

The foundation sutra for Zen is the Prajna Paramita Sutra, the teachings on Emptiness. The Heart Sutra, which we chant after sitting, is a very abbreviated version. In it we say that “form is nothing other than emptiness, emptiness is nothing other than form”. Emptiness is thus not another world, or something to aspire to. It is a way of describing *this* world, *this* experience.

It is infinitely faceted. One can say that it is dependent origination; nothing exists separately and independently of anything else. Equally, one can say that because emptiness cannot be grasped – one cannot seize space – it is a way of describing the ineffability of all being. The world eludes the web of words. And one can say that it is a way of describing our experience when self consciousness drops away. The world is empty of *you*, and so, is luminous.

The teachings on emptiness are themselves empty.