

ego, and then interpret the teaching in various different ways. This means there is a big gap. So no matter how well or clearly you've studied and learned the teaching, you still won't reach the Dharma. The teaching of Buddhism is "no self" because it is the teaching of someone who has truly gotten rid of the ego. As long as the ego exists, it means you can't truly hear the teaching.

Announcer: I see. It seems like a contradiction.

Roshi: This means that the people sitting sesshin here are hearing the teaching even though they don't really understand it. "Be selfless." But they are still practicing within the confines of the ego. Until a person truly forgets the self, it won't be possible to truly practice and become the teaching of Shakyamuni.

Announcer: That means inevitably the ego is included within understanding the

teaching and apart from that understanding is the world of the Dharma.

Roshi: That's right.

Announcer: Is this the meaning of the Zen expression "no dependence on words and letters?"

Roshi: Yes. Zen was brought to China from India by Bodhidharma. But before he arrived in China, Buddhism, the teaching of the Buddha (i.e. the sutras), had already been there a long time. The teaching was like a prescription for medicine.

Announcer: A prescription?

Roshi: If your head hurts, then take this. If you have a stomach ache, then take this. At that time there was only this kind of discussion. Then Bodhidharma arrived. He embodied the Dharma itself. He pointed out that debating and arguing about this and that had nothing to do with the real teaching of Buddha. But they were only accustomed to the intellectual teaching of Emperor Wutei and other scholars. The teaching of the Bodhidharma seemed to be strange and unusual for them so that none of them could believe it. Bodhidharma knew that the Dharma would die even if the intellectual teaching of Buddhism was passed on. Coming to this conclusion, he went to the mountains.

Announcer: It's not in letters. It's not in the sutra books.

Roshi: That's right. There is something which must be transmitted separate from the teachings. That is the meaning of "no dependence on words and letters; a special

transmission outside the sutras."

Announcer: Then by means of zazen it is possible to reach the world of the Dharma without relying on the sutras.

Roshi: Yes. It is important to know that it isn't possible to use zazen or Zen as a means or way to reach the final point which is the world of the Dharma. Zen itself is the Dharma itself. This is something you can realize for yourself. "Ah, so that's the way it is!" To simply sit and think about concepts which appear in the sutras like KU (emptiness) or MU (nothingness) and imagine what they are like isn't Zen. If that is what a person is going to do, they may as well go to school and study various commentaries on the sutras. Announcer: I've read your book which is a compilation of your Dharma talks. In this book expressions such as "true person of the Dharma" or "a liberated person" or "true peace of mind" appear. Now hearing you say that the teaching and the Dharma are different, I wonder what is a "true person of the Dharma."