

On the Whole Universe in All Ten Directions

(*Jippō*)

Translator’s Introduction: In this discourse, depending on context, the Japanese word *jippō*’ is translated in various ways, such as the ten directions, the ten quarters, the ten domains, and the ten worlds, all of which refer to the whole universe not only in a literal, worldly sense but also in a spiritual one.

A Master’s making a Fist signifies this whole universe of ours in all its ten directions.¹ This one instance of his manifesting his sincere heart is the whole universe—all ten quarters—in all its splendor. It completely pounds out the marrow from our bones.



Shakyamuni Buddha once proclaimed to His great assembly, “Within the Buddha lands in all ten quarters there is only the Teaching of the One Vehicle and no other.” What He calls the ten quarters have produced the Buddha lands and they form the ten quarters. Therefore, unless we choose to make use of the Buddha lands in our training, we will not yet have the ten quarters. Because they are Buddha lands, we have taken the Buddha as our Master. This ordinary worldly country of ours is no different from Shakyamuni Buddha’s Land. You need to explore through your training that when someone expresses what this ordinary worldly realm is, it is the six- or eight-foot-tall Buddha lands in all ten quarters, in the same sense that we clearly describe something as weighing either eight ounces or half a pound.²

These ten quarters are contained within one single quarter and are contained within one single Buddha, which is why they have manifested as ten quarters. Because they are the ten worlds which is one world, and because they are this very

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1. A Master’s making a Fist refers to a Chinese Zen Master’s raising of his fist to direct a disciple away from a narrow way of thinking in order to have him encompass the whole of the universe, spatially and temporally.
 2. That is, we use different terms for the same thing. In short, what we call the ordinary worldly realm is another name for the Buddha lands, depending on our perspective.

world which is both one's own world and the world of the present moment, they are the Eye of the world, the Fist of the world, the supporting pillar of the world, and the stone lantern* of the world. The Buddhas of the ten quarters within these Buddha lands of the ten worlds are not something comparatively larger or smaller, nor are They something pure or sullied. Because of this, all Buddhas on Their own, along with all the Buddhas of the ten quarters, deeply admire and praise each other. Further, They do not slander each other or talk about each other's merits or weaknesses or each other's likes and dislikes as if They were turning the Wheel of the Dharma to express It. As Buddhas and the disciples of Buddhas, They help give rise to spiritual goals by making respectful inquiries.

In receiving the Dharma of the Buddhas and Ancestors, we explore It through our training, just as They do. We do not insult Them, or judge Them as being right or wrong, or say insulting things about Them as do non-Buddhists and the demon hordes. When we open and read the Buddhist Scriptures that have been passed on to China, and look at Shakyamuni Buddha's Teaching over the span of His life, we see that He never spoke of Buddhas in other domains as being inferior or superior to Him, nor did He say that They were not Buddhas. In short, we cannot find in any of the Teaching that He gave in His lifetime a word of His that criticized any Buddha.

Thus it was that Shakyamuni Buddha once addressed His great assembly, saying, "I, on My own, have come to know how It appears, as every Buddha in the ten quarters has also done."³ You need to know that the appearance referred to in His statement "I, on My own, have come to know how It appears" is the appearance of That which is fully perfected. The appearance of perfection is, as the saying goes, "This cane of bamboo is on the tall side whereas that cane of bamboo is on the short side." The Way of the Buddhas in the ten quarters is synonymous with giving full expression to the saying, "I, on My own, have come to know how It appears, which was the same for Shakyamuni Buddha." It is "I, on My own, have awakened to this appearance, and Buddhas in Their own domains are also like this." It is the way 'I' appears, the way 'knowing' appears, the way 'this' appears, the way 'all' appears, the way 'this ordinary worldly country of ours' appears, the way 'Shakyamuni Buddha' appears.

The underlying principle of this is what the Buddhist Scriptures give voice to. The Buddhas, along with Their Buddha lands, are beyond duality, beyond being

* See *Glossary*.

3. In this discourse, the various forms of the word 'appearance' carry the meaning of 'the form that something takes'.

sentient or nonsentient, beyond being deluded or enlightened, beyond being good, bad, or neutral, beyond being pure or sullied, beyond being something created and beyond being something permanently abiding, beyond yearning for things and beyond there being nothing to yearn for, beyond permanence and impermanence, beyond existence and non-existence, and beyond self. They are apart from the four phrases—there is existence, there is no existence, there is both existence and non-existence, and there is neither existence nor non-existence—as well as apart from the one hundred ways of negating. They are simply nothing other than the ten quarters, nothing other than the Buddha lands. Thus, the ten quarters are nothing other than what they are, just as we humans are: we have heads but no tails.



Meditation Master Chōsa Keishin, when addressing his assembly, once said, “The whole universe in all ten directions is nothing other than the discerning Eye of a mendicant monk.” What is being spoken of now is the discerning Eye of Gautama. The discerning Eye of mendicant monk Gautama is synonymous with ‘the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, which is what I have’. Even though It is Transmitted to whomever, It is still mendicant monk Gautama’s discerning Eye. The whole universe, all sharp-edged and raggie-taggle in all its ten quarters, is Gautama’s very organ of sight. This whole universe in all ten quarters is the One Eye among the mendicant monk’s eyes, and up and beyond this, He has ever so many eyes.⁴



“‘The whole universe in all ten directions’ is a term that a mendicant monk is accustomed to.”⁵

‘Accustomed to’ means ‘familiar with’. Among words in common use in Japan, it would be described as ‘everyday’. So, ‘the whole universe in all ten directions’ is an everyday phrase in a mendicant monk’s spiritual family. Its words are accurate and the phrase itself is accurate. Clearly, you need to explore through your training the underlying principle that everyday words are the whole universe in all ten directions, and therefore ‘the whole universe in all ten directions’ are everyday words. Because these ten directions are inexhaustible, they are the ten quarters in

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4. An allusion to the thousand-armed Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva, personification of the all-seeing, all-helping compassion of Buddha Nature.
 5. This is the first of five statements that Dōgen quotes. He then supplies a commentary after each.

their entirety. We use these words in their ordinary, familiar sense. It is like seeking for a horse, seeking for salt, seeking for water, seeking for a drinking vessel, or like offering a drinking vessel, offering water, offering salt, offering a horse.⁶ Who would know that an awakened one, one whose perspective is beyond duality, has transformed his body and transformed his mental functioning within the stream of his words, for he has transformed his speech within the stream of his words? The accuracy of his words and the straightforwardness of his speech, which gives a mouth to the oceans and a tongue to the mountains, has an everyday familiarity. Thus, even were we to cover his mouth and blanket our ears, what he expressed about the ten quarters would still be true.



“The whole universe in all ten quarters is the whole body of a mendicant monk.”

With one hand pointing towards the heavens, the Buddha showed what the heavens are and, with the other hand pointing towards the earth, He showed what the earth is, for this is the way things are. Even so, He said, “In the heavens above and the earth below, I alone am the Honored One.” This is the whole universe in all ten directions, which is the whole body of a mendicant monk. The crown of his head, his eyes, his nose, his skin and flesh, his bones and marrow, each and every one, is totally the embodiment of a mendicant monk, one who has clarified and let go of the whole ten quarters of the universe. Without our having to set all the ten quarters into motion, the whole of them are no different for us. Without depending on the fictions constructed by the intellectual mind, we come to realize the body of a mendicant monk as the whole universe in all ten quarters and view the whole universe in all ten quarters as comprising the body of a mendicant monk.



“The whole universe in all ten quarters is what our radiantly luminous True Self is.”

What we call ‘the True Self’ is our Nose before ‘father’ and ‘mother’ were born.⁷

6. The significance of what is sought and what is offered is the topic of Discourse 79: On ‘The King Requests Something from Sindh’ (*Ō Saku Sendaba*). It concerns a certain king whose servants could anticipate their master’s desires without his having to specifically say what he wanted at any given moment.

7. “Our Nose before ‘father’ and ‘mother’ were born” is a Zen expression for one’s innate

When we mistake what our True Self is, we call whatever comes to hand ‘the whole universe in all ten directions’. Despite that, the emerging of the True Self is the spiritual question manifesting before our very eyes. It is our opening the Buddha Hall and encountering Buddha. At the same time, it is someone else exchanging your eyes with black nuts from a soapberry tree.⁸ Be that as it may, you will precipitously encounter the Great Master. Further, it is easy to call to That One, but it is difficult to do what is asked. Even so, when we hear the call, we turn our head. Of what use is it to go through the motions of arbitrarily turning our head? It is That One who makes our head turn. But when there is rice that is going uneaten and a robe that is going unworn, even though you are like someone groping about who has not yet made contact with That One, I shall, for pity’s sake, deal you thirty blows.⁹



“The whole universe in all ten quarters resides within the radiant luminosity of our True Self.”

The eyelid of the Eye is taken for the radiant luminosity of the True Self. Its sudden opening is taken for something that resides within. What is seen as residing in the Eye is what people call ‘the whole universe in all ten quarters’. However, though there are people who speak in this manner, only those who lie down in the same bed actually see where the bedding is shot through with holes.¹⁰



“In the whole universe in all ten quarters, there is not one single person who is not the True Self.”

Accordingly, among each and every trainer of novices and each and every Fist, there is not one who is not a True Self, just as the ten quarters are. Because they are their True Self, each and every one of these True Selves is the ten quarters. The ten quarters of each and every one of these True Selves delimits what the ten quarters

Buddha Nature prior to the first arising of the discriminating mind which separates things into opposites such as ‘father’ and ‘mother’.

8. That is, one’s voracious eyes are replaced by eyes that have a cleansing effect on self and others.
9. Uneaten rice refers to someone passing up the opportunity to ingest the Dharma; an unworn robe refers to someone who passes up the opportunity to adhere to the Precepts.
10. That is, only those who have awakened share the same insight as to the nature of things.

are on a deep and intimate level. Because the lifeline of each and every True Self is in the hands of the True Self, each repays the original cost of his or her straw sandals.¹¹ Now, why is it that the Eye of Bodhidharma and the Nose of Gautama are newly born from within the Womb of some pillar* of the temple? It is because, as they say, they freely come into, and go out of, the ten quarters in all ten directions.



Gensha Shibi once said, “The whole universe throughout all its ten directions is the One Bright Pearl.” You need to clearly recognize the converse, which is that the One Bright Pearl is the whole universe throughout all its ten directions. Those with heads of gods as well as those with faces of demons take It to be their cavernous dwelling place, whereas the Dharma heirs of the Buddhas and Ancestors take It to be Their Eye. Ordinary folk take It to be the crown of their head or their own fists. Those with a beginner’s heart and those who are present-day trainees take It to be their donning the kesa* and their eating rice.¹² My late Master made It into mudballs which he would use to pelt both those junior to him and those senior to him.¹³ Further, even though this was just like placing a stone on a *Go* board, he would customarily be scraping out the eyes of those in our Ancestral tradition.¹⁴ When he was scraping them out, not only would our Ancestors lend him a hand at it, but a radiance would stream out from within their Eye.



The venerable monk Kempō was once asked by a monk, “A certain Scripture says, ‘The World-honored Ones in the ten quarters are on one and the same road that leads to the gateway to nirvana,’ but, I wonder, where does that road begin?”

Kempō took his traveling staff and drew a circle, saying, “It is in here.”

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11. That is, a monastic earns his or her keep by ceaselessly doing the training wholeheartedly.
 12. ‘Donning the kesa’ refers to living by the Precepts, whereas ‘eating rice’ refers to ingesting the Dharma.
 13. The principle is that if the Master pelts trainees with sufficient Teaching, sooner or later some of it will ‘stick’, like mudballs.
 14. That is, he would help remove their worldly way of looking at things so that the Truth could shine through their Eye.

His words, “It is in here,” refer to the ten quarters. What he calls a ‘World-honored One’ is a veritable traveling staff.* ‘Traveling staffs’ are what is ‘in here’. ‘The one road’ refers to the ten quarters. However, do not try to hide your staff in Gautama’s nose. Do not try to stick your traveling staff into the nostrils of one who is a traveling staff. Even if you are acting in that way, do not conclude that the Old Fellow Kempō had already finished stewing on “The World-honored Ones in the ten quarters are on one and the same road that leads to the gateway to nirvana.” He only speaks of it as ‘being right here’, but that doesn’t mean that his ‘being right here’ is in some way deficient. If Old Fellow Kempō, right from the start, was not being deceived by his traveling staff, then well and good for him.

In sum, just explore through your training that living noses are the ten quarters.

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