Our Practice

BY ZEN MASTER SEUNG SAHN

Our world is supported by three columns: time, space, and cause and effect. But, where do time and space come from? Also, who makes cause and effect? Time, space, and cause and effect are made by thinking. Our thinking makes everything. So the three columns that support our world are created by our mind.

But if our mind disappears, then thinking disappears. If thinking disappears then time, space, and cause and effect disappear; then empty world appears. Empty... completely empty. Another name for "empty world" is Substance. This is the Substance of the whole universe: human being's substance, dog's substance, everything's substance.

Ten thousand dharmas return to one. This one comes from where? During interviews everybody hits the floor: BOOM! Everything becomes one point: no name, no form, no space, no cause and effect, no time ... nothing at all. The name for this is the Absolute. If you open your mouth about the Absolute then you've already made a mistake. Only action.

If you keep that point for a long time, then you see clearly, hear clearly, smell clearly, taste clearly, touch clearly, think clearly, and act clearly. Which means the sky is blue; trees are green; the dog is barking—woof, woof; sugar is sweet. Then, when you see, when you hear, when you smell, everything, just as it is, is the truth. Truth is beyond time and space, cause and effect. There are no opposites. This is the Absolute. If you attain this point, you attain the Truth.

How can this point function correctly? Most important in our practice is a clear direction; then a correct life is possible. This world has a lot of suffering. How can we help all beings? The name for that is bodhisattva action. If you wake up moment to moment and keep a clear mind, then correct direction and truth and correct life are always in front of you. Then your action, your life, and you are never separate.

However, if this moment is not clear, then time and space, cause and effect will control you. That means your mind makes subject/object world. If your mind is clear, then subject and object disappear. This is the Absolute. Then everything is clear in front of you, and helping this world is possible. That is our practice.