

A monk in China was observing the birthday of his guru with great celebration. People asked him whose birthday he was celebrating, as he always said that he had no guru and that there was no need for a guru. Then what was all this about? He begged them not to question him, but they kept on insisting. “Today is the day of the guru – have you a guru?”

The monk said, “Don’t put me in difficulty. It is good that I keep quiet.”

But the more he kept quiet the more the people insisted, “What is the matter? What is it that you are celebrating? - because this is Master’s Day Celebration. Do you have a master?”

The monk said, “If you go on insisting then I have to say something about it. Today I remember the man who refused to be my guru, because if he had accepted me as a disciple I would have gone astray. When he refused me I was very angry with him, but today I want to bow down to him in great gratitude. Had he wished he could have been my guru, because it was I who begged him to accept me, but he did not agree.

So the people asked, “Then what do you thank him for when he refused you?”

The monk said, “It is enough to say that by not becoming my guru this man did for me what no guru could do. If he had been my guru there would have been some give and take on both sides. I would have touched his feet, offered my veneration and respects, and the matter would have been concluded. But this man did not ask for respect and he did not become my guru. Therefore my obligation to him is double. This has been absolutely one-sided: He gave and I could not even thank him, because he left no place even for that.”

- unknown origin

“What we need is another Bodhidharma, firm as a rock, fierce as a tiger, merciless in his ‘grandmotherly kindness’, and not afraid to tell the Emperors of China that they are talking through their hat.

-Wei Wu Wei

“Ask the Awakened”