

## **The Gift of Catastrophic Change**

"One, seven, three, five, Nothing may be depended upon by any universe;"

The "gift" of catastrophic change - and we do eventually come to see the gift in it and become grateful - is that there is no thing we can hold onto. When the great hurricane of change blows there is no usual place to stand that can give us the old comforts.

The Abbot of Shasta has abandoned his seat and for many of us it is as if the deck of cards with which we have been playing the game of life has been thrown into the air and we do not know where all the cards will land. When I heard the news my world did indeed shake and I fell to the deep self-questioning that such an event must precipitate.

"Vast Emptiness - no holiness" Bodhidharma taught the Emperor and he didn't like it any more than we do when change catches us off guard.

What to do? The answer is simple and at the same time quite difficult to do – look fearlessly at myself and my own capacity for self deception.

A monk once asked Joshu "What is the most important thing for the one who sits in the teacher's seat?" and Joshu replied, "Not to deceive oneself".

I have found the process terrifying - standing on the precipice of NO THING MATTERS with no exception and knowing that the UNBORN is not a thing - just that after I turn around, turn around, IT is where I come down, come down, right where I ought to be. And that is a gift - the gift of the great Truth of Constant Change.

"Night comes and the moon floods the water with light, within the dragon's jaws I find many exquisite jewels."

in Gassho,

HKoten