



PICTURE 8 – BOTH SELF AND OX FORGOTTEN

PREFACE:

Shedding worldly feelings, erasing holy thoughts,
You do not linger where the Buddha is.
You dash right past where the Buddha is not.
Don't cling to duality, or the thousand-eyed one will soon find you.
If birds were to bring you flowers, what a disgraceful scene.

VERSE: Whip and line and you and the ox, all gone to emptiness,
Into a blue sky for words too vast.
Can a snowflake survive the fire of a flame pit?
Attain this, truly be one with the masters of the past.

[Daido Looi/Tanahashi Verse]

Whip, tether, self, and ox all have merged, no traces remain.
The vast blue sky cannot be reached by thoughts;
How can a snowflake abide in a raging fire?
Having reached home, you are in accord with the ancient way.

[M.H. Trevor/Kennedy Verse]

Whip and rein, ox and herdsman, have completely vanished
without trace.
In the vast, blue sky, words can never suffice to measure her/him.
How could snow survive in the red flame of the burning fire?
Only when a person has succeeded in getting to this place can he
match the old masters.

WAKA: No clouds, or moon, or cassia tree,
Swept clean,
Lost in the sky.

Picture 6 – GUIDING QUESTIONS

Ponder these phrases:

- These is nothing outside of yourself. (no person, no buddha, no mountains)
- Empty the subject (self), empty the object, empty the emptying.
- In Zen, intimacy does not imply relationship, it implies oneness with the absolute.

“Father and mother are not close to me;
With whom am I most intimate?
The Buddhas are not my way;
With what way am I most intimate?”
- The ox, the ox herder, the buddha, you, and I are all one and that one is empty.
- There is no separate dwelling place for buddha. Who is buddha?
- Every direction is the one way.
- “Go quickly past where no buddha dwells.” (Do not fall into nihilism.)
- “Do not linger where the buddha dwells.” (Buddha is not separate from you.)

What is the disease of being stuck in emptiness? What does its manifestation appear as?

ASSIGNMENT(S)



1. Allow yourself to be drawn into the picture -- infinite blue sky, no clouds, no limitations, empty of all dualities because everything has merged into sky.
2. During the coming month, practice “not dwelling” or not attaching. Practice not attaching to ideas, no matter how compelling. What is this experience for you?
3. Share with the eGroup how “empty circle” is impacting how you are living.

(Enso or Circle above is by Kaz Tanahashi.)