

Zoom Zazen - Saturday 22 July 2023

The total unity between beings, that the Buddha never ceases to talk about, means that each of our thoughts, words and actions interacts with all beings, with the whole of nature. There is only one truth, only one reality, **Ku**, in which beings, stars and galaxies, express their activity in the unceasing bubbling of the appearance-disappearance of phenomena, **shiki**. All this is Emptiness and it is also the limitless body of Great Wisdom. We must become aware of this absolute unity in our meditation. It is the heart of our awareness of being, of Presence. Our work and our responsibility as human beings is to shed light on the false idea of separation, and of the individual ego which masks our luminous nature; to let go of our thoughtless stratagems, our fictitious stories and our incessant illusions. To stop being afraid that we'll miss something.

Let's listen to Master Obaku's advice:

"When you have developed a deep intuition of the reality of the world, you realise immediately that everything you need is there in all its perfection and abundance, that you lack nothing. To understand this is to sit in the place [midst] of the Way. Don't let the events of your daily life tie you down, but never withdraw yourself from them. This is how you will achieve freedom."

We assume our responsibility as human beings when we look at things just as they are, when we listen with total attention to the sounds of the world, when we feel intimately the vibration of our sensations, when we taste with all our concentration the flavours of our food, or become the fragrance of a flower, when with all our heart we make a donation or reach out to someone who is suffering. This is how we can consciously celebrate the mystery of being, and express our gratitude for all that comes to us so generously.

"In a totally spontaneous way," continues Master Wanshi, "all dharmas are a wonder beyond words or any description. In perfect vision, there is no separation. In mountains, forests and meadows, the truth is always expounded."

"If, beyond illusion, you perceive this directly, you realise that nothing is concealed in the teaching of the broad, long tongue of the Buddha speaking the Dharma. What is expounded is in itself what is heard; what is heard is in itself what is expounded. The faculties of the senses combine with their objects just as the original principle merges with Great Wisdom. See this clearly."

To see the unity of all things means to realise that each of our thoughts, whether useful or distracted, each of our words, whether wise or thoughtless, each of our actions, whether intentional or mechanical, is the way in which Great Wisdom is put into play.

When the causes of suffering are produced, all beings suffer. When the roots of goodness are watered, all beings know [experience] peace. Understanding this intimately leads us naturally to the Awakening of the Buddhas.

Master Wanshi tells us, in conclusion:

"When oneself and the ten thousand things are no longer separate, mind and phenomena are One. When you accept what you have repressed, you become capable of welcoming and integrating what appears before you, and instantly stepping back from it, without grasping anything. Put this into practice in your own home. Then remain in your seat, immobile and steady."

Master Dogen has inspired my final words in this kusen:

*"In the summer breeze, the sesshin has gone.
Flown away, too, the ten thousand words
Of my sheets of kusen, my long teishos;
I hope, however, that they'll be transmitted as a
precious treasure,
Practised, gardened, cultivated like a marvellous
garden of flowers of emptiness."*
