



Song of Meditation Hakuin

Sentient beings are primarily all Buddhas:
It is like ice and water,
Apart from water no ice can exist;
Outside sentient beings, where do we find the Buddhas?
Not knowing how near the Truth is,
People seek it far away, — what a pity!
They are like him who, in the midst of water,
Cries in thirst so imploringly;
They are like the son of a rich man
Who wandered away among the poor.
The reason why we transmigrate through the six worlds
Is because we are lost in the darkness of ignorance;
Going astray further and further in the darkness,
When are we able to get away from birth-and-death?

As regards the Meditation practised in the Mahayana,
We have no words to praise it fully:
The virtues of perfection such as charity, morality, etc.,
And the invocation of the Buddha's name, confession, and ascetic discipline,
And many other good deeds of merit, —
All these issue from the practice of Meditation;
Even those who have practised it just for one sitting
Will see all their evil karma wiped clean;
Nowhere will they find the evil paths,
But the Pure Land will be near at hand.
With a reverential heart, let them to this Truth
Listen even for once,
And let them praise it, and gladly embrace it,
And they will surely be blessed most infinitely.

For such as, reflecting within themselves,
Testify to the truth of Self-nature,
To the truth that Self-nature is no-nature,
They have really gone beyond the ken of sophistry.
For them opens the gate of the oneness of cause and effect,
And straight runs the path of non-duality and non-trinity.
Abiding with the not-particular which is in particulars,
Whether going or returning, they remain for ever unmoved;
Taking hold of the not-thought which lies in thoughts,

In every act of theirs they hear the voice of the truth.
How boundless the sky of Samadhi unfettered!
How transparent the perfect moon-light of the fourfold Wisdom!
At that moment what do they lack?
As the Truth eternally calm reveals itself to them,
This very earth is the Lotus Land of Purity,
And this body is the body of the Buddha.

D.T. Suzuki. *Manual of Zen Buddhism*. Kyoto: Eastern Buddhist Society, 1934. This text is in the public domain.

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