



**Bamboo for you
the clear wind rises**

**Take kimi ga tame ni
yōyō seifū o okosu**

Bamboo from ancient times has been a symbol of purity and simplicity, and it is even said that it has the atmosphere of the sage. In bamboo there is a joint that separates the lower and the higher. Because of these joints, bamboo is flexible enough to bend over and then stand up again. And because it is empty inside, bamboo is said to be pure and can contain no dishonesty. In the ancient Chinese teaching bamboo was held in high esteem as an example of these sagely qualities, and its presence teaches us to be flexible yet strong.

As we watch the breeze blow across the bamboo grove, seeing the bamboo sway, we feel cooled, refreshed. The words of this calligraphy, taken from the couplet,

“As I escort you to the gate, there are tall bamboo. Just for you, their leaves are raising a pure wind.”

are those of Priest Kido Chigu Zenji.

Kido Zenji lived in China in the thirteenth century and was teacher of the Japanese Master Daio Kokushi Nampo Jomyo Zenji. Kido Chigu Zenji left behind the *One Hundred Substitute and Alternative Saying of Kidō Oshō* and with his writings expressed his deep wisdom on those old cases.

In his works we find this poem:

Who can know it?
On the way to visit the desolate ruins,
The temple of Kanzan and Jittoku,
After visiting our good friend,
He accompanies us warmly to the gate.
The nearby clump of bamboo sways
Sending us off with the clear wind.

This poem is full of the deep profundity of the sage and expresses our deepest human feeling. From far away good friends have come to visit. Since they are stopping on the way to another destination, the visit cannot be for long, but as the visitors and their host talk for the first time in a long while, they stay up all night, without even noticing it. As the dawn breaks it is necessary for the visitors to depart. As they say good-bye at the main gate, the wind is blowing and the bamboo in the grove is swaying, and it is so hard to part. It is such a profound moment, not knowing if they will meet again in this lifetime. Our encounters are always moments of “one time, one opportunity.”

From the time of Buddha we also have the words:
All things that are born will die
All things that join will separate
Where there is birth there will be death
Where there is meeting there will be separation

To meet is the beginning of parting; meeting is always accompanied by separation. Even if we meet again, this encounter, this moment will not be duplicated. Even a small amount of time together is something to be deeply thankful for; a mysterious karmic connecting. Meeting with people is always a matter of karmic connection. Thinking this way, the parting becomes so poignant. It is the truth of our life, and each time we meet with someone, hold every moment precious.

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