

On Giving Rise to the Enlightened Mind

(*Hotsu Bodai Shin*)

Translator's Introduction: This discourse was given on the same day as was Discourse 67: On Giving Rise to the Unsurpassed Mind (*Hotsu Mujō Shin*). Because of the nature of its content, it may have been intended primarily for monastics.

Generally speaking, there are three types of mind. “The first is the mind of *chitta*, which we call the discriminative mind. The second is the mind of *hridaya*, which we call the mind of grass and trees. The third is the mind of *vriddha*, which we call the True Mind.” Among these, we invariably employ the discriminative mind to arouse *bodhichitta*, the enlightened Mind. *Bodhi* is an Indian word which we call the Way, or what is True. *Chitta* is an Indian word which we call the discriminative mind. Without this discriminative mind we could not give rise to the enlightened Mind. I am not saying that this discriminative mind is the enlightened Mind; rather, we give rise to the enlightened Mind by means of the discriminative mind.

Giving rise to the enlightened Mind not only means vowing to take all sentient beings across to the Other Shore before one has taken oneself across, but it also means actively engaging in the task. Though somebody may be considered lowly, when such a one gives rise to this Mind, that person is already a spiritual guide and teacher for all sentient beings.

This Mind is neither something innate nor something that suddenly rises up as new at this moment, nor is It something singular or something plural, nor is It something spontaneous or something planned, nor is It something within our physical body, nor is our body something within that Mind. This Mind is not something that has permeated the entire universe of thoughts and things, nor is It something of the past or something of the future, nor is It something that is present or something that is absent, nor is It something intrinsic or something produced by an external cause, nor is It something of a combined nature or something of a causeless nature. Even so, at that point when we have established a spiritual connection with a Master, we give rise to the Mind that aspires for enlightenment.

It is not something that the Buddhas and bodhisattvas* confer upon us, nor is It something that we can do for ourselves. This Mind arises due to Its being established through a spiritual connection with our Master and, consequently, It is not something spontaneous.

Giving rise to the enlightened Mind occurs, by and large, in human beings in the southern continent of Jambudvīpa.* Only on rare occasions does this event occur among those in the eight states where it is difficult to hear of Buddhism.¹ After giving rise to the enlightenment-seeking Mind, one does the training and practice for three asamkhyeya eons or for a hundred great eons.² In some cases, people train for immeasurable eons and then become a Buddha. In other cases, people train for immeasurable eons to help sentient beings reach the Other Shore, ultimately not becoming a Buddha but just continuing to help ferry sentient beings across, doing this solely for the benefit of sentient beings. They are pursuing the course that is the delight of bodhisattvas.

To speak more broadly, the Mind of enlightenment operates via the three modes of behavior—body, speech, and mind—without a moment's idleness, always helping sentient beings give rise to the Mind of enlightenment and leading them along the Buddha's Way. To waste one's time bestowing worldly pleasures on people does not benefit sentient beings. Giving rise to this Mind and giving rise to this training for the enlightenment of others go far beyond the outer bounds of delusion versus enlightenment. Having transcended the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form, such persons have become preeminent among all beings, and have gone quite beyond shravakas* and pratyekabuddhas.*



The bodhisattva Makakashō, wishing to pay homage to Shakyamuni Buddha, composed the following eulogy:

* See *Glossary*.

1. The eight states where it is difficult to encounter a Buddha or hear His Teaching are: 1) being born in one of the hells; 2) being born as a hungry ghost; 3) being born as an animal; 4) being born in the Northern Continent of Uttarakuru where all is pleasant; 5) being born in one of the heavens where life is long and easy; 6) being deaf, dumb, and blind; 7) being an erudite scholar; 8) being born in the intermediate period between a Buddha and His successor.
2. These time measurements may seem to be of inordinately long duration, but they are simply of indeterminate length: it takes just as long as it takes.

*Awakening one's intention and arriving at the Ultimate,
though two, are not separate.
Of these two states of mind, the former is the more
difficult to arrive at,
So when those who have not yet arrived at the Ultimate
first lead others to arrive,
I, for that reason, bow to their first giving rise to their
intention.*

*With Your first arising, You were already a Teacher for
humans and gods,
Surpassing those who merely listen and those who seek
the Goal only for themselves.
The arising of such an intention as Yours has surpassed
the triple world,
And therefore we call it the supreme state above all.*

The arising of the intention means giving rise, right off, to the intention to help others reach the Other Shore, even though you yourself have not yet reached that Place. We call this giving rise to the enlightened Mind for the first time. Once you have given rise to this Mind, you will then encounter Buddhas to whom you should make alms offerings, and you should hearken to Their Teaching. Further, should you then strive to give rise to the enlightened Mind, it would be like adding frost atop snow.³

The term 'the Ultimate' refers to the Wisdom that is the result of Buddhahood. Were we to compare the state of supreme, fully perfected enlightenment with the state of giving rise to the enlightened Mind for the first time, it is like comparing the universal, all-consuming conflagration of the final age with the light of a firefly. Even so, when you give rise to the heart that helps others reach the Other Shore, even though you yourself have not yet reached that Place, there is no difference between the two. As the Tathagata said in the *Lotus Scripture*,

*I constantly make this My intention:
How may I help living beings
Enter the Unsurpassed Way
And quickly realize Buddhahood?*

3. That is, having once given rise to the enlightened Mind there is no need to strive after It as if it had not yet arisen.

This is what is meant by the immeasurable life of the Tathagata. Giving rise to the intention, doing the training and practice, and awakening to the fruits of Buddhahood are the same for all Buddhas.

‘To benefit all sentient beings’ means helping sentient beings give rise to the heart that helps others reach the Other Shore even though they themselves have not yet reached that Place. Even though you yourself have not yet reached that Place, you should not reckon that you will become a Buddha simply on the basis of your ability to help others reach the Other Shore. Even if the ripening of your meritorious activities, which could turn you into a Buddha, were at its full, still you should offer this merit to sentient beings in order to help them realize Buddhahood and recognize the Truth.

This Mind is not ours, or someone else’s, or something that comes to us, yet after this intention arises, whenever we raise aloft the Great Earth, everything turns into gold, and whenever we sprinkle the waters of the Great Ocean, they immediately turn into the sweet dew. After that, whenever we lay hold of soil or rocks, sand or pebbles, we make use of this enlightened Mind, and whenever we explore the gushing forth of water and the blazing up of fire, we are personally shouldering the enlightened Mind. Hence, to offer as alms one’s nation and city, one’s spouse and children, the seven treasures,* men and women, one’s head and eyes, one’s marrow and brains, one’s body and flesh, or one’s hands and feet, all are the hustle and bustle of an enlightened Mind; all are an enlightened Mind’s playfulness, which is like a fish frolicking in a pool of water.

Chitta, our mind that is engaged in discriminating at this very moment, is neither close to us nor distant from us; it is neither ourselves nor someone else. Even so, if we use this mind to turn ourselves towards the principle of helping others awaken before we ourselves are fully awakened, without retreating or turning away from it, this is our giving rise to enlightened Mind. Thus, if we employ enlightened Mind in making an alms offering of grass and trees, tiles and stones, gold and silver, and rare treasures, which all sentient beings hold onto as if these things were their own possessions, how could this not be our giving rise to enlightened Mind?

Because Mind, as well as all thoughts and things, is beyond self and other, beyond both together, or beyond being without a cause, if we should give rise to this enlightened Mind, even for a split second, all the myriad thoughts and things will become Its additional effects.

Generally speaking, the arising of Mind and the realizing of Truth rely upon the instantaneous arising and vanishing of all things. If things did not arise and vanish instantaneously, previous moments of evil actions would not yet have passed. And if previous moments of evil action had not yet passed, later moments

of good actions could not arise now. Only a Tathagata alone clearly knows the measure of this moment. The Teaching that our mind in any single moment can give rise to a single utterance and that an utterance in any single moment can express a single word is also true, but it is true only of a Tathagata alone; this is not something that those of the other two Courses are capable of. As a rule, there are sixty-five moments within the time it takes for someone to snap his fingers, during which the five skandhas*—that is, the five components of existence—arise and vanish, but ordinary, unawakened people have not noticed or recognized this though they may have sensed it. Based on the length of a tatkshana, which is comprised of a hundred twenty moments, in the passing of a single day and night there are sixty-four hundred million, ninety-nine thousand, nine hundred and eighty moments during each of which the five skandhas arise and vanish. Even so, ordinary, unawakened people have not taken notice of this, and because they have not taken notice of it, they have not given rise to the enlightened Mind. Those who do not know the Buddha Dharma or who do not trust the Buddha Dharma do not believe in the principle of the arising and vanishing of moments.

Anyone who has clarified what the Tathagata's Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, which is the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana, is certainly believes in this principle of the arising and vanishing of moments. Now that we have encountered the Tathagata's giving expression to it in the Scriptures, we may seem to be experiencing it as if it had fully dawned on us, but if we are barely aware of it during the span of a tatkshana, we can only take on faith that this principle must be so. If we fail to clarify and understand through direct experience all of the Dharma that was expressed by the World-honored One, it will be as if we do not know what the length of a moment is. As trainees, do not be reckless and act proud or arrogant. Not only are we ignorant of the smallest of things but we are also ignorant of the largest. Should ordinary sentient beings rely on the power of the Tathagata's Truth, they too will see the whole of the three-thousandfold worlds that comprise the universe. In sum, as we pass from fully existing to intermediately existing, and from intermediately existing to fully existing again, everything moves on, moment by moment.⁴ Thus, whatever our intentions, we are led by our deliberate actions, so that the cycle of birth and death rolls on without stopping even for a single moment. With our body and mind rolling on like this through the cycle of birth and death, we should immediately give rise to the enlightened intention of helping others reach the Other Shore, even though we ourselves have not yet reached that

4. 'Intermediately existing' describes the period between one moment of existing and the next moment of existing.

Place. As we simply give rise to enlightened Mind, even if we regret having a body and mind, they are what arises, ages, sickens, and dies, and ultimately they are not our possession.

Oh, how unceasingly and swiftly sentient beings go through life from arising to vanishing!



While the World-honored One was in the world, there was a monk who came to call on Him. The monk bowed, his head respectfully touching the Buddha's feet. He then arose and, out of deference, stood to the side and, addressing the World-honored One, said, "At what speed does the course of a living being's life—from its arising to its departing—go?"

The Buddha replied, "Although I could tell you, you would not understand."

The monk then asked, "Is there some example that could illustrate it?"

The Buddha said, "There is. And I shall tell it to you now, for your benefit. Consider, for example, four fine archers. Each takes up his bow and arrow, then the four, standing together back to back, prepare to shoot in the direction each is facing. Now, there is a nimble man who comes along and says to them, 'Now, if you will all shoot off your arrows at the same time, I will be able to catch them all before any of them touch the ground.' What do you think? Would such a one be nimble or not?"

The monk said to the Buddha, "He would be exceedingly swift, O World-honored One."

The Buddha then said, "The swiftness of that man is not as fast as that of an earth-dwelling yaksha.⁵ And the swiftness of an earth-dwelling yaksha is not as fast as that of a sky-dwelling yaksha. And the swiftness of a sky-dwelling yaksha is not as fast as the swiftness of the Four Celestial Lords. And the swiftness of those Celestial Lords is not as fast as the swiftness of the two orbs of sun and moon. And the swiftness of the two orbs of sun and moon is not as fast as the swiftness of the resolute celestial children. It is they who pull the

5. A yaksha is a belligerent demon that enjoys stirring things up. After its conversion, it becomes a guardian of Buddhism.

chariot whose wheels are the orbs of sun and moon. These celestial beings are swift at rolling things. The course of a living being's life—from its arising to its departing—passes swifter still. It rolls on in every moment, without the slightest pause.”

The swiftness with which the cycle of arising and vanishing rolls on in every moment during the course of our life is like this. You who are doing the practice instant by instant, pray, do not forget this principle. While you are experiencing this swiftness with which the cycle of arising and vanishing rolls on in every moment during the course of your life, if you give rise to a single thought of helping others arrive before you yourself have done so, the Life that is eternal will manifest before your very eyes. All the Buddhas in the ten quarters during the three periods of time, along with the Seven Buddhas,* the twenty-eight Ancestors in India and the first six Ancestors in China, as well as all the other Ancestral Masters who have Transmitted the Buddha's Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching have maintained and relied on this enlightened Mind. Those who have not yet given rise to this enlightened Mind are not our Ancestral Masters.



Question 120 in the *Procedures for Cleanliness in a Zen Temple* states, “Have you awakened to enlightened Mind?” You clearly need to realize that what this is saying is that, in learning the Truth of the Buddhas and Ancestors, awakening to enlightened Mind is unquestionably foremost. This is the continual Teaching of the Buddhas and Ancestors. ‘To awaken’ means to have something fully dawn on you. This does not refer to the great, ultimate awakening of a Buddha. Even if someone has entirely experienced all ten stages of bodhisattvahood, that person is still a bodhisattva. The twenty-eight Ancestors in India and the first six Ancestors in China, as well as the other great Ancestral Masters, were bodhisattvas; they were not the Buddha, nor were they shravakas or pratyekabuddhas, or anything else. Among those who are exploring the Matter* in the world today, there is not even one who has clearly understood that the Ancestors are bodhisattvas, not shravakas. Such folks today carelessly describe themselves as patch-robed monks or patch-robed disciples. Since they do not yet understand this, they have recklessly created confusion. How sad that, in these degenerate days of ours, the words and ways of the Ancestors have died out.

Thus it is that even though there are those who remain in home life and those who have left home life behind, and even though there are those who are in lofty positions and those who are just ordinary folk, and even though there are those who say that they are suffering and those who say that they are happy, all should

quickly give rise to the intention of helping others awaken before they themselves have fully awakened. Even though the world of sentient beings has its limits and is also beyond limits, we give rise, first off, to the intention of helping all sentient beings awaken, for this is what the enlightened Mind is.

When bodhisattvas who are but one stage away from realizing Buddhahood are about to descend to Jambudvīpa, they offer the following as their final Teaching for the sake of those celestial beings in the Tushita Heaven: “The enlightened Mind is the bright gateway to Truth, for It does not separate Itself from the Three Treasures.” You need to clearly understand what they are saying, namely, that not separating oneself from the Three Treasures is what comes after the arising of the enlightened Mind. After we have given rise to the enlightened Mind, we must not regress or wander off from It, but must steadfastly protect and defend It.



The Buddha once said, “How do bodhisattvas protect the One Great Matter, which is enlightened Mind? The bodhisattvas and mahasattvas* are always diligent in protecting enlightened Mind, which is like ordinary, conventional parents in the world protecting their child, or like a one-eyed person protecting his one remaining eye, or like someone protecting his guide when going through a wilderness. A bodhisattva’s protecting enlightened Mind is just like this. Because bodhisattvas rely on safeguarding enlightened Mind in this way, they realize supreme, fully perfected enlightenment. Because they rely on realizing supreme, fully perfected enlightenment, they come equipped with certainty, bright-mindedness, self-worth, and freedom from defilement, which describes the unsurpassed great nirvana. For this reason, bodhisattvas protect this one Teaching.”

Such are the Buddha’s words concerning the safeguarding of enlightened Mind. The reason why we protect It and do not let ourselves regress or wander off from It is, as popular custom would put it, because It is like the three things that are born but do not reach maturity, namely, fish eggs, mangos, and bodhisattvas who have given rise to the intention.⁶ Because, generally speaking, there are many who have regressed and thereby have forgotten enlightened Mind, I too once feared that I would regress and forget It. This is why I have protected enlightened Mind.

6. Many fish eggs are produced but few succeed in hatching. Mango trees produce many flowers, but few become mature fruit. Dōgen will explain the third.

When bodhisattvas are beginners, many regress or wander off because they do not have a genuine Master. If they do not have a genuine Master, they do not hear the true Teaching, and if they do not hear the true Teaching, they are apt to deny causality, along with denying the end of suffering, the Three Treasures, and all thoughts and things in the three temporal worlds. Vainly craving the five fleeting desires of property, sexual involvement, food and drink, fame, and sleep in the present, they forget the merits of enlightenment in the future. Sometimes, in order to obstruct a trainee, bedevilers and tempters will take on the form of a Buddha or appear in the figure of one's parents or of one's Master, as well as of one's relatives or even of heavenly beings. Then, drawing near, they make up ever-worsening stories, saying, "The Buddha's Way is far, far off. You will soon enough experience many sufferings and deep sorrows. Better to free yourself from birth-and-death first and then help others awaken." The trainee, hearing these tales, regresses from enlightened Mind and backs away from the conduct of bodhisattvas. Further, you need to know that preachings like these are nothing but the mouthings of demons. O my bodhisattvas, know this and do not follow such teaching. Even more, you should not regress or wander away from your vow to practice helping others to awaken before awakening yourself.

Should you consider going against your vow to help others to awaken before you do, you must realize that this is the preaching of demons, the preaching of non-Buddhists, the preaching of wicked companions. So do not follow it.



There are four kinds of demons: first, the demons of disturbing passions; second, the demons of the five components of existence; third, the demons of death; and fourth, the celestial demons of desire.⁷

'The demons of disturbing passions' refers to the hundred and eight disturbing passions.⁸ When these are analyzed in detail, they actually comprise eighty-four thousand hindering passions.

'The demons of the five components of existence' are the various ways in which whatever arises unites with some hindering

7. 'Demons' are not necessarily something in human form, but whatever bedevils the trainee by creating a feeling of being hindered in one's practice.

The first sentence of this quotation by Dōgen is from the *Great Scripture on the Buddha's Parinirvana*. The remainder is from a commentary on this sentence by our Indian Ancestor Nāgārjuna.

8. These are the mental functions that disturb and pollute our mind and body.

passion. For instance, we have a body. The four basic elements of this body—earth, wind, water, and fire—along with whatever else is fashioned from these four elements,* such as what we see with our eyes, comprise what we call ‘the component of physical form’. Whatever we perceive through our senses that unites with the hundred and eight disturbing passions, we call ‘the component of perception’. Whatever distinctions our mind makes up—be they measurable or immeasurable—which unite with judgments, we give the name of ‘the component of mentation, or of thought’. When, by giving rise to thoughts of pleasure or disgust, we then give rise to a disposition to be greedy or angry, we call this activity—be it proper or improper—‘the component of conduct’. By uniting the six sense organs—eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind—with the six objects of the senses—color and shape, sound, odor, taste, touch, and thoughts—we give rise to the six kinds of mental functioning—seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling, and discerning; we call the immeasurable, boundless mind which unites with the judgments formed by these six kinds of mental functioning ‘the component of consciousness’.

Because causes and conditions are impermanent, what we call ‘the demon of death’ interrupts the flow of the five components of existence, and because this completely removes the three elements of consciousness, heat, and life, we call it ‘the demon of death’.

‘The celestial demons’ are the lords of the world of desire. Because they are deeply attached to worldly pleasures and engage in ulterior motives to gain them, they give rise to fallacious views. They despise and envy the words and ways taught by all the sage and saintly ones for realizing nirvana, which is why we call them ‘the celestial demons’. In India, Māra is their name; in China, they are called those who can steal someone’s very life. Although such demons of death can truly rob you of your life, other celestial demons can also produce the causes and conditions for your life being stolen, and they can also rob one of a life of wise discernment. Because of this, they are called ‘killers’.

Someone once asked me, “The one category of the demons of the five components of existence embraces the other three types, so why do you separate them into four?” I replied, “Truly, there is but one demon, but in order to clarify what that one means, there are the four.”

The preceding is what our Ancestral Master Nāgārjuna taught. You trainees should remember it and diligently study it. Do not regress or turn away from enlightened Mind, vainly concealing demons of fascination.

Delivered to the assembly at Kippō-ji Temple in Echizen Province on the fourteenth day of the second lunar month in the second year of the Kangen era (March 24, 1244).

Copied in the Master's hermitage on the ninth day of the fourth month in the seventh year of the Kenchō era (May 16, 1249).

Ejō