



Adoration of the Buddha Within

Buddhism is the only major religion that has elevated its creator, Buddha, to be its primary object of worship, giving him a place at the center of the altar. There is irony in that because he never put himself in the position of a god, nor did he promise to bestow grace or be a medium for a higher power. No one here is channeling Buddha from his grave, nor has he become a guardian spirit of any tradition or a guiding voice from the beyond. As with all masters of a higher degree, he simply disappeared, meaning he left this dimension behind. And yet here he is, still being worshiped by millions.

Who is being worshiped? The original symbolic figure of Buddha has long been forgotten. Over time, in order to fulfill the human need for spiritual entertainment, the whole pantheon of Buddhas was created instead – past Buddha, future Buddha, Buddha of the pure land, goddesses and gods. But originally there was just one Buddha.

The real significance of Buddha worship goes much deeper than what humanity has reduced it to. Most humans are simply too immature to grasp that meaning. They have no deep sense of what they are worshiping, so they project their helplessness and dependence onto this object or another. Most of them do not even pray for spiritual illumination but for material security, a common feature of most religions. But what is the original meaning of Buddha? It does not really matter whether he existed historically or not because he symbolizes something greater than any particular person. He is a symbol of our spiritual potential and our responsibility to actualize this potential. The meaning of Buddha is to be a light unto oneself and to reclaim our power instead of giving it away to gods, gurus, saviors, spirit guides, higher beings and the authority of past traditions.

Buddha rebelled against Hinduism, which was his natural background, not only because of ideological discrepancies or because he did not see it as a valid path to self-realization. He rebelled to reclaim his power: the power to think for himself, to understand for himself and, above all, the power to be himself. The power we speak of here is not of the ego – it is of the soul.

Spiritual seekers have been conditioned to think of themselves as helpless children, waiting idly to receive any scrap of grace from some kind of a higher plane. We have lost our sense of dignity. There are those who speak about receiving guidance from other beings, from higher planes or even from dead people. Why would we assume that other beings know any better than humans? The fact that you cannot see them does not make

them any wiser. Seekers pray for grace and insights into their existence because they refuse to use their own intelligence and resources.

There is a beautiful story about a Zen cook who was visited by Maitreya, Buddha of the future, to offer him some special knowledge. In response, the monk chased the apparition away with his cooking spoon. This was not an expression of arrogance but of inner dignity: he was claiming back his power and independence. This dignity is our birth right. We entered creation to become divine beings, not beggars. To realize our light, our sacred self and our universal independence is our primal responsibility. To truly enter the spiritual path is to agree to uphold this responsibility and become a man or woman of truth. This is the existential meaning of becoming an adult.

To understand that we must actualize our power and become a light unto ourselves does not mean that seekers do not need help; it does not invalidate the relationship between a spiritual guide and disciple. Seeing it in this way would be to confuse taking responsibility for one's empowerment with arrogance. Those who say that they do not need a teacher or path because they have all the answers inside are deluded and dishonest. No one can walk the path alone: it is too hard, too complex and too vast. A true teacher is helping the seeker to embody his or her light; he is not keeping him in the state of dependence. Everyone needs help, but awakening our higher self is each one's personal responsibility; it takes place in the deepest dimensions that are the most intimate to our existence. No one can do it for anyone else – not even god. To truly awaken is to meet our very self, to embody our light and reclaim our power through this realization as divine beings; it is to become the living reflection of the lustrous presence of our creator, the beloved of all souls.

This is the true adoration of Buddha: to adore our innermost existence, to honor who we are and to finally become a light unto oneself. Unless a true love towards our own existence is born, a true devotion to who really are, we will remain weak and powerless – small children in the great play of life. If you want to honor Buddha, close your eyes, then close your second eyelids and know yourself. Self-love, self-respect, honor, dignity, strength, patience, sensitivity, gentleness towards one's own heart and magnanimity of spirit are the fundamental qualities that each one has to awaken in order to open the door for our higher being to enter and take over our existence. This is how the lower self becomes transmuted into the noble identity of the higher self. Finally, our inner Buddha takes its rightful place in the middle of the altar of our existence.

Blessings,

Anadi

For a glossary of the terminology used in this teaching and for further resources, you may visit our website www.anaditeaching.com

