

## Zoom Zazen 12 February 2022

Discipline is one of the *Paramitas*, that is to say, a concrete and essential practice which leads the bodhisattva to the top of the mountain. It is the pure intuition that we must follow when it emerges from the heart of zazen. Any discipline that comes from our conditioning and our 'self' will only prolong our suffering.

*"The treasure of the Precepts of buddha-nature is imprinted in the depths of our mind," says Master Yoka in the Shodoka.*

It was only after his Enlightenment, from that Enlightenment which is the very heart of transcendental knowledge, that Shakyamuni Buddha established the rules for the liberation of bodhisattvas. They are to protect the Three Treasures unceasingly, to study the teachings of the Buddhas, to respect one's father and mother, one's spiritual master and other monks and nuns, and to serve each being with equal benevolence. All this as if it were the Pupil of our Eye.

*"This piety, which can be called 'filial'," says the sutra, "is another name for the precepts. It is that which activates all that is good in us.*

*"In a word," concludes Master Dogen, "we must follow the example of the Buddha himself, in form and manner."*

Since it is a question of finding the Precepts in our own mind, let us take up Master Keizan's recommendations in the *Zazen Yojinki*:

*"Put down your mind, give up intellectual thoughts and self-awareness, the memory of recollections, the activity of thinking, observation and curiosity about things.*

*"Do not try to become a Buddha.*

*"Don't be affected or concerned by your own judgement of the good or bad way you practice.*

*"Just understand that time is precious, don't waste it. Be in the same urgency as if you were trying to put out a fire that is burning on your head."*

Do we really hear this advice when it is given to us?

We need to understand beyond the words themselves, because the real meaning of Master Keizan's advice springs from his own Awakening. It is not intellectual chatter for the discriminating mind in preparation for an exam. We must reread and absorb the teachings of the Buddhas and Ancestors, until what the words mean or state is revealed to us. With the same clarity as the pure jewel of full moonlight in a clear sky.

So do we really understand these words of Master Keizan:

*"The Buddha sat upright, Bodhidharma sat facing the wall for nine years. Both of them put their whole hearts into it."*

What do we really need to understand?

Master Yoka's answer comes to mind:

*"Little rabbits do not play on the path of the big elephant. He moves slowly along the path. How could the little rabbits refuse him the way?"*

Be the elephant, and let the little rabbits play without ignoring them.

The big elephant stands straight, moving majestically. He has neither hatred nor love for the little rabbits playing in the samsarah. Simply *Shikantaza*.

To keep upright, body and mind always at peace, without trying to grab hold of anything. That's true practice.

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