

Zoom Zazen Saturday 10 August 2024

Too often we pass things by without seeing them. We don't [even] hear the birds singing in our own garden. And we eat without appreciating the flavours which Nature so generously puts into our bowl. This is like being a ghost, wandering through Samsara, bent over its illusory preoccupations, [completely] out of touch with itself!

The practice of Zen should attract us to the living [nature of] things as surely as a magnet attracts iron filings. If this is not so, the infinite merits of zazen are lost in the smoke of futile thoughts and insatiable desires. If our practice is sincere, it resounds in our hearts like the wake-up bell in the sleeping temple or the chanting of a sutra in the space of the dojo.

Our practice of zazen - has it taught us to welcome life as it unfolds within us at every moment, to savour the incredible spectacle of the ten thousand things that interpenetrate one another in an endless cosmic interplay?

Have we sufficiently studied and assimilated the teachings of the Buddha and Ancestors? Is our understanding open to the truths they've taught? They have never spoken in vain or sought to shine by using flowery language. Their words always hit the target directly. But are we aware of this? Sometimes we ignore the depth of their teachings and judge them based on our own limited mentality!

Master Wanshi tells us:

"Receive honestly the flow of words from this monk [which I am]. It's not frozen, nor does it trickle out drop by drop. It's neither transparent nor. When you squeeze it dry, make the most of the opportunity it offers you. When you get involved in the complexity of the world's affairs, see this from a global perspective."

The global perspective is one that does not separate the two aspects of duality, "that embraces contradictions," as Master Deshimaru continually said. And many of his disciples took advantage of this [statement] to justify their own shortcomings and mistakes.

But if we really study the words of the masters, they will touch our heart, making it exude all the compassion and love it contains for the benefit of [all] beings.

Master Wanshi tells us where it is that putting into practice the teachings of the masters takes us:

"Ultimate understanding welcomes this changing world without the least resistance. Just as the moon accompanies the flow of water with its sparkling light, just as the grasses bow and sway with the wind. Nothing and no one is delivered into confusion. It is well known that all things are not identical, but beyond their differences, each of them demonstrates the Great Way."

It is in the silence of Mind that we put an end to the noise of judgements and conditioned opinions. There, each thing has its own colour, sprung from one single palette.

The multiplicity of things flows from a single source. When we dwell in our own presence, we see plainly that this source is our own Mind [itself].
