

## Zoom Zazen Saturday 4 December 2021

*"The teachings that the Buddhas expounded throughout the length of their lives," continues Master Keizan, "are nothing other than this discipline of the precepts, this practice of concentration and wisdom.*

*"During zazen, there is no discipline that is not maintained, no concentration that is not cultivated, no wisdom that is not realised."*

Buddhism is the Way of direct knowledge of what we are. Whether it is the precepts or meditation or wisdom, there is nothing there except the teaching of Reality. It is none other than absorbing ourselves in pure awareness of the Presence of the Self. We learn to forget our temporal history and to return to the simplicity and truth of living in the present moment where, in truth, we *ARE*.

At this very moment, what do we see, what do we hear, what do we feel, what do we perceive? Are we full or empty, calm or agitated, sad or light-hearted? How are we breathing - slowly or quickly, superficially?

There is no need either to reflect or to think, no need to struggle, nor to accomplish or to *do*. Simply to observe and welcome what occurs within the inner space of the mind - without trying to hold anything back, without wanting to intervene or to modify anything. This is true Zen - where the discipline of the precepts is maintained, the practice of concentration is cultivated, where Wisdom is realised. A zazen where we become capable of contemplating the present moment, without effort, in an attention guided by self-discipline and the precepts, in concentration in which we wonder at the appearance of things, in a gaze of equable wisdom where our darker sides are welcomed without resistance, without frustration and without any desire to eliminate them.

The Buddhas and Ancestors taught the sublime truth of this zazen, the practice in which our true nature is revealed. Their only wish is that this truth should become intimate, direct, never-endingly immediate. Because recognising it finally brings peace and bliss; it is the end of suffering; it is the entry to great compassion which puts an end to

any sense of separation from beings and from the universe.

The Buddhas and Ancestors urge us to study and to let go of the false 'me', the *persona* we interpret and cherish - to be simply ourselves, without disguise. So that we become able to let go of appearance, so as to approach our wounds and traumas with gentleness - we have to stop running away from the present moment towards an illusory *becoming*. We have to accept without condition every one of our experiences, and courageously follow the precepts, for they guide us on the Way, towards ourselves. To stop hiding ourselves, lying, playing, feeding the image of the 'me', so as to take refuge in timeless Presence. To die in order that we truly exist. To stop projecting ourselves towards some hypothetical destination and to *live* the journey itself.

Master Keizan insists that we must have absolute faith in the teachings of the Buddhas, even if we don't always understand them! This faith keeps us on the Way as surely as the precepts protect us and teach us uprightness and prevent us from taking mis-turnings.

It is written in the Brahmâ Net Sutra:

*"The precepts (discipline) are like the sun and the moon. They are the pearls of a precious necklace. They enable bodhisattvas, who are as numerous as atoms, to attain authentic and perfect Awakening.*

*"So receive these precepts, keep them at the front of your mind. Observe them and set about transmitting them to all beings.*

*"Always have faith in the precepts and you will observe all the rules of the Discipline and become truly a child of the Buddhas."*

Master Keizan said:

*"During zazen, there is no discipline that is not maintained, no concentration that is not cultivated, no wisdom that is not realised."*

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