Zazen Zoom Saturday 20 August 2022

"That which is before the appearance of anything, that which is on the other side of what is subject to the erasure of time, is just that unique reality from which the activity of the Buddhas and the Ancient Awakened Ones springs."

This was the last thing Master Keizan said.

What we are looking for, waiting for, hoping for is on the other side of the fading of time. It is neither the past that has disappeared, nor the future that has not yet happened. There remains only the present moment, which has neither beginning nor end, which is ungraspable, and it is in it that we must merge and in it that the very essence of Zen is realised. That moment when our own mind is nothing more than the sound of the river, the tinkling of wind bells or the clatter of a pebble hitting a bamboo. That moment which is the *unborn*, from which springs the activity of the Buddhas.

"He who rests in the unborn," says Master Bankei, *"stands at the source of all the Buddhas, at the point of appearance of all phenomena. And there is no question here of annihilation, because when you rest in the unborn, it is totally superfluous to talk about what is imperishable."*

The point of appearance of phenomena is our own open and attentive mind in the moment before That which comes thus. It is zazen that is satori, where it is realised that *Ku* is *shiki*, where there is no longer any self.

The *unborn*, That which is before the appearance of anything is not beyond our reach. We are already it, and we realise it in the *now* of Presence. Our only practice is to let the unborn spring forth and manifest just as it is.

"Let life be," says Master Dogen. And that which recognises that something appears - thought, feeling or perception - is none other than the wonderful mind of the Buddhas.

"So," concludes Master Keizan, *"stay in non-action, and stop everything. Relax and live countless years as a moment. Be cold ashes, a withered tree, an incense pot in an abandoned temple, a piece of immaculate silk."*

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