,
Regardless, let us practice diligently now with all our
attention.

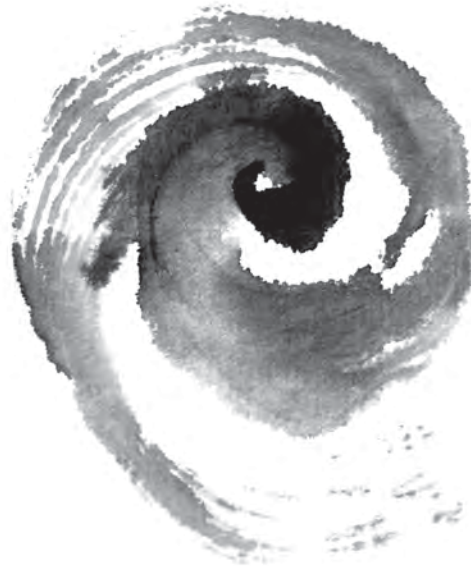
Any day now, death appears

Just as it does for the reluctant cow,

Hooves dragging towards the slaughterhouse.

The practitioner of old did not lose even a single mo-
ment to rest;

How idly I have wasted!



The practitioner of old stabbed himself
with an awl to stay awake;

How idly I have wasted!

The practitioner of old, down on all
fours and crying at sunset,

Lamented another day lost;

How idly I have wasted!

Having attained not a single thing,

This fleeting mind evaporates like a whiff
of spirit;

Ah, how truly sad it is!

Ignoring reproaches,

Heedless to warnings,

Carelessly passing by, how can this
clouded mind be led?

Following useless desires and provoking
anger for no reason,

Raising discrimination daily,

My wisdom is laughable; whom can I
blame?

Like a moth flying to the flame unknowingly rushes to
death,

Without practicing to attain one's mind, keeping
precepts avails no merit at all.

Ah, how pitiful!

Study these words closely and practice diligently.

Trust this song deeply.

Place it open at your desk and read it from time to time.

To say all I wish to say, even the oceans are not enough

To wet the ink needed to write all the words.

I stop now, so please attend to this earnestly,

For I will speak again when the stone god has a baby. ◆

*From Song of Zen (Hong Kong: Kwan Um Zen Translation
Group, 2014).*

