

Also by John Daido Loori

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Zen Master Dōgen's

THREE HUNDRED KŌANS

WITH COMMENTARY AND VERSE BY

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But still, the question remains: what does the offering of rice have to do with alleviating Nanquan's problem, and indeed, what does Nanquan mean when he says, "Master Wang has not practiced hard enough?"

CAPPING VERSE

In whole body and mind seeing and hearing,
there is intimacy.
In this continuum no trace of the self remains,
and this tracelessness continues endlessly.

NOTES

1. If practice fills heaven and earth, how can there be coming and going?
2. How do the land deities get their news?
3. There must be tracks for the spirits to take notice.
4. Indeed!
5. Becoming aware of the gaps, he moves to close them.

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"Ordinary Mind Is the Way"

MAIN CASE

Zhaozhou asked Nanquan, "What is the Way?"¹ Nanquan said, "Ordinary mind is the Way."²

Zhaozhou said, "Shall I try to direct myself toward it?"³

Nanquan said, "If you try to direct yourself toward it, you will move away from it."⁴

Zhaozhou said, "If I don't try, how will I know it's the Way?"⁵

Nanquan said, "The Way is not concerned with knowing or not knowing.⁶ Knowing is illusion;⁷ not knowing is blank consciousness.⁸ If you truly arrive at the Great Way of no trying, it will be like great emptiness, vast and clear. How can we speak of it in terms of affirming or negating?"⁹

Zhaozhou immediately realized the profound teaching.¹⁰

COMMENTARY

Ordinary mind is perfect and complete. It is self-contained and self-fulfilling and is its own accomplishment. Since it existed before the kalpa of emptiness, it cannot be attained. Since it transcends time and space, it is always in the eternal present. This ordinary mind is the dharma of each moment of existence—it has no before or after.

CAPPING VERSE

The enlightened and the deluded all live in its presence.
Move toward it, and the sickness is increased.
Describe it,
and you miss its reality.

NOTES

1. What is he saying? He seems to be asleep.
2. Only one on the path would be able to respond.
3. As it turns out, he misunderstands.
4. Why is he being so kind? Let Zhaozhou go chasing his tail for the rest of his life.
5. Now he is nostril deep in complications.
6. Without a bit of hesitation, he leaps into the mud pit.
7. What is he doing? He's trying to explain the dharma.
8. Where is all this leading?
9. *Bah!* The old monastic talks too much.
10. What is it that he realized?