

*Although I forget about the Buddha from time to time,  
The Buddha never forgets about me.*

KANAI TAKAHISA

This quote reveals how we are all the time, buried in trivialities of the secular world. When I listen to the Buddha Dharma, I feel that I am in the midst of the teaching, but when I return to the reality of everyday life, the Buddha Dharma seems to go somewhere.

Simply said, there is a dualistic type of thinking that the Buddha Dharma is the Buddha Dharma and everyday life is everyday life. A person who had come to a Dharma gathering at my temple once told me, “I like coming to the temple. It feels to me like it cleanses my mind and heart. But when I return to [the routine of] my everyday life, I once again become brutal and mean.” The reason for this is [they think] that going to temple to hear the Dharma is a place to escape from life.

I believe that there are many people who feel this way, that the Buddha Dharma is for things involving the Buddha Dharma only and everyday life is for things involving everyday life only. So they adeptly decide and divide everything in this manner. I feel that no matter how much I would hear the Buddha’s teaching, if I were to listen in this manner, it would never become the reliable foundation upon which I could base my life.

An acquaintance of mind who had resided in the United States for a long period and graduated from an American university taught me the term “nightstand Buddhist.” This refers to people who maintain an occupation in society during the day, then in bed at night read the Buddhist scriptures. When morning comes again, they return to the harsh conditions of their workplace. It is a term that really makes you think.

No matter where I may be, I am who I am. Even when I am at work or listening to the Buddha Dharma, I am who I am. I am not and can never be someone else. No matter where I may be, I myself want to encounter the Truth (teaching), that penetrates my being.

(Excerpt from the Hongwanji Shuppansha publication *Daijō*, May 2005.)

私はしばしば仏を忘れるが  
 仏は私を忘れない

かない たかひさ  
 金井 隆久

この言葉はいつも、世俗に埋没している私たちのありようを示してあまりあります。仏法<sup>ぶつぽう</sup>を聴く時は仏法の中に自分がありますが、いったん生活の現実に戻ると、その仏法がどこかへいってしまいます。

つまり、仏法は仏法、生活は生活といったように二元化して考えてしまうのです。私(※)の寺の法話会<sup>ほうわかい</sup>に来られた方が、

「お寺に来るといいですね。ここが洗われるような気持ちがいたします。しかし、生活に戻るとまた殺伐<sup>ころはく</sup>としてしまうのです」

といわれました。お寺での聴聞<sup>ちえもん</sup>が人生の逃避場となっているわけです。

このような方は多いと思います。仏法は仏法、生活は生活。それはそれとして器用にたて分けしているわけです。このような仏法聴聞をいくら重ねても、私自身の生きる依りどころとはならないと思います。

長い間アメリカに住み、アメリカの大学を卒業して帰国した私の知人が「ナイトスタンド、ブディスト」という言葉を教えてくれました。つまり一日中、社会の只中で働き続け、夜になると、寝室で仏教書を読む人のことだそうです。そして、その人は朝になるとまた、酷<sup>きび</sup>しい仕事の現場に戻ります。考えさせる言葉でした。

どこにあっても私は私です。仕事の場にある私も、仏法聴聞の場にある私も私自身です。別の私ではありません。どこにあっても、私自身を貫く真実(教え)にであっていききたいものです。

(※私=山崎龍明氏)

(月々のことば『いかなる昨日より今日が尊い』本願寺出版社刊より)

*As a product of one's own effort and calculation,  
One cannot be born into a world where one can encounter the Buddha.*

HATA RYUEI

I wonder what significance the word “learning” (*manabu* 学ぶ) has in Jodo Shinshu. Master Shan-tao, in the section Essential Meaning (玄義分) of his *Commentary on the Contemplation Sutra* (*Kangyosho* 觀經疏) indicated that this means “learning the Buddha’s heart of great compassion” (学仏大悲心). This is neither mere knowledge nor academics; rather it is to make one’s own life the topic and to learn about it.

When I (FUJII Kunimaro) am conducting a study seminar, I sometimes say to the participants, “There will be a test at the end.” The moment I say this there is suddenly tension in the room. Then, when I add, “I’m just joking. There’s no test,” the tension dissipates and everyone begin to chuckle and comment, “Boy, did that give me a scare.” A test is for verifying how much a person comprehends or remembers something. For a study seminar on Jodo Shinshu, there is no need for any test. This is because it is an opportunity to hear of Amida Tathagata’s Primal Vow which [embraces and] liberates all equally, making no distinction between male and female or good and evil persons.

Rennyō Shonin wrote about this in a letter [titled] “Eighty Thousand Dharma-teachings.”

Those who are not concerned about their afterlife are considered to be ignorant persons, even though they may be well-versed in eighty thousand Dharma-teachings; those who have resolved the matter of the afterlife are described as wise persons, even if they are illiterate laymen or laywomen. So it is said.

Here, “well-versed” refers to mere knowledge and academia. However, “wise” indicates wisdom, which is the wisdom of Amida Tathagata. No matter how seemingly well-learned and scholarly a person may be, if the destination of that person’s life is unsettled, then that person is said to be ignorant. On the other hand, a person who entrusts himself to Amida Tathagata’s Primal Vow without any doubt, though he may be unable to read or write a single word, he is said to be a person who has received Amida’s wisdom. This standard is the opposite of that used by the secular world.

努力や思索の延長から  
仏に遇う世界は生まれない

はた りゅうえい  
畑 龍英

浄土真宗で“学ぶ”ということはどんな意味があるのでしょうか。善導大師はその著、『観經疏』「玄義分」(『註釈版聖典七祖篇』298頁)に、

仏の大悲心を学して(学仏大悲心)

と、示されています。それは知識でも教養でもなく、自身のいのちそのものを問題として“学ぶ”ことなのです。

私(※)は時々、研修会の折に「最後にテストをします」と言います。すると一瞬会場は緊張が走ります。続いて「冗談です。テストはしません」と言いますと、「なーんだ」と参加者の中から安心した笑い声が出てきます。テストとは、どれほど「理解したか」「覚えたか」を確認することです。浄土真宗の研修会にはテストは必要ないのです。それは男女の区別なく、善人・悪人の区別なく全て等しく救うという阿弥陀如来の本願を聞く場であるからです。

蓮如上人は「御文章」(八万の法蔵章)に、

それ、八万の法蔵をしるというとも、後世としらざる人を愚者とす。たとひ一文不知の尼入道なりといふとも、後世をしるを智者とすといへり。

(『註釈版聖典』1190頁)

と、示されています。この中で、「しる」や不知の「知」は「知識」や「理解」という意味です。「智者」の「智」は阿弥陀如来の「智慧」を表しています。どれ程仏教の知識が豊富であろうとも、自分のいのちの行き先が定まらない人は愚者である。反対に一文字読み書きができなくても阿弥陀如来の本願を疑うことなく信じた人は、智慧を得た人といわれるのです。世間とは反対の物差しの基準です。

(※私=著者の藤井邦麿氏のこと)

(月々のことば『いかなる昨日より今日が尊い』本願寺出版社刊より)