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# MOON ON THE WATER

Volume 7, Issue 5

Newsletter of the Great Lake Zen Center, Milwaukee, WI

October, 2005

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## Where Does the True Buddha Dwell?

Zen Master Seung Sahn

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Zen Master Ku San wrote to Ven. Duk Sahn as follows:

Once Zen Master Ang Sang asked Zen Master Wi San Yungwoo, 'Where does the true Buddha dwell?'

Wi San answered, 'When origination and matter come together, they become light. This light is emptiness and this 'empty' is 'full'. When all phenomena, extinguished, return to the origin, then nature and form become clear. Origination is origination; matter is matter. only like this - this is the true Buddha.'

At this remark, Ang San was suddenly enlightened.

Now, Duk Sahn, what is your view?

Ven. Duk Sahn wrote in reply as follows:

It is said that there is no place of abode of mind. Duk Sahn, the general of the guards keeping the gate of Sambosa on Robin mountain, has also no place of abode and no view.

Regarding the dialogue between Ven. Ang San and Ven. Wi San, I give them both thirty blows and give the bodies to a hungry dog.

Zen Master Ku San wrote again as a reply:

In your letter you mentioned that you are a general of the guards who keeps the gate, and so on - but In True Emptiness, there is no entry and no exit. So what do you guard?

And, you said that you hit Ang San and Wi San thirty times. Please give me an answer that is before words. You give them thirty blows. To whom do you give them?

At this Ven. Duk Sahn wrote to Zen Master Seung Sahn:

Ven. Seung Sahn, how should I answer the questions? I look forward to your kind instructions.

Zen Master Seung Sahn answered Zen Master Ku San:

The sword of the general who keeps the gate at Robin mountain kills Buddhas when it meets them, and kills patriarchs when it meets them, as well. If Ven. Ku San opens his mouth here, he too shall have no way of escape from being killed by the pitiless sword.

Regarding the second question, the thirty blows are given to Ang San and Wi Ran, why do you carry these thirty blows around on your own back?

KATZ!

The sky is blue and the ground is yellow.

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# What a Year

Michael Zinke, BT

Mother Nature is really giving us a lesson this year. The earth experienced earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods. Just about everything imaginable. Watching the news one day I saw a family that lost their home. Someone in their immediate family had lived in the home consistently for 146 years; and then one day it was gone. They were just one of many families that had their homes and all of their possessions lost forever. In the north we felt empathy for those people as well as feeling lucky that we weren't involved. We opened our hearts and donated food, money, clothing, and whatever else was needed to assist. And when we thought Mother Nature was settling down, another hurricane quickly came and caused more damage. Now Florida has experienced yet another hurricane and more damage has been caused and right now there are two more storms, Alpha and Beta, forming.

On the Pakistan/India border we heard news of thousands and thousands of deaths due to an earthquake. We wondered out loud if these disasters were ever going to end and then, ever so slowly, we saw signs of rebuilding going on in New Orleans. Things seemed to be getting back to what we consider normal. Even though people lost their homes due to the flooding many were ready, and even planning, to rebuild - right there in New Orleans.

Where I grew up we had a small creek going through town, just past main street. It was so narrow that normally you could step across the creek. But one night, following heavy rain storms in the north part of the state, the creek flooded and destroyed many homes in town. Several people were killed by the flood. My brother lost three of his best friends, two of them neighbors of ours. They had been out driving around town, as kids in small towns do, when they were overtaken by the flood waters. It took several days to find their bodies and many anxious moments for everyone in town. The parents of one the guys owned a hobby shop in town and they were always friendly and easy going. That changed after the death of their son. Both the mother and father were very distant; lost in their grief. The hobby shop became a place to avoid instead of a place to go have fun because it was difficult to be around them. They never got over their grief and eventually lost the store because people just didn't know how to deal with them. The part of town that was destroyed was rebuilt; people built new houses right where the old ones had been. It seems like you see that every time there's a flood or other natural disaster somewhere. The media will interview the people that just lost everything and they reply that they will rebuild right there knowing that next year another flood could occur and wipe out everything again.

So is there a lesson to be learned from all of these disasters this year? Is there an explanation for why this is happening? I saw Larry King (only once on my entire life and I swear, never again!!) one day and he had the Dalai Lama and a Minister on his show. He asked the Dalai Lama how the Buddhists explained these disasters; the Dalai Lama replied it was due to karma, the old cause and effect teachings that we all know. The Minister replied it was just God's way. When asked to explain, he replied 'God acts in mysterious ways'. Take your pick, whatever answer suits you. I kind of lean towards the cause and effect answer. I mean, if you build a house in an area that is lower than the Gulf of Mexico and all that is holding back all of that Gulf water is a concrete levy, I think the effect is pretty clear - some day the levy will break and you'll lose your house. Those of us in the Midwest can wonder about the logic of building in a dangerous area and question why people do that but in reality we do similar things. No matter whom you are or where you live, you always think things are going to be permanent. And I think therein lies the biggest lesson, the law of impermanence. Everything we now see will disappear someday, some things will be around longer and some things will be gone quickly. Wood rots, concrete crumbles (look at the Marquette interchange), bricks break, metal rusts. Everything will disappear. No matter how much we know and expect that something will someday disappear it is always a shock to us when that something disappears so quickly; like the 146 year old house that withstood so much during its lifetime and then, one day, disappeared. So one of the big lessons from all of the disasters we've seen this year is that things can disappear very quickly. In a minute you could lose everything you own. Years of saving, collecting, and gathering - gone in a matter of seconds. The grief we then feel is associated with the attachment we have to various material things. A lot of attachment, a lot of grief. A little attachment, less grief but none the less, grief.

So, if we have attachments to material things and we build a house next to a river or on the edge of a cliff, or some other out of the way place - be prepared for grief. The only way to avoid the suffering from the grief is to sever your attachment to the material items. Without attachment, when things disappear, they just disappear. You feel no grief.

But then, this isn't the time to tell the victims of the disasters to let go of their attachments. This isn't the time to get on our Zen pedestals and tell them they wouldn't feel so bad if they just let go of their attachments. This is the time to help those people any way we can. Send clothing, donate money to charities, and give food to organizations that distribute food to the needy. Right now the important thing is to comfort those in need. Mother Nature already supplied the teaching.

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## **Kido Retreat, Saturday, November 12, 9 AM – 2:30 PM**

Kido means ‘energy path’. Participants in the kido play percussion instruments while continuously chanting “Kwan Seuem Bosal.” Bring a percussion instrument (this can be as simple as a blocks of wood). Some additional ones will be provided. You should also bring a bag lunch. There is no charge for the kido. Newcomers are welcome. For more information, contact us at [info@glzc.org](mailto:info@glzc.org).

NOTE: There will be practice on Saturday, November 12 at 8:00am. Join us for the kido retreat following practice.

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## **No Practice Wednesday, November 23, 2006**

Due to the Thanksgiving holiday; there will be no practice on Wednesday, November 23. The dharma talk usually scheduled for the fourth Wednesday of the month will instead be held on Monday November 21. Please join us Monday night for a dharma talk given by one of GLZC’s teachers.

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## **Change is Inevitable – Except in Vending Machines.....Mark Overs**

### **Calendar of Upcoming Events**

#### **November, 2005**

**Saturday, November 12:** Kido One-Day Retreat, GLZC, 9am to 2:30pm.

#### **No Practice, Wednesday, November 23**

#### **December, 2005**

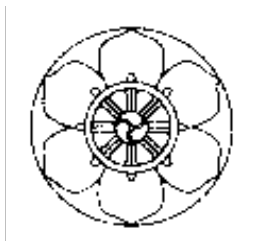
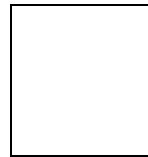
**Monday, December 5: Buddha’s Enlightenment Day.** GLZC, 7:30. Join us as we celebrate Buddha’s Enlightenment Day. Friends and family are welcome to attend, also.

**Monday, December 26: No Practice.**

#### **January, 2006**

**Monday, January 9: Heart Kyol Che Opening Ceremony.** GLZC, 7:30. Join us as we open the 90 day period of intense practice corresponding to the 90 day Kyol Che retreat.

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## MOON ON THE WATER

*is published by the*

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The Great Lake Zen Center is affiliated with the Kwan Um School of Zen.

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### **Regular Practice Schedule of the Great Lake Zen Center**

Monday and Wednesday at 7:30PM;  
Saturday at 8:00AM

Other special events as described elsewhere in the newsletter. Unless otherwise noted, all events are held at the Great Lake Zen Center.

*Beginners Always Welcome!*

Unless noted otherwise, *Introductions to Zen* are offered on the first Monday of each month. Dharma Talks are offered on the fourth Wednesday of each month. Both are at 7:30PM.

