

**Shunryū Suzuki-rōshi**  
**Friday, August 19, 1966**  
**SESSHIN LECTURE: Friday Evening**  
**Lecture D**  
**Soko-ji Temple, San Francisco**

**Suzuki-rōshi:** We have already a pretty good understanding of our practice because we have studied it from various side. Here is the interesting subject. I think you—you can easily understand this subject.<sup>1</sup>

MAIN SUBJECT

Attention! A monk asked Jōshū: "All the dharma lead up to the one, but what does the one lead up to?"

Jōshū said, "I was in the Province of Sei. I made a hempen robe. It weighed seven pounds."

This is very famous story.

Attention! A monk asked Jōshū: "All the dharmas, all the teachings, all the dharmas lead up to the one. What does the one lead up to?"

Jōshū said, "I was—I have been in Province of Sei. I made a hempen robe. It weighed seven pounds."

That was answer.

Jōshū is the famous Chinese Zen master who joined our order at his age of sixty.<sup>2</sup> And he studied zazen, our practice, for twenty years under Nansen.<sup>3</sup> And he became a temple [?] monk [?] and—until he died at the age of one hundred and twenty [laughs, laughter]. It is not joke [laughs]. It is true—historical—it is true. And he—his way is so simple, and his life is so bare—bare, you know—bare enough to—just to support himself. He always sit in broken chair, and one of the four legs of the chair, his chair, was always mended [laughs] by—by a rope. Anyway, he is, you know, unique, powerful Zen master.

Someone asked him, "All—all the things—many end up in one. Then what one does end up?" This is the, you know, story. This is the

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<sup>1</sup> *Blue Cliff Records* 45. Suzuki-rōshi is reading from R.D.M. Shaw's translation of *The Blue Cliff Records* (London: Michael Joseph, 1961, p. 156).

<sup>2</sup> Zhaozhou Congshen (Jōshū Jūshin): 778–897.

<sup>3</sup> Nanquan Puyuan (Nansen Fugan): 748–835. Dharma successor of Mazu Daoyi (Baso Dōitsu).

question. Of course, this is the problem of one and many. One—when we say "one," many is, you know, understood already. If there is—if you lack one thing, nothing will exist. So one is always necessary. So one is all and all is one.

But by mechanical understanding, or materialistic understanding, you know—one—when—it takes time, you know, before many and—lead to one, led to one. It takes time by mechanical understanding. But from our understanding, if there is one, many is understood. One and many is—does exist simultaneously. Isn't that so? Many and one is same thing. If you count, you know, all those students there may be fifty or more. That many. But all those student is all one group. So one and many is not different. Because you count one by one, it's many. But if you don't count, this is one group. So this is—so one and many is simultaneous being. And one cannot always remain in one because everyone is changing.

So for us, one or many—one and many, those dualistic pair of duality is the unit of existence. Here I am a, you know, speaker, and you are audience. The speaker and audience is the relationship—duality in this case. Because—because of this duality, there is—some activity is going on now. If there is no duality, nothing will happen [laughs] to us. Where there is problem, there is some—something to do here. If there is no problem [laughs], we cannot work on anything. We will be all dead. This is the mechanical understanding of life. So—mecha- [partial word]—through—by mechan- [partial word]—because of mechanical understanding, we have this kind of problem. If many teleologically [?] become one, then what is the purpose of one? Where does it go [laughs]? After became many—after many become one, where does it go? This is just mechanical understanding.

But from our viewpoint, one and many is the simultaneous being. Then one, you know—and our life is succession of event—each event—each event happen dualistic way. In dualism each event happen. This is succession of event. One event is ensuing [?] event of another. But there is no continuation—continuity. One is one. Another—"A is A," "B is B." This is more appropriate understanding for us. Because of, you know, mechanical understanding of our practice, we become proud of our achievement sometime [laughs]. Or we will become discouraged by what you did. But anyway, you cannot produce—you cannot make same mistake, anyway. What you have done is already over. And you are doing something quite new. So there is no reason why we should be discouraged. But what you have done is already over [laughs], so why are you proud of what you have done [laughter]? If you have this kind of understanding, your mind is always wide open [laughs] like a mirror. Then you have always composure without disturbing by anyone or by past or future. This is, you know, our understanding.

His [Jōshū's] answer is very interesting [laughing, laughter]. He does not care what he says, you know [laughter]. It is out of question. Just mechanical, you know, understanding of our life. Our life is not going in that way. Actually, our life is going quite different way: from form to forming. Something which was formed is already finished, and we have to form with something else, you know [laughs]. Dualistic—formal dualistic life is over already. And we attained oneness. After we attain oneness, we—our mind is ready for something, some duality, you know. You will have some new event with something else. So this is his understanding of life. So for him, one does not become many, or many does not become one. But he [the monk] asks him: "Many become one. Then what—after that one—where one will go?"

So he says, "Bamboo is growing. Bamboo is tall. Pine tree is short." Whatever he says, that is answer. "I bought a very good material in Sei Province. And I made a heavy robe with it. It weighs seven pounds" [laughs, laughter]. That is "things is going," you know. Things is going—are going in this way. There is no need to answer for such a question. See what is going—see closely what is going. Then you will understand what is going. One is many, many is one. And it is—one after another things takes—events take place for everyone. That's all.

But it does not—he does not ignore his practice according to the rules. There is some rules. But that rules does not control things in time-order or space-order. Things itself has its own function and quality. And things goes according to its own function and its own quality. So things has—nature of things is way of going. So things returns themselves—things knows where does it go if let everything goes in due course, in right course. That is our understanding.

So something which you should put higher place, you should put higher place. Something which is—which should be put in lower place should be put in lower place.<sup>4</sup> That is our way. If it is heavy robe, heavy material, you can make beautiful material. That's all. If it is not so good, you can scrub your floor with it. That's all. If it is beautiful mater- [partial word]—heavy material, it will weigh seven pounds [laughs]. That is our teaching.

But this monk asked where does it go? Where is, you know, is answer? It goes where [laughs]? It goes—what place does it go? So what place is answer? It goes what place? What place is any place

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<sup>4</sup> Alluding to Dōgen's *Tenzokyōkun (Instructions for the Cook)*: "For all the various things, put away in high places things that belong in high places, and put away in low places things that belong in low places" (trans. by T. D. Leighton and S. Okumura, 1996, pp. 35-36). See also SR-69-12-02, SR-65-07-26A, SR-65-07-29, and SR-69-12-02.

you like [laughs, laughter]. It will go what place? Whatever place it likes. So what place is the answer.

And what place means dynamic, you know, change—stream of change. This is the, you know, key point of Buddhism. "Where" we say, but where—wherever you go there is dynamic stream of change. It will go to the dynamics [of] change. That is answer. So where does it go itself is answer. Where does it go?

So if you say [?]-it is true with physics, you know, traditional physics too. If—mechanically we say "one and many," but actually one is acting on many. And so our world is counteracting—world of counteracting. If, you know, counteracting take place, nothing can remain in same state. Everything will change in the realm of counter-reacting world. So this counter—realm of counter—world of counter-reaction is called world of transcending [?]. The world of counter and reaction—counteraction is world of transcending [?] because in the world of counter-reaction man- [partial word]—things change always. So where does it go? It goes into the count- [partial word]—world of counter-reaction. So in that counter-reaction—world of counter-reaction, many things happen.

Jōshū bought a fine material at [laughs] some place in China. Where someone paid a lot of money for a piece of—for a cup of water because he was thirsty. Many thing will happens. So we say if we—when someone is striking drum in southern country, in northern country someone will dance [laughs, laughter]. Many things happen in the world of counter-reaction. So it goes into the counter-reaction. In the realm of counter-reaction, many things become possible to work or to act. And whatever we do, when we realize we are working in the world of counter-reaction, our life is not only creative life but also unfolding of our inmost desire.

I—this afternoon,<sup>5</sup> I could not think of "unfolding." That was the word I wanted [laughs, laughter]. Unfolding of our inmost desire. So you may say our life is expression of our inmost desire. If it is expression it is created. It is un- [partial word]—it is unfolding. It is—there is some rules, and there is some goal. We know where to go because of our inmost desire. Our inmost desire knows intuitively where we should go. So our life is both created and controlled by some rules. So where there is no rule, there is no creativity. Where there is creativity, there should be some rules. We cannot ignore rules.

"Where does it go?" is very interesting question, you know. He answered to his question, "Where does it go?" Space gives us some meaning; time gives us some meaning. While usually we strive for to ignore time-bound and space-bound, that is the value in its usual

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<sup>5</sup> SR-66-08-19C.

sense. They want—they just want liberty. But it is not possible. They say liberty, but that liberty is—that idea of liberty is based on mechanical understanding. We are not mechanics. If we are human being, we should understand so far.

This is nearly the same question as Daizui was asked, you know.<sup>6</sup> "When the—this world [is] devoured by karmic fire, where does it go [laughs]? Where does our true mind go—true self go?" This is, you know, just mechanical understanding.

I think it is strange enough to find out the Hegel<sup>7</sup> and Dōgen was almost—Hegel may be later than Dōgen, but this kind of deeper understanding was understood by many ancient thinkers. More than 700 years ago, Dōgen observed things in this way. And this is, surprising enough, the traditional understanding of things of Buddhism.

In Eihei-ji Monastery, you know, if you go to Eihei-ji Monastery you will be bored [laughs, laughter] because you will repeat same thing over and over again every day. Fortunately Philip and Petchey couldn't speak [laughs, laughter] the Japanese.<sup>8</sup> They have—they had something to study there [laughs, laughter], so—. They say that is a problem, but for us it is very good [laughs]. It was very good that he—they couldn't understand Japanese or [laughs], you know, speak Japanese. But our understanding of life is very firmly based on the mechanical understanding that we think our everyday life is repetition of same thing. But it is not so. It is—no one can repeat same thing over. What you do something is different from what you do in next moment. That is why we should not waste our time.

I was told when I was quite young, by my master,<sup>9</sup> "You should not waste your time." I thought it means to work hard all day long and all night through [laughs, laughter]. But we do not work nighttime, but we have to behave all night through. That was, I thought, what he meant. But it was not so. Sometime he said, "To understand what is Buddhism is not to waste your time. If you do not understand Buddhism you are wasting time [laughs, laughter]," he said. I thought this is very [laughs, laughter] good way to encourage us, but I was not so encouraged [laughs, laughter] because it is too convenient logic for me. But now I understand what he meant. Not to waste time is not to waste even a grain of rice. To do something appropriately, to do something when you should do, it should not be too late or too early.

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<sup>6</sup> *Blue Cliff Records* 29. Suzuki-rōshi discussed it in SR-66-08-19C.

<sup>7</sup> Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel: 1770–1831. German philosopher who proposed that truth is reached by a continuing dialectic.

<sup>8</sup> Grahame Petchey went to Eihei-ji in 1963 and again in 1965. Philip Wilson went in 1964.

<sup>9</sup> Gyokujun So-on.

In—at—in Eihei-ji, if you get up ten or fifteen minutes earlier than others, you will be scolded [laughs, laughter]. That is, you know, safest practice. You should get up just when they get up. That is enough. You should not be especially good student [laughs, laughter]. I—we have no answer for it. "Hmm." [Probably mimicking an overly serious student.] We are like—we feel like we swallowed a start [?] of —straight stick. No answer [?]. We cannot move [laughs]. "Oh!" That's all.

This is, you know—you may understand how strict our teaching is, but our teaching is not—is always near at hand, not easy—not difficult to observe. But at the same time it is very strict and very delicate. So our mind should be always subtle enough to adjust our conduct with our surrounding.

I think I told you many times, but for someone it may be quite a new story about me.<sup>10</sup> My teacher—when I was at Eihei-ji, I [was] told to serve Kishizawa Ian-rōshi. Later—since then he became my teacher, my whole life teacher. When I was serving him, I opened the *karakami*<sup>11</sup> door—sliding door, like this. He said: "Don't open that side!" So I closed the door and opened the other side. That was all right. Next morning [laughs, laughter], I opened the other side like this. "Don't open—don't open that side!" [Laughs, laughter.] I couldn't understand at all. Once he said to open right side—to open left side. And he said now to open the other side. I couldn't understand at all. But because what he said don't open that side, so I opened right-hand side again.

That was all right, but it was not all right with me [laughs, laughter]. I thought over and over, but it was not at all all right. Why he said don't open right side was because there was someone—some guest was there. So before I open the door, we should know—I should know where—which side the guest was—guest was talking. So [laughs] because I opened the side where the guest was, I was wrong. Usually, it is all right with us to open this side. This is usual way to open.

Same thing happened to me again when I served tea for the guest. When I served tea for the first time for my teacher, he said, "This is not enough." That was just what he said. "This is not enough," he said. So I poured more and served it, and he took it and drank it. Next day [laughs, laughter] when a guest come I served a cup filled

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<sup>10</sup> See Lectures SR-69-03-15 and SR-70-06-03.

<sup>11</sup> *karakami*: Originally a type of decorative craft paper created in the Tang dynasty of China. During Japan's Heian period, when doors and partitions covered with such paper were first widely created, the term came to apply to any paper used for *fusuma*, a decorative paper-covered opaque door used to partition rooms. *Karakami* is widely used in shrines, temples, tea-ceremony rooms, and other traditional buildings, especially in Kyoto.

with [laughs, laughter] maybe 90 percent—80 percent or 90 percent filled with hot tea and served it—served him. [Laughs, laughter.] He said, "Don't fill tea cup so much." [Laughs, laughter.] You know, he—he likes a cup filled with, you know, plenty of hot water. But almost all the guest don't like a cup filled with bitter, hot tea [laughs]. So for him, you know, a filled cup is all right, but for guest, you know, we shouldn't fill the teacup when we serve.

Same thing happened in the—yesterday's story,<sup>12</sup> you know, whether the essence of mind perish after *kalpa* fire devours the whole universe. "It will perish sometime," he said. Sometime he said it doesn't. And there is many of those stories in *Blue Cliff Record*.

People say *Blue Cliff Record* is very difficult to understand. In Japanese, *Hekiganroku*. Almost all the Buddhists knows the name of this book, *Hekiganroku*. And this book is supposed to be very difficult book to understand for—even for teachers. Do you know why? That is because we—our thinking is always based on mechanical understanding, or idealistic understanding, or sometime intellectual understanding. But when we see things-as-it-is, it is not difficult to understand. There is many stories like this.

Here is Tōzan's "No Cold and No Heat":<sup>13</sup>

MAIN SUBJECT

Attention! A monk asked Tōzan, "Cold and heat come upon us. Cold and heat come upon us. Oh, it is very cold," he said. "How should we avoid this cold weather?" he said.

Tōzan said: "Why don't you go where there is no cold and heat?" [Laughs, laughter.] "Why don't you do where there is no cold and no heat?" [Laughs, laughter.]

This is quite mechanical understanding, you know. Some—if you go to Alaska, it is very cold. But if you go to—come to California, it is very warm. "Why don't you go to San Francisco?" That was answer. This is quite—very mechanical, you know, question and answer. But he said, "Why don't you go where there is no cold and no heat?" This [laughs]—it is impossible, you know [laughs, laughter], to live where it is just hot or just cold. Wherever you go, we have four seasons, cold and heat. Why we say it is cold because we are so accustomed to warm weather. That is why it is cold. So cold itself, you know—a pair of opposite with warm, then [there is] no—nothing—no climate which is just cold or just warm, or no feeling of cold or no feeling of hot, without the pair of—the other pair.

<sup>12</sup> SR-66-08-19C: *Blue Cliff Records* 29.

<sup>13</sup> *Blue Cliff Records* 43.

So cold and hot is co-existent. It is not "cold come after hot comes." Cold and hot [are] simultaneous feeling. Because you know how—because you know how cold it is in winter, in summer you say, "Oh, it is hot." Even though you—you think—you are not comparing, but without you—your—your skins, your feeling is comparing. So it is duality; it is coexistent. So there is nowhere to go, you know. "Why don't you go [laughs] somewhere here is no cold and no heat?" No cold and no heat means, at the same time, the answer, you know—perfect answer: no heat, no cold. When cold and hot [are] simultaneously understood in term of awareness, you know, you understood—you have understood what is my problem, you know. When you understand this problem and overcome this problem, you are already in where there is no cold or warm. So why don't you go to somewhere where no—where there is no cold or no heat?

The monk said, "Is there such a place without cold and heat?" [Laughs, laughter.] Through and through he, you know—from beginning to end, his question is just materialistic question. Tōzan said, "When cold be thoroughly cold, when hot be hot through and through." That is answer.

Cold and heat—feeling of cold and heat is one, you know. Cold and heat—sometime our understanding will go from cold to hot—heat. Sometime our mind will go from heat to cold, you know. Actually, it is one because it is so closely related that it is understood as a one. So when we say, "Oh, it is cold," it means it is hot [laughs, laughter]. When you say, "It is cold," it means it is hot. What you say is different [laughs], but actual understanding of reality is same. Without using your head, without waiting [?] order of your brain or mind, you judge things right way. You know things already. So if it is cold, you may say it is cold. If it is hot, you may say it is hot. That was his answer.

So where or when is the answer always. Where or when. And where or when always means dynamic change of the world. So in this dynamic change of the world, various problem will be resolved. We call it progressive, you know, solution—progressive result. When our understanding is naïve and poor, before we have the idea of when or why, which is dynamic change, we have pro- [partial word]—various problem which should be solved in the understanding of dynamic change. Everything is changing. If you say, that truth will solve various problem you have. That is, you know, eternal truth. And our practice is based on this truth, so our practice is always true.

As I have to, you know, have to go to Japan, so for a while, this lecture will be the last lecture to me and to you maybe. Since I came to America, I studied many things because of language difficulties. We have many technical term—Buddhist convenient technical term. It

means terms—I have so many fancy good sharp tools [laughs]. So sometime we abused the tool. When we should use chisel, I think we used plane. That was, I think, what I was doing—I have been doing. But because of the language difficulty, I have to think and think and think [laughs] to express myself. This thinking helped me a lot. And I'm very much grateful for the difficulty we had with you. And I think it is same thing with you. You must have great difficulties in understanding my talk [laughs]. "What he say?" [Laughs, laughter.] At least I gave you chance to think [laughs, laughter]. And this thinking, I think, helped you a lot. I hope it was not waste of time. And it was not waste of time for me too. Anyway, I should—we should be grateful for any problem we have every day. It is not repetition of same thing.

*[The following sentences were transferred from SR-66-08-19-C2. It is thought to be the end of this present Lecture D.]*

We are making progress every day. Even in five-day *sesshin* you made a big progress. Big, big progress.

Thank you very much for your attendance and sincere help.

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Source: Original City Center tape. Verbatim transcript by Diana Bartle, Adam Tinkham, and Bill Redican (8/6/01).