

The moon
abiding in the midst of
serene mind;
billows break
into light.

Dogen

Tanahashi. *Essential Zen*

Water clear in the jade stream;
Moonlight white over Cold Mountain.
Through wordless knowing, my spirit shines;
I watch the void, and the world becomes calm.

Hanshan

Clouds Thick, Whereabouts Unknown: Poems by Zen Monks of China. Translated by Charles Egan. Columbia University Press, 2010.

A certain person asked Master Yuan: "Why do you not teach me the Dharma [true teaching]?" Answer: "If I were to set up a Dharma to teach you, it would not be leading you. If I were to set up a Dharma, it would be deceiving you; it would be failing you. If I had a Dharma, how could I explain it to someone else? How could I speak of it to you? It comes down to this: if there are terms and written words, all of it will deceive you. How could I tell you even a mustard seed's worth of the meaning of the great path? If I could speak of it, what purpose would that serve?" When asked again Master Yuan did not reply.

Bodhidharma

Bodhidharma. *Zen Teaching of Bodhidharma.* Translated by R. Pine. New York: Weatherhill, 1987.

What is the heart of this old monk like?
A gentle wind
Beneath the vast sky.

Ryokan

Ryokan. *One Robe, One Bowl: The Zen Poetry of Ryokan.* Translated by J. Stevens. New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1977

In the stillness by the empty window
 I sit in formal meditation wearing my monk's surplice. Navel and nose in alignment,
 Ears parallel with the shoulders.
 Moonlight floods the room;
 The rain stops but the eaves drip and drip.
 Perfect this moment –
 In the vast emptiness my understanding deepens.

Ryokan

John Stevens. *Zen Masters: A Maverick, a Master of Masters and a Wandering Poet*. Kodansha International, 1999.

Like the dreaming of a crane flying in empty space...

Silent Illumination

Hongzhi Zhengjue. *Silent Illumination*. In Sheng Yen, *The Poetry of Enlightenment: Poems of Ancient Ch'an Masters*. Elmhurst, NY: Dharm Drum Publications, 1987.

The Thus-Come One revealed to me that the essential nature of our awareness is true emptiness and that the essential nature of emptiness is perfect understanding....I understood that all is empty and also that what understands emptiness and the emptiness that is understood are empty as well. To return the cognitive faculty to purity so that all phenomena are understood to be empty....

Śūraṅgama Sutra

Śūraṅgama Sutra with Excerpts from the Commentary by the Venerable Master Hsüan Hua. Translated by Śūraṅgama Sutra Translation Committee. Ukiah, CA: Buddhist Text Translation Society, 2009.

One experiences emptiness, brightness and purity. Inwardly, one's mind is delighted. One feels tranquil and blissful. There are no situations wherein one is covered over by the hindrances. The mind of goodness comes forth and manifests. One's faith and reverence increase and grow. One's mirror of wisdom becomes clear and bright. The body and mind become supple and pliant. One experiences a subtle and marvelous emptiness and quiescence. One develops a revulsion for and abhorrence of the world. There is nothing which one feels needs to be done and one remains free of desires. One remains sovereignly independent in one's ability to emerge from and enter into

Zhiyi

Zhiyi. *Essentials for Practicing Calming-and-Insight and Dhyana Meditation*. Translated by B. Dharmamitra. Seattle, WA: Kalavinka Press, 2008.

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Emptiness is the relinquishing of all views.

Nagarjuna

Nagarjuna. (1995). *The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way: Nagarjuna's Mulamadhyamakakarika*. Translated by J. Garfield. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

An explosive shout cracks the great empty sky.
Immediately clear self-understanding.
Swallow up buddhas and ancestors of the past.
Without following others, realize complete penetration.

Dogen

Dogen. *Moon in a Dewdrop: Writings of Zen Master Dogen*. Translated by K. Tanahashi. New York: North Point Press, 1985.

When views of "I" and "mine" are extinguished.
Whether with respect to the internal or external,
The appropriator ceases.
This having ceased, birth [samsara] ceases.

Nagarjuna

Nagarjuna. (1995). *The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way: Nagarjuna's Mulamadhyamakakarika*. Translated by J. Garfield. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Nirvana means no birth and no death. It's beyond birth and death and beyond nirvana. When the mind stops moving, it enters nirvana. Nirvana is an empty mind. Where delusions don't exist, buddhas reach nirvana. Where afflictions don't exist, bodhisattvas enter the place of enlightenment.

Bodhidharma

Bodhidharma. *Zen Teaching of Bodhidharma*. Translated by R. Pine. New York: Weatherhill, 1987.

Theme Emptiness

The nature [of mind] is like space; it neither increases nor decreases. What could you possibly add to
Guifeng Zongmi

Broughton, J. L. Zongmi on Chan. New York: Columbia University, 2009.

All these phenomena are intrinsically void and yet this Mind with which they are identical is no mere nothingness. By this I mean that it does exist, but in a way too marvellous for us to comprehend. It is an existence which is no existence, a non-existence which is nevertheless existence. So this true Void does in some marvellous way exist.

Huangbo

Huangbo. The Zen Teaching of Huang Po: On the Transmission of Mind. Translated by John Blofeld. New York: Grove Press, 1958.

As a lamp, a cataract, a star in space an illusion, a dewdrop, a bubble a dream, a cloud, a flash of lightning. View all created things like this.

Diamond Sutra

Diamond Sutra: The Perfection of Wisdom. Translated by R. Pine. Washington, DC: Counterpoint, 2001.

A quiet fills my three-matted hut.
All day long, not a soul appears.
I sit at the window and meditate...
the sound of falling leaves.

Ryokan

Ryokan. The Kanshi Poems of Taigu Ryokan. Translated by Larry Smith and Mei Hui Liu Huang. Bottom Dog Press, 2009.

Like the little stream
Making its way
Through the mossy crevices,
I, too, quietly
Turn clear and transparent.

Ryokan

John Stevens. Zen Masters: A Maverick, a Master of Masters and a Wandering Poet. Kodansha International, 1999.

Theme Emptiness

When a person's mind has no thoughts and is fundamentally empty and still and free of false views, this is the greatest of all causes – which occurs when you aren't confused about the inside or the outside, when you are free of dualities. If you're confused about the outside, you're attached to forms. If you're confused about the inside, you're attached to emptiness. To be free of form amid forms and to be free of emptiness amid emptiness, this is when you aren't confused about the inside or the outside.

Platform Sutra

Platform Sutra: The Zen Teaching of Hui-neng. Translated by R. Pine. Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2006.

The Zen meditation tradition handed down from the patriarchs teaches, however, that when all traces of thinking are cut off, the principle of emptiness appears clearly, of itself, as the very origin of

The Mirror of Zen

Joeng, B. Mirror of Zen: The Classic Guide to Buddhist Practice by Zen Master So Sahn. Translated by H. Gak. Boston, MA: Shambhala, 2006.

To say "it is" is to grasp for permanence.
To say "it is not" is to adopt the view of nihilism.
Therefore a wise person
does not say "exists" or "does not exist."

Nagarjuna

Nagarjuna. (1995). The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way: Nagarjuna's Mulamadhyamakakarika. Translated by J. Garfield. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Your mind is basically empty. All appearances are illusions. Don't hold on to appearances.

Bodhidharma

Bodhidharma. Zen Teaching of Bodhidharma. Translated by R. Pine. New York: Weatherhill, 1987.

It is no different from death and differs from it only in that breathing is still present.

Nagarjuna

Nagarjuna. (1995). The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way: Nagarjuna's Mulamadhyamakakarika. Translated by J. Garfield. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Since I escaped to Cold Mountain
I've lived on mountain fruit
What worries does life hold
this time I'm following karma
days and months are like a stream
Time is but a spark
Heaven and Earth can change
I'm happy here in the cliffs

Han Shan

Han Shan. *The Collected Songs of Cold Mountain*. Translated by R. Pine, Trans. Port Townsend, WA: Copper Canyon Press, 2000.

Like a drifting cloud,
Bound by nothing:
I just let go
Giving myself up
To the whim of the wind.

Ryokan

Ryokan. *Dewdrops on a Lotus Leaf: Zen Poems of Ryokan*. J. Stevens, trans. Boston and London: Shambhala, 2004

True reality is true emptiness and it is also wondrous existence. Do you say that true emptiness is empty? It is not, because within it all that exists comes into being. True emptiness is said to be true because it is not in fact empty and all that exists is wondrous because it does not, in fact, exist. What exists within emptiness is wondrous existence. Emptiness, therefore, is not empty and that lack of emptiness is true emptiness. Since true emptiness is not empty, it is called wondrous existence. Since wondrous existence does not exist, it is called true emptiness. These two names are one. If you investigate this in detail, you will find, however, that even that one does not exist....Fundamentally, there isn't anything at all.

Hsüan Hua

Huangbo. *The Zen Teaching of Huang Po: On the Transmission of Mind*. Translated by John Blofeld. New York: Grove Press, 1958.

There are masters who say that, if one simply establishes the mind in calming at the site of the disorder, one will immediately be able to cure the disorder.

Next, there are masters who say that one inch below the navel is a location known as the udana. This refers to what we know [in Chinese culture] as the dantian. If one is able to bring the mind to a halt and preserve its point of focus at this location such that it does not become scattered, then after one has done this for a long time, in most cases, there will be that which is remedied.

There are other masters who say that if one constantly anchors the mind's point of attention beneath the feet without regard to whether one is walking, standing, or lying down to sleep, one will be able to cure disorders. Why is this? This is because it is on account of non-regulation of the four great elements that most illnesses occur. This is brought about by the mind's consciousness becoming anchored in a higher position, thus causing the four great elements to become unregulated. If one anchors the mind below, then the four great elements will naturally become appropriately adjusted and the various disorders will be gotten rid of.

There are masters who state that one need only realize that all dharmas are empty and that nothing whatsoever exists. If one refrains from seizing upon the symptoms of illness while quiescently abiding in calming, then a cure will be brought about in most cases. Why is this? This is because the mind's reflective intellection pumps up the four great elements and instigates the arising of disorders. If one puts the mind to rest in harmony and happiness, the various disorders will then be cured.

Zhiyi

Zhiyi. *Essentials for Practicing Calming-and-Insight and Dhyana Meditation*. Translated by B. Dharmamitra. Seattle, WA: Kalavinka Press, 2008.

Many people are afraid to empty their minds lest they may plunge into the Void. They do not know that their own Mind is the Void. The ignorant eschew phenomena but not thought; the wise eschew thought but not phenomena.

Huangbo

Huangbo. *The Zen Teaching of Huang Po: On the Transmission of Mind*. Translated by John Blofeld. New York: Grove Press, 1958.

There is an empty and subtle blissfulness. One's happiness and pleasure are pure and indescribable even by simile.

Zhiyi

Zhiyi. *Essentials for Practicing Calming-and-Insight and Dhyana Meditation*. Translated by B. Dharmamitra. Seattle, WA: Kalavinka Press, 2008.

The birds have vanished from the sky.
Now the last cloud drains away.
We sit together, the mountain and me,
until only the mountain remains.

Han Shan

Han Shan. *The Collected Songs of Cold Mountain*. Translated by R. Pine, Trans. Port Townsend, WA: Copper Canyon Press, 2000.

Practice in emptiness and forget conditioning as dazzling light gleams from the shadows....In upright practice let go from the edge of the high cliff, not grabbing anything. The ropes around your feet are severed. In wholeness take one step.

Hongzhi Zhengjue

Hongzhi Zhengjue. *Cultivating the Empty Field: The Silent Illumination of Zen Master Hongzhi*. Translated by T. Leighton, Ed., T. Leighton, & Yi Wu. Tokyo: Tuttle Publishing, 2000.

The subject is extinguished with the object.
The object sinks away with the subject.
Object is object because of the subject.
Subject is subject because of the object.
Know that the two
Are originally one emptiness.

Faith in Mind

Sheng Yen, *The Poetry of Enlightenment: Poems by Ancient Ch'an Masters*. Elmhurst, NY: Dharm Drum Publications.

Form is emptiness, emptiness is form;
emptiness is not separate from form,
form is not separate from emptiness.
whatever is form is emptiness,
whatever is emptiness is form.

Heart Sutra

Rochester Zen Centre.

Theme Emptiness

If ever you should allow yourselves to believe in the more than purely transitory existence of phenomena, you will have fallen into a grave error known as the heretical belief in eternal life [permanence]. But if, on the contrary, you take the intrinsic voidness of phenomena to imply mere [nothingness], then you will have fallen into another error, the heresy of total extinction.

Huangbo

Huangbo. *The Zen Teaching of Huang Po: On the Transmission of Mind*. Translated by John Blofeld. New York: Grove Press, 1958.

Look for it and there is nothing to see,
Listen for it and there is nothing to hear,
And yet in availing oneself of it, it is inexhaustible.

Daodejing

Lao-Tzu's *Taoteching*. Translated by R. Pine. Port Townsend, WA: Copper Canyon Press, 2009.

Spring water is pure in an emerald stream
moonlight is white on Cold Mountain
silence thoughts and the spirit becomes clear
focus on emptiness and the world grows still

Han Shan

Han Shan. *The Collected Songs of Cold Mountain*. Translated by R. Pine, Trans. Port Townsend, WA: Copper Canyon Press, 2000.

To be empty of all created things is to be full of God and to be full of created things is to be empty of God.

All that it [detachment] wants is to be. But to wish to be this thing or that, this it does not want.

Whoever wants to be this or that wants to be something, but detachment wants to be nothing at all.

So it is that detachment makes no claims upon anything.

One ought not to have a God who is just a product of his thought, nor should one be satisfied with that, because if the thought vanished, God too would vanish. But one ought to have a God who is present, a God who is far above the notions of humans and of all created things.

So detachment is the best of all, for it purifies the soul and cleanses the conscience and enkindles the heart and awakens the spirit and stimulates our longings and shows us where God is and separates us from created things and unites itself with God.

Become like a child, become deaf, become blind.

Your own something must become nothing.

Drive away all something, all nothing.

Leave place, leave time, avoid images too.

Go out without any path on the narrow way,
and then you will find the wasteland's hint.

O soul of mine, come out, God in.

Sink all my something into God's nothing,

sink down in the bottomless flood...

If I lose myself, then I will find you.

Meister Eckhart

Meister Eckhart. *Meister Eckhart: Selected Writings*. Translated by O. Davies. London: Penguin Books, 1994.

When the mind stops moving, it enters nirvana. Nirvana is an empty mind. Where delusions don't exist, buddhas reach nirvana. Where afflictions don't exist, bodhisattvas enter the place of

Bodhidharma

Bodhidharma. *Zen Teaching of Bodhidharma*. Translated by R. Pine. New York: Weatherhill, 1987.

This is not something which you can accomplish without effort, but when you reach the point of clinging to nothing whatever, you will be acting as the Buddhas act. This will indeed be acting in accordance with the saying, "Develop a mind which rests on no thing whatever."

Huangbo

Huangbo. *The Zen Teaching of Huang Po: On the Transmission of Mind*. Translated by John Blofeld. New York: Grove Press, 1958.