

## Zoom Zazen Saturday 2 November 2024

Faced with the continual insecurity that impermanence generates in us, we have chosen to follow the spiritual practice of zazen in order to know what is not dependent on fluctuating causes and conditions. We have a vital, unconscious need to know the true nature of things, our own true nature. This is the ultimate reason for our existence. But we do so as individuals who search for something for ourselves. Therein lies the problem, for the seeking 'me' [self], itself dependent on causes and conditions, must disappear so that the Source of all things is revealed to us.

To return to the Source is a recommendation repeated by all the masters. The Source is that which exists before the appearance of the ephemeral form of our body and thus our awareness of it. The tiny individual identified with a body that always lacks so many things, that experiences time, that is subject to birth and death cannot go back to its source, being itself already one with this source. Consciousness [itself] has to return to its Source. Spirituality *is* understanding the interplay of consciousness. When our spirituality deepens in the heart of zazen, identification with the individual body-mind diminishes and consciousness realises that it is not this perishable form. It reconnects with the universal consciousness, and it is then that we know our true nature, the unborn, emptiness that manifests in the multiplicity of phenomena. The return to the Source is actualised when in our Mind: *Ku is shiki* and *shiki is Ku*.

Master Wanshi writes:

*"The original source flows from emptiness, without exhibiting itself. When it is stirred, it can react. You must then pierce it with your gaze, and hold yourself alone like a vertical cliff, wide open and available, liberated and filled with fervour, clear and radiant - all of this without depending in the least on the world of external conditions.*

*Such an attitude is called the simple and luminous occurrence that coincides perfectly with the ten thousand things that disappear as they appear."*

There's really no need to comment on what Master Wanshi tells us. He talks about zazen, about Reality, about emptiness manifesting itself in the spectacle of ten thousand phenomena, with no one who watches. But everything is seen.

Perhaps it is easier to reach the truth through a poem?

Here are words that Master Ryokan addresses to us:

*My life, where does it come from?  
Where does it go when it's over?  
Sitting alone under the window,  
I meditate and return to myself.  
Even though I wonder and think about it,  
I don't know where it comes from.  
How can I know its end?  
The same is true of the present;  
It moves and yet everything is empty.  
I exist for a moment in this emptiness.  
How can pros and cons exist in such  
circumstances?  
It's better just to accept that it is so,  
And obey the truth of the moment,  
Letting myself go with the flow.*

When we are fully present to what we are experiencing, we don't need anything else at all. Sometimes life seems hard, but who can we blame? There is no choice but to open our hearts and smile. For nothing, for the love of nothing. Because that's the way it is. Just as Mahakasyapa smiled as he watched the Buddha turn a flower between his fingers.

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