

Zoom Zazen - Saturday 28 January 2023

Master Wanshi continues:

"The original light, empty and [yet] active, illumines the top of the skull. Original wisdom, silent and radiant, responds to conditions."

Light and wisdom are not separate in the minds of practitioners who have forgotten themselves or surrendered themselves to Presence, to emptiness. *That* shines of itself in itself.

The original light has no origin and is never extinguished. It is without cause, has no features [characteristics]. It *is*. And it acts in lighting up the top of the skull. This probably means for Master Wanshi that the seventh chakra at the top of the head has been activated by correct practice. And when it is aligned with the other chakras, the union of form and essence is achieved. Self has dissolved in Presence. Awakening!

Original wisdom is another name for emptiness, which too is without beginning or end, and is featureless. Original wisdom responds to the causes and conditions that produce the world and phenomena, in a total symbiosis that is called *soku ze* in the fundamental formula of the Hannya Shingyo: *Ku soku ze shiki*.

This phrase by Master Wanshi evokes and celebrates the truth of the absolute unity of wisdom (of *essence-emptiness*) and of form, light and silence. This is what reveals itself spontaneously during zazen without any need for us to wish for it.

When our attention is turned inwards, light and wisdom gradually permeate us and our true nature is revealed. Even the seeker of truth disappears.

Master Joshū asked Master Nansen, *"What is the truth?"*

Master Nansen replied, *"The moderate, stable mind is the truth."*

"Is it possible to achieve this intentionally?"

"If we have the desire to achieve it, the truth will refuse us," Nansen replied.

Then Joshū asked again, *"But how can we know the truth if we have no desire to attain it?"*

Master Nansen concluded, *"Truth belongs neither to recognising it nor to not recognising it. To recognise it is a kind of illusion. Not to recognise it is neither good nor bad."*

Just recognise in your meditation the truth of no-intention (*mushotoku*) and no-action. It then becomes like space which is serene, vast and bright. How then can one wonder whether it is right or wrong?

Wisdom and light are like an infinite space that contains the entire manifestation of the universe, including our own personal consciousness. Wisdom and light cannot exist without the universe. The part of us that listens is not the ears or the body, but we need the body and the ears to [be able to] listen.

What we *are* is not this ephemeral body, but *That* which knows it. This is our true nature. Light and wisdom shine in the heart of meditation for practitioners who surrender themselves to *samadhi*, the place of the truth that is beyond the duality of subject and object, time and space.

In *Mokushōka*, the 'Song of Silent Illumination', Master Wanshi expresses for us the total absence of duality that someone who immerses themselves in Great Wisdom achieves:

"Only this silent wisdom is the ultimate teaching, only this original light is the universal answer, the effortless answer, the inaudible teaching."
