

## Zoom Zazen - Saturday 7 January 2023

I would like to begin this first *kusen* of the year by quoting Master Yoka Daishi, the author of the Shodoka, "*The Song of Immediate Satori*". Here is the first sentence of his poem:

*"Dear friend, don't you see that man of satori?  
He has stopped studying and is inactive.  
He does not seek to remove illusions or to find the  
truth. "*

The ten thousand things (the phenomena) flourish without the need for the person of satori man to appropriate them. He witnesses the spectacle of impermanence without trying to change anything. He abandons passions and attachments to establish himself in non-action. This letting-go in non-action is the practice of the Buddhas. It is sitting and recognising the emptiness of the self. It is knowing and feeling oneself to be One with all beings. This is the supreme teaching of zazen.

In peace in the non-action of zazen, we too can humbly contemplate the comings and goings of the ten thousand things, in our own mind, without trying to intervene. We can see that they all return to their original nature, to the limitless space of emptiness, to a Presence that contains them all and yet retains none. What else is there to do but just watch this ongoing miracle and simply enjoy it?

At the beginning of each year we repeat the same wishes, wishing each other happiness, health and wealth for the times ahead. But if we are in tune with the ten thousand things, do we need to make wishes to reassure ourselves?

Can we simply realise the unity of body and mind with the ten thousand things and settle into it, without grasping anything?

Can we consciously breathe our life with the same suppleness as an infant?

Can we open our wonderful Eye-Treasury and see the emptiness of the ten thousand things, their ungraspable miracle?

Can we unfold our heart and spread its compassion all around us? Can we open and close the doors of our perception while remaining still? Can we stop desperately pushing aside illusions and seeking truth?

To answer these questions is to give ourselves to the practice of the bodhisattvas and to take true vows for ourselves and for all beings.

This is also what Master Wanshi wishes for us, in this new paragraph of his recommendations, which is entitled: "Do your Buddha work". A work that consists of gathering ourselves in non-action, living emptiness, doing things from our heart. This is what he tells us:

*"Emptiness can neither be cultivated nor explained.  
From the beginning It is complete in its totality,  
unstained and clear in all its unfathomable depth.*

*"Where all is right and complete, open your  
Eye-Treasure, the pure heart that perfectly  
illuminates everything and accomplishes liberation."*

This invitation to open our hearts and live the emptiness of the ten thousand things is the true vow that puts an end to all other vows. When we become one with the ten thousand things, the ten thousand things rejoice to welcome us. Everything is at peace.

And whatever these words and the uncertainties of tomorrow may be, I hope you will allow your heart to open wide to whatever comes your way.

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