

## Zoom Zazen - Saturday 27 May 2023

*"The real work of a monk who wears the kesa is to practise the essence. It's to see with the greatest attention that within every circumstance emerging in the present moment, the brilliant source shines forth without any discrimination, with a unique colour without stain."*

What Master Wanshi asks us to do is to remain constantly aware of the essence that underlies all aspects of our lives and all phenomena. *Presence*.

During zazen we realise that nothing stays unchanged from one moment to another. Everything flows so that we cannot hold on to anything. Everything flows from the essence and immediately returns to it. This is what it is to meditate: to remain in the awareness of the present moment, in *non-abiding*.

We can only see the essence if we are settled in the beginningless and endless present moment of our daily life and practice. We have to forget ourselves in the flow of time. We awaken to the essence, to the original nature of things, in seeing and understanding that Awakening is born within the practice and that the practice is done within Awakening, "*at one and the same time*," says Master Dogen.

And he continues, to explain this mystery to us:

*"Being thus absorbed in Awakening, you will eventually understand that the tens of thousands of forms, the hundreds of grasses exist within the universe and that in each one of these forms, each of these blades of grass, is the entire universe. When you understand this, your practice begins. Forms and blades of grass are one and the same time. In each moment of time is found everything that exists in all worlds of existence."*

The shining source is the heart of this present moment from which nothing can escape, which accepts everything that appears without the least discrimination. The present moment has only one colour: that of time. Like a mirror that is not affected by what is reflected in it, the present moment is not stained by any of the forms that pass across it. It *is* the essence.

*"It is time that neither arrives nor departs," says Master Dogen in 'Uji'. "It is the very now of the time when I am on the top of the mountain."*

Zazen is the mountain remaining conscious in the very *now* of time. It is *Shikantaza*. There is no effort to be made, because we are inseparable from time. We *are* time. It's incredibly simple.

Yakusan, a disciple of Baso, expresses it like this:

*"Standing on the highest peak, I am time; walking in the deepest ocean, I am time."*

And because you understand this, Master Wanshi insists:

*"You must turn within, for it is there that the source is revealed."*

Turning within is what we actualise in front of the wall. We understand clearly that it is not the wall we are interested in or we look at. All that we see and feel is happening within us: sensations, perceptions, thoughts - springing from the Source without our having to do anything. Creating this unity with the time of ourselves is called, says Master Wanshi: "*Becoming able to continue the family business*."

When we practise zazen, the whole family of beings practises. The illusion of being separate from others vanishes in this present moment which contains everything and retains nothing. Everything is simply *present time*. This is the truth of ourselves.

So, when body and mind are in time's spontaneity the Way is actualised and the shining Source revealed.

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