

Zoom Zazen Saturday 29 Jan 2022

The Middle Way can't be travelled or realised if we're dreaming, if we let greed direct our meditation, if we don't see the causes of our thirst, the root of our illusions, of our desires and our negative emotions. We have to mobilise our full attention, our gaze, our *Eye*, to become aware of the nature of things and the emptiness of the body itself - and to do the work that leads to liberation. We have to stop kidding ourselves by inventing justifications for our laziness or excuses for our physical and mental addictions.

In the *Satipatthana* sutra, the Buddha explains the heart of meditation, that's to say, the [right] way of considering [viewing] things. To consider [examine] is, in fact, to practise attention.

"The only Way for the purification of beings, for victory over suffering and lamentation, for the cessation of pain, for attaining the middle way, the right path, for attaining liberation, is to practise - without ceasing - the four realms of attention. That is, the body, the sensations, the perceptions of the mind and the mental objects in the mind."

None of our masters have neglected this fundamental teaching of the Buddha. The posture and the attitudes of the body, the mechanisms of thought and emotions, the morbid conditioning and the perverse habits have to be seen with total attention for us to see their emptiness. This is the sincere commitment that we make to ourselves because we have to arrive at our destination, at the summit of the Real, in this very life.

"The practitioner contemplates the body, internally and externally. They contemplate the original causes of what happens in the body, the causes of dissolution or both."

"Awareness that the body is impermanent is established in practitioners to the degree necessary for clear Understanding and for pure Attention."

"Thus remains the one who practises contemplation of the body."

"Then, free, they remain - no longer attaching themselves to anything in this world."

Zazen is the practice that teaches non-attachment, non-grasping, the characterless, non-duality. Without discipline, this teaching does not hit the mark and there is no progress on the Way.

Discipline is not just a matter of respecting and protecting the precepts. It is to see that they are what the Buddhas have transmitted. They are in our own body and in our own mind, guiding us towards liberation. The precepts are the foundation of right action, of right speech, of right thought. They are the very best of ourselves.

In the *Brahma's Net Sutra*, it is written:

"The precepts are like the sun and the moon;

They are the pearls of a precious necklace.

They enable bodhisattvas as numerous as atoms

To attain authentic, perfect Awakening.

Always have faith in the precepts and you will observe all the rules of the Discipline.

The ordinary being who receives the Buddha's precepts attains the level of the Buddhas.

So when you have received them and when you have observed them,

Then go out and transmit them to all sentient beings!"
