

Zoom Zazen Saturday 10 July 2021

Continuing Master Keizan's *Zazen Yojinki*:

"You should not refuse to teach, but only do so if you are asked. You should only answer when you're asked to do so three times. And if you are asked from the heart, then speak of the Dharma. If you can think of ten answers, limit yourself to only one, as if moss grew around your mouth, as if you were a fan in winter.

"Like a wind bell suspended in the air, indifferent to the direction of the wind, that is how the person of the Way is."

Too much talk about the Dharma hides its truth and conceals it from understanding. The Masters and Ancestors were known for their direct and even sometimes abrupt speech. Some only responded with the *kyosaku*. The teaching must hit the mind of the questioner and even take him out of the comfort of words, preconceptions and concepts. To touch the mind is the meaning of the word *sesshin*.

A lay-person came to question Master Baso:

"Master, you are someone who knows his original nature. Can you tell me something really instructive that will clarify this point for me?" Master Baso looked at the ground.

The lay-person continued:

"You, Master, are the only one who can play a musical instrument without strings."

Master Baso looked up at the sky. The lay-person bowed and accompanied the Master back to his room. Then he said:

"I've played at being clever, but I've simply proved how stupid I am."

To know your original nature is not to describe something in words. It is only in the silence that the mysterious coincidence that frees from all questioning is revealed. Sit down and look within yourself.

Master Deshimaru would sometimes simply answer during a *mondo*: *"Continue zazen."* Or just *"Shikantaza"*. It is short and even frustrating, and it leaves the question

unanswered. You need to gather yourself into the living, luminous Silence of your own zazen for the ultimate answer to be revealed. Because even the Buddhas cannot realise original nature on our behalf.

Master Keizan continues:

"Do not use Dharma teaching for your own gain. Do not talk about the Way to make yourself important. This is the most essential point, about which you must constantly remind yourself."

In all ages there have been liars who cleverly make people believe that they have understanding, awakening and insight. And also naive people who believe that eloquence is sufficient proof of knowledge and realisation.

The Pasedani Rajah was standing by the Buddha when a procession of *sadhus*, holy men, came to pass before them. The Rajah, stood up, joined his hands together, and prostrated himself - announcing his name clearly. Then he asked the Buddha if, among them, there was anyone who was awakened or had attained enlightenment.

The Buddha replied:

"This is impossible to know, Rajah. For it is only through a long relationship with someone that you can know their virtue and integrity. It is in troubled times that you can see true courage and through long conversations and exchanges that you recognise wisdom.

"You should observe for yourself, and you should not let yourself be someone else's man. It's not by dependence on another that you should live, nor should you be dragged from here to there by those trading in sanctity."

And in his great humility the Buddha concludes:

"Although nirvana certainly exists, and the Path to it exists, and a guide - myself in this case - also exists, some of my disciples will reach the unchanging goal and others will not. There is nothing I can do about it. All I can do is indicate the Way. You must be a light unto yourself."
