

January 26, 1966  
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In our scripture it is said that there are four kinds of horse – an excellent one and a not so good ones and bad horse. The best horse will run before it sees the shadow of the whip – that is the best one. And the second one will run just before the whip reach his skin – and that is the second one. The third one will run when it feels pain on his body – that is the third. The fourth one will run after the pain penetrates into his marrow of the bone – that is the worst one. When we hear this story perhaps everyone wants to be a good horse...the best horse; even if it is impossible to be the best one, we want to be second best. That is quite usual understanding of horse. But actually when we sit, you will understand whether we are the best horse or the not so good ones. Here we have some problem in understanding of zen. Zen is not the practice to be the best horse. If you think so, if you understand zen as a kind of practice to be a best horse you will have, if you have this kind of idea, you will have problem. Big problem. That is not the right understanding of zen. Actually, if you practice right zen, whether you are best horse or worst one is not...doesn't matter. That is not the point.

If you feel the mercy of Buddha what will he...if you think of the mercy of Buddha, what do you think the Buddha will feel for him worst horse...he will like or he will be most...more sympathetic with the worst one rather than with the best one. So if you have the right understanding of zen, or deeper understanding, worst horse should be most valuable horse. And because of the imperfect character of ourselves we have to express our inmost feeling through our imperfect body and characters. Usually those who can sit physically perfect takes more time to obtain

the marrow of zen...the true taste of zen...actual feeling of zen. Those who have...those who find a great difficulty in practice zen will find more meaning of zen. So sometimes I think it is the best horse is the worst horse and worst horse is the best one....sometimes.

In...If you study calligraphy, you know, those...usually those who are not so clever will become best calligraphers, and those who are very clever at his hand will find great difficulty to attain excellent calligraphy. That is quite usual in our art and religion. So, we cannot say, "He is good" or "He is bad". The posture we take is not the same. For someone it is impossible to take this posture. Even though he cannot take right posture he can practice zen in its true sense. In our everyday life we...what we are always ashamed of myself...reflecting what we are doing. Some student wrote me saying, "You sent me a calendar and I am trying to follow the good message of the calendar and I find the calendar undaunted by failure". The calendar is a calendar of failure...the calendar become a calendar of failure. Dogen zenji said, "Shiyoshaku jushaku". Shaku means mistake or wrong. With wrong....succeed wrong with wrong. To succeed wrong with wrong or to succeed mistake with mistake. It means continuous mistake. Continuous mistake is zen according to him. And yet he is a founder of zen. But his life was a life of continuous mistake. Shiyoshaku jushaku. Some zen master says,"Shiyoshaku jushaku (Ti junan). It means my eighty years of life is succession of mistakes. But there is zen in it. It is...we say, "Good father is not good father." Do you understand? "Good father is not good father". Those who think he is good father is not good father....but those who think he is good husband is not good husband; those who think he is bad husband may be good husband. This is true.

When we find it is impossible because of pain on your head or some physical difficulty, but in such case we should sit when we are worst horse...We should sit. Then you will get the marrow of the zen. Suppose your children suffering from hopeless disease. You don't know what to do. You cannot lie in bed. Ususally the best thing for you is to lie in warm, comfortable bed. That is the best place to live. But in such case you cannot rest on your comfortable bed so you may walk up and down because you cannot stay still. You think that is the best way. In such case how is it possible to stay still? But actually best way to stand for the mental suffering is to sit...this is the best way. If you can't sit in such case you are not zen student. Even though you walk in and out of your house, it doesn't work. It is nearly the same as you try to lie in your comfortable bed. In sitting you want your mind and your body has power to accept things. In standing posture you have no power to accept your difficulties. In this posture you have big power to accept you difficulties. In this posture you have big power to accept things. Whether your posture is right or wrong it is out of question. So when you sit you have enormous power to accept things as it is whether it is agreeable to you or disagreeable to you, you can accept things as it is. When yu feel disagreeable it is better for you to sit. There is no other way to accept it and work on it. That is the only way we have. And we have always this wonderful way to accept things and to work on things.