

CHANTS AND SUTRAS



Zen Community of Oregon

GREAT VOW ZEN MONASTERY
HEART OF WISDOM ZEN TEMPLE

Why We Recite Chants and Sutras

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by Hakuun Yasutani Roshi (revised)

There are three reasons why we chant and read sutras: First, to make an offering to the Buddhist ancestors; second, to create a noble relationship with all beings; third, to unite these first two actions with our Buddhist training.

The first reason, to make a sincere offering to the Buddhist ancestors, is a natural expression of gratitude for the opportunity to hear, believe, learn and realize Buddhist teaching. The greatest delight of a Buddhist ancestor is for their followers to respect, maintain, and spread the teaching. Therefore, we sit before an icon of the ancestors and chant or read with sincerity the sutras they composed. In this way, express our gratitude to them.

Second, Buddhists want others know about, believe and realize the noble teaching of the Buddha. In order to do this, we must chant or read sutras as often as possible. It is necessary and important to do this to establish a relationship with many people. Even chanting sutras alone or before a dead person has value. I will explain it to you.

We chant sutras before others as an education of their subconscious minds. On the surface, it may seem that the effectiveness of teaching is limited by the extent of their understanding. If you have studied only a little about the subconscious, you will know that even though you do not grasp meaning with your conscious mind, you may understand very clearly with your subconscious. And, if you have some conscious understanding it may be a reflection of what your subconscious knows. Indeed, your subconscious mind operates with absolute control over your character.

Even chanting or reading sutras alone in a mountain temple is announcing Buddha's teaching to the world and to the Universe. For our ordinary minds, we need a radio station and a radio. However, all things come from the same source so subconsciously all people and all the life of the universe receive perfectly the sutras recited by one person sitting alone. At a deep level they accept completely the doctrines of Buddhism.

Moreover, if you know the grandeur and subtlety of the thinking process, you will realize that even thinking chants and sutras without using the voice has a great influence upon the people of the world. Thus, whether or not others can see or hear, whether they are alive or long dead, if we chant sutras time and again with a great conviction to the visible and invisible worlds, we permeate everywhere and guide many to Buddhism, saving all beings. Therefore, the chanting of sutras is very meaningful work. Sutra chanting is an element of Buddhist training. But its effectiveness is related to the way you chant the sutras – with energy and single-mindedness, or half-heartedly.

If you chant or recite sutras with great energy and single-mindedness frequently, then your own Samadhi-power will be strengthened and you will be closer to awakening. If you have already had some degree of awakening, it will shine more brilliantly in your character and act more effectively in your everyday life. Please chant with your whole heart, then there will be no difference between zazen and your chanting and recitation.



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Standard Service Chant Pages

Morning Service A:	page 8 thru 19
Morning Service B:	page 20 thru 29
Sesshin Chants:	begin on page 6
Special Chants:	begin on page 62

SERVICE SCHEDULES

Morning Service A:

Morning Service B:

Sunday late service at 10am is generally an Abbreviated Morning Service A.

Sesshin Services always begin with Page 6
Then follow normal morning service order, A or B.

Noon, Evening and Night chants vary
And will be announced.

Small, frequently used chants begin
On page 5.

Dedication of Merit

By Rev. Heng Sure

May every living being,
Our minds as one and radiant with light,
Share the fruits of peace
With hearts of goodness,
Luminous and bright.

If people hear and see,
How hands and hearts can find in giving,
Unity, may their minds awake,
To Great Compassion, wisdom, and to joy.

May kindness find reward.
May all who sorrow leave their grief and pain;
May this boundless light,
Break the darkness of their endless night.

Because our hearts are one
This world of pain turns into Paradise.
May all become compassionate and wise,
May all become compassionate and wise.



Verse of the Kesa

How great the robe of liberation,
 A formless field of benefaction!
 Wrapping ourselves in Buddha's teaching,
 We free all living beings.

Four Great Bodhisattva Vows

Beings are numberless;
 I vow to free them.
 Delusions are inexhaustible;
 I vow to end them.
 Dharma gates are boundless;
 I vow to enter them.
 The Buddha way is unsurpassable;
 I vow to embody it.

Shigu Seigan Mon

(Four Vows in Japanese)

Shu jo mu hen sei gan do
 Bon no mu jin sei gan dan
 Ho mon mu ryo sei gan gaku
 Butsu do mu jo sei gan jo

Gatha on Opening the Sutra

The dharma, incomparably profound and infinitely subtle, is rarely encountered, even in hundreds of thousands of millions of ages. As we see it, hear it, receive and maintain it, may we completely realize the Tathagata's true meaning.

Universal Dedication

All Buddhas throughout space and time,
All Honored Ones, Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas,
Wisdom beyond wisdom,
Maha Prajna Paramita.

Gatha of Atonement

All evil karma ever committed by me
since of old,
On account of my beginning-less greed,
anger, and ignorance,
Born of my body, mouth, and thought,
Now I atone for it all.

Three Refuges

Ti Sarana (in Pali)

*Namo Tassa Bagavato
Arahato Samma Sam Buddhassa.*

(Honor to the Buddha, worthy one,
who is perfectly and completely enlightened.)

Buddham saranam ga chami
(I take refuge in the Buddha)

Dhammam saranam ga chami
(I take refuge in the Dharma)

Sangham saranam ga chami
(I take refuge in the Sangha)

Duti yampi, Buddham saranam ga chami
(For the second time ...)

Duti yampi, Dhammam saranam ga chami

Duti yampi, Sangham saranam ga chami

Tati yampi, Buddham saranam ga chami
(For the third time ...)

Tati yampi, Dhammam saranam ga chami

Tati yampi, Sangham saranam ga chami



Heart of Great Perfect Wisdom Sutra

(Maka Hannya Haramitta Shingyo)

Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva, when deeply practicing Prajna Paramita, clearly saw that all five aggregates are empty and thus relieved all suffering.

Shariputra,
form does not differ from emptiness, emptiness does not differ from form,
form itself is emptiness, emptiness itself form,
sensations, perceptions, formations, and consciousness are also like this.

Shariputra,
all dharmas are marked by emptiness;
they neither arise nor cease,
are neither defiled nor pure,
neither increase nor decrease.

Therefore, given emptiness, there is no form,
no sensation, no perception, no formation,
no consciousness;

no eyes, no ears, no nose, no tongue,
no body, no mind; no sight, no sound,
no smell, no taste, no touch,
no object of mind; no realm of sight,
no realm of mind consciousness.

(Continue to next page)

There is neither ignorance nor extinction of
ignorance ... neither old age nor death,
nor extinction of old age and death;
no suffering, no cause, no cessation, no path;
no knowledge and no attainment.

With nothing to attain, a Bodhisattva relies on
Prajna Paramita, and thus the mind is without
hindrance. Without hindrance, there is no fear.

Far beyond all inverted views, one realizes
nirvana. All Buddhas of past, present, and
future rely on Prajna Paramita and thereby
attain unsurpassed, complete, perfect
enlightenment.

Therefore, know the Prajna Paramita as
the great miraculous mantra,
the great bright mantra,
the supreme mantra,
the incomparable mantra,
which removes all suffering
and is true, not false.

Therefore we proclaim
the Prajna Paramita mantra,
the mantra that says:

**"Gate Gate Para-gate Para-Samgate
Bodhi Svaha."**



(Continue to next page)

Identity of Relative and Absolute

(Sandokai) by Zen Master Sekito Kisen

The mind of the great sage of India was intimately conveyed from west to east.

Among human beings are wise ones and fools, but in the Way there is no northern or southern ancestor. The subtle source is clear and bright, the tributary streams flow through the darkness. To be attached to things is illusion; to encounter the absolute is not yet enlightenment.

Each and all, the subjective and objective spheres, are related, and at the same time, independent. Related, yet working differently, though each keeps its own place.

Form makes the character and appearance different; sounds distinguish comfort and discomfort. The dark makes all words one; the brightness distinguishes good and bad phrases.

The four elements return to their nature as a child to its mother. Fire is hot, wind moves, water is wet, earth hard, eyes see, ears hear, nose smells, tongue tastes the salt and sour.

(Continue to next page)

Each is independent of the other. Cause and effect must return to the great reality. The words high and low are used relatively.

Within light there is darkness, but do not try to understand that darkness; within darkness there is light, but do not look for that light.

Light and darkness are a pair, like the foot before and the foot behind in walking. Each thing has its own intrinsic value and is related to everything else in function and position.

Ordinary life fits the absolute as a box and its lid. The absolute works together with the relative, like two arrows meeting in mid-air. Reading words you should grasp the great reality. Do not judge by any standards.

If you do not see the Way, you do not see it even as you walk on it. When you walk the Way it is not near it is not far. If you are deluded you are mountains and rivers away from it.

I respectfully say to those who wish to be enlightened:

“Do not waste your time by night or day.”



(Continue to next page)

Dai Hi Shin Dharani

(Dharani of the Great Compassionate One)

Namu kara tan no tora ya ya namu ori ya
boryo ki chi shifu ra ya fuji sato bo ya
moko sato bo ya mo ko kya runi kya ya
en sa hara ha e shu tan no ton sha namu
shiki ri toi mo ori ya boryo ki chi shifu ra

Rin to bo na mu no ra kin ji ki ri mo ko
ho do sha mi sa bo o to jo shu ben o
shu in sa bo sa to no mo bo gya mo ha
te cho to ji to en o bo ryo ki ru gya chi
kya ra chi i kiri mo ko fuji sa to sa bo sa
bo

Mo ra mo ra mo ki mo ki ri to in ku ryo
ku ryo ke mo to ryo to ryo ho ja ya chi
mo ko ho ja ya chi to ra to ra chiri ni
shifu ra ya sha ro sha ro mo mo ha mo
ra ho chi ri i ki i ki shi no shi no ora san

Fura sha ri ha za ha zan fura sha ya ku
ryo ku ryo mo ra ku ryo ku ryo ki ri sha
ro sha ro shi ri shi ri su ryo su ryo fuji ya
fuji ya fudo ya fudo ya mi chiri ya nora kin
ji chiri shuni no hoyo mono somo ko shido
ya

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Morning Service A

13

Somo ko moko shido ya somo ko shido yu
ki shifu ra ya somo ko nora kin ji somo ko
mo ra no ra somo ko shira su omo gya ya
somo ko sobo moko shido ya somo ko
shaki ra oshi do ya somo ko

Hodo mogya shido ya somo ko nora kin ji
ha gyara ya somo ko mo hori shin gyara
ya somo ko namu kara tan no tora ya ya
namu ori ya boryo ki chi shifu ra ya somo
ko shite do modo ra hodo ya so mo ko



**Great Vow Monastery
Ancestral Lineage**

(Names of the past 7 Buddhas)

Vipashyin Buddha Daiocho
Shikhin Buddha Daiocho
Vishvabhu Buddha Daiocho
Krakucchanda Buddha Daiocho
Kanakamuni Buddha Daiocho
Kashyapa Buddha Daiocho
Shakyamuni Buddha Daiocho

(Indian Ancestors)

Great Teacher Mahakashyapa
Great Teacher Ananda
Great Teacher Shanavasa
Great Teacher Upagupta
Great Teacher Dhritaka
Great Teacher Micchaka
Great Teacher Vasumitra
Great Teacher Buddhanandi
Great Teacher Buddhamitra
Great Teacher Parshva
Great Teacher Punyayashas
Great Teacher Ashvaghosha
Great Teacher Kapimala
Great Teacher Nagarjuna
Great Teacher Kanadeva
Great Teacher Rahulata
Great Teacher Sanghanandi

(Continue to next page)

Morning Service A

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Great Teacher Gayashata
Great Teacher Kumarata
Great Teacher Hayata
Great Teacher Vasubandhu
Great Teacher Manorhita
Great Teacher Haklenayashas
Great Teacher Arya Simha
Great Teacher Basiasita
Great Teacher Punyamitra
Great Teacher Prajnatara
Great Teacher Bodhidharma

(Chinese Ancestors)

Great Teacher Dah-dzoo Hway-kuh
(Dazu Huike)
Great Teacher Jian-jur Sung-tsan
(Jianzhi Sengcan)
Great Teacher Dah-ee Dow-shin
(Dayi Dauxin)
Great Teacher Dah-man Hoong-ren
(Daman Hongren)
Great Teacher Dah-jian Hway-nung
(Dajian Huineng)
Great Teacher Ching-yuan Shing-suh
(Qingyuan Xingsi)
Great Teacher Shur-toe Shee-chian
(Shitou Xiqian)
Great Teacher Yow-shan Way-yan
(Yaoshan Weiyuan)
Great Teacher Yoon-yan Tan-shung
(Yunyan Tansheng)

(Continue to next page)

Morning Service A

16

Great Teacher Doong-shan Lyang-jyeh
(Dongshan Liangjie)
Great Teacher Yoon-joo Dow-ying
(Yunju Daoying)
Great Teacher Toong-an Dow-pee
(Tongan Daopi)
Great Teacher Toong-an Gwan-jur
(Tongan Guanzhi)
Great Teacher Lyang-shan Yuan-gwan
(Liangshan Yuanguan)
Great Teacher Dah-yang Jing-shuan
(Dayang Jingxuan)
Great Teacher Toe-dz Ee-ching
(Touzi Yiqing)
Great Teacher Fu-rong Dow-kai
(Furong Daokai)
Great Teacher Dan-shyah Dzu-chwoon
(Danxia Zichun)
Great Teacher Jun-shyeh Ching-lyow
(Zhenxie Qingliao)
Great Teacher Tian-tong Dzung-jweh
(Tiantong Zongjue)
Great Teacher Shway-doe Jur-jian
(Xuedou Zhijian)
Great Teacher Tian-tong Roo-jing
(Tiantong Rujing)

(Japanese Ancestors)

Great Teacher Eihei Dogen
Great Teacher Koun Ejo
Great Teacher Tetsu Gikai

(Continue to next page)

Morning Service A

17

Great Teacher Keizan Jokin
Great Teacher Gasan Joseki
Great Teacher Taigen Soshin
Great Teacher Baizan Monpon
Great Teacher Nyochu Tengin
Great Teacher Kisan Shosan
Great Teacher Morin Shihan
Great Teacher Taishi Sotai
Great Teacher Kenchu Hantetsu
Great Teacher Daiju Soko
Great Teacher Kinpo Jusen
Great Teacher Kaiin Sochin
Great Teacher Tetsuei Seiton
Great Teacher Shukoku Chuton
Great Teacher Ketsuzan Tetsuei
Great Teacher Hoshi Soon
Great Teacher Goho Dainon
Great Teacher Tenkei Denson
Great Teacher Zozan Monko
Great Teacher Niken Sekiryo
Great Teacher Reitan Roruo
Great Teacher Kakujo Tosai
Great Teacher Kakuan Ryogu
Great Teacher Ryoka Daibai
Great Teacher Ungan Guhaku
Great Teacher Baian Hakujun
Great Teacher Koun Taizan



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Universal Dedication

All Buddhas throughout space and time,
All Honored Ones, Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas,
Wisdom beyond wisdom,
Maha Prajna Paramita.

Enmei Jukku Kannon Gyo

Kan ze on!
Na mu Butsu
Yo Butsu u in
Yo Butsu u en
Bup po so en
Jo raku ga jo
Cho nen Kan ze on!
Bo nen Kan ze on!
Nen nen ju shin ki
Nen nen fu ri shin!

(Continue to next page)

Shosaimyo Kichijo Dharani

(Dharani for removing obstructions)

No mo san man da moto nan oha ra chi
koto sha sono nan to ji to en
gya gya gya ki gya ki
un nun shifu ra shifu ra
hara shifu ra hara shifu ra
chishu sa chishu sa
chishu ri chishu ri
sowa ja sowa ja
sen chi gya
shiri ei so mo ko

Jizo Shingon

Om ka ka kabi san ma e sowa ka

Universal Dedication

All Buddhas throughout space and time,
All Honored Ones, Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas,
Wisdom beyond wisdom,
Maha Prajna Paramita.



(End of Standard Service A)

Maka Hannya Haramitta Shingyo

(Heart of Perfect Wisdom Sutra)

Kan ji zai bo sa gyo jin han nya ha ra mi
ta ji sho ken go on kai ku do is sai ku
yaku

Sha ri shi shiki fu i ku ku fu i shiki shiki
soku ze ku ku soku ze shiki ju so gyo
shiki yaku bu nyo ze

Sha ri shi ze sho ho ku so fu sho fu
metsu fu ku fu jo fu zo fu gen ze ko ku
chu mu shiki mu ju so gyo shiki mu gen
ni bi zes shin ni mu shiki sho ko mi soku
ho mu gen kai nai shi mu i shiki kai

Mu mu myo yaku mu mu myo jin nai shi
mu ro shi yaku mu ro shi jin mu ku shu
metsu do mu chi yaku mu toku i mu sho
tok ko bo dai sat ta e han nya ha ra mi ta

Ko shin mu ke ge mu ke ge ko mu u ku
fu on ri is sai ten do mu so ku gyo ne
han san ze sho butsu e han nya ha ra mi
ta ko toku a noku ta ra sam myaku sam
bo dai

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Morning Service B

21

Ko chi han nya ha ra mi ta ze dai jin shu
ze dai myo shu ze mu jo shu ze mu to
do

Shu no jo is sai ku shin jitsu fu ko ko
setsu han nya ha ra mi ta shu soku setsu
shu watsu

Gya tei gya tei ha ra gya tei ha ra so gya
tei bo ji sowa ka han nya shin gyo



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Morning Service B

22

The Precious Mirror Samadhi

(Hokyo Zanmai) by Tozan Ryokai Zenji

The dharma of thus-ness is intimately transmitted by Buddhas and ancestors. Now you have it, preserve it well.

A silver bowl filled with snow, a heron hidden in the moon. Taken as similar, they are not the same; not distinguished, their places are known. The meaning does not reside in the words, but a pivotal moment brings it forth.

Move and you are trapped; miss and you fall into doubt and vacillation. Turning away and touching are both wrong, for it is like massive fire. Just to portray it in literary form is to stain it with defilement. In darkest night it is perfectly clear; in the light of dawn it is hidden.

It is a standard for all things; its use removes all suffering. Though it is not constructed, it is not beyond words. Facing a precious mirror; form and reflection behold each other. You are not it, but in truth it is you.

Like a newborn child, it is fully endowed with five aspects. No going, no coming, no arising, no abiding; a baby babbles - is anything said or not? In the end it says nothing, for the words are not yet right.

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Morning Service B

23

In the illumination hexagram, apparent and real interact; stacked together they become three, the permutations make five, like the taste of the five flavored herb, like the five pronged vajra.

Wondrously embraced within the real, drumming and singing begin together. Penetrate the source and travel the pathways; embrace the territory and treasure the roads. You would do well to respect this; do not neglect it.

Natural and wondrous, it is not a matter of delusion or enlightenment. Within causes and conditions, time and season, it is serene and illuminating. So minute it enters where there is no gap, so vast it transcends all dimension. Just a hair's breadth's deviation and you are out of tune.

Now there are sudden and gradual, so teachings and approaches arise. With these matters distinguished, each has its standard. Mastered or not, reality constantly flows.

Outside still and inside trembling, like tethered colts or cowering rats, the ancient sages grieved for them, and offered them the dharma.

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Morning Service B

24

Led by their inverted views, they take black for white. When inverted thinking stops, the affirming mind naturally accords. If you want to follow in the ancient tracks, please observe the sages of the past.

One on the verge of realizing the Buddha Way contemplated a tree for ten long kalpas, like a battle-scarred tiger, like a horse with shanks gone gray.

Because some are vulgar, jeweled tables and ornate robes; because some are wide-eyed, cats and white oxen.

With a great archer's skill one can hit the mark at a hundred yards, but arrows meeting head on, how could it be a matter of skill?

Wooden man starts to sing; stone woman gets up dancing. It is not reached by feelings or consciousness, how could it involve deliberation?

Ministers serve their lords, children obey their parents; not obeying is not filial, failure to serve is no help.

With practice hidden, function secretly, like a fool, like an idiot; just to do this continuously is called the host within the host.



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Morning Service B

25

Women Ancestors

Prajna Paramita Dai-osho
Maha Maya Dai-osho
Ratna-vati Dai-osho
Shri-mala Dai-osho
Naga Deva Dai-osho
Pra-bhuta Dai-osho

(Indian Ancestors)

Great Teacher Maha Paja-pati
Great Teacher Khe-ma
Great Teacher Punnika
Great Teacher Pata-chara
Great Teacher Bhad-da
Great Teacher Dhamma-dinna
Great Teacher Su-mana
Great Teacher Kisa-go-tami
Great Teacher Su-bha
Great Teacher Dhamma
Great Teacher Suk-ha
Great Teacher Up-pala-vanna

(Chinese Ancestors)

Great Teacher Dzung Chr
(Zongchi)
Great Teacher Shr-ji
(Shiji)

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Morning Service B

26

Great Teacher Ling Sying-po
(Ling Xingpo)
Great Teacher Ling-jau
(Lingzhao)
Great Teacher Lee-you Tay-mo
(Liu Tiemo)
Great Teacher Mo-shan Lyau-ran
(Moshan Liaoran)
Great Teacher Myau-syin
(Miaoxin)
Great Teacher Hwei-gwang
(Huiguang)
Great Teacher Hwei-wen
(Huiwen)
Great Teacher Fadeng
(Fadeng)
Great Teacher Gung-shr Dau-ren
(Kongshi Daoren)
Great Teacher Wen-jau
(Wenzhao)
Great Teacher Yu Dau-po
(Yu Daopo)
Great Teacher Myau-dau
(Miaodao)

(Japanese Ancestors)

Great Teacher Zen-shin
Great Teacher Ko-myo
Great Teacher Sei-shi
Great Teacher Ryo-nen
Great Teacher Sho-gaku

(Continue to next page)

Morning Service B

27

Great Teacher Egi
Great Teacher Mugai Nyo-dai
Great Teacher Kaku-zan Shido
Great Teacher E-kan Dai-shi
Great Teacher Myo-sho En-kan
Great Teacher Kon-to Ekyu
Great Teacher Moku-fu So-nin
Great Teacher Sho-taku
Great Teacher Yo-do
Great Teacher E-shun
Great Teacher Dai-tsu Bun-chi
Great Teacher Ryo-nen Genso
Great Teacher Tei-jitsu
Great Teacher Ohashi
Great Teacher Ten-myō Jor-in
Great Teacher Naga-sawa So-zen
Great Teacher Ken-do Koji-ma
Great Teacher Yo-shida E-shun

(Western Ancestors)

Great Teacher E-ryu Jo-kei
Great Teacher Myo-on
Great Teacher Ges-shin Myo-ko
Great Teacher Ho-un Jiyu



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Morning Service B

28

Universal Dedication

All Buddhas throughout space and time,
All Honored Ones, Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas,
Wisdom beyond wisdom,
Maha Prajna Paramita.

Chant of Boundless Compassion

Absorbing world sounds
Awakens a Buddha right here!
This Buddha the source of compassion!
This Buddha receives only compassion!
Buddha, Dharma, Sangha – just compassion.
Thus the pure heart always rejoices!
In the light recall this!
In the dark recall this!
Moment after moment the true heart arises.
Time after time there is nothing but THIS!

(Continue to next page)

Morning Service B

29

Shosaimyo Kichijo Dharani

(Dharani for removing obstructions)

No mo san man da Moto nan oha ra chi
Koto sha sono nan To ji to en
gya gya gya ki gya ki
un nun shifu ra shifu ra
ha ra shifu ra ha ra shifu ra
chishu sa chishu sa
chishu ri chishu ri
sowa ja sowa ja
sen chi gya
shiri ei so mo ko

Jizo Shingon

Om ka ka kabi san ma e sowa ka

Universal Dedication

All Buddhas throughout space and time,
All Honored Ones, Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas,
Wisdom beyond wisdom,
Maha Prajna Paramita.



(End of Standard Service B)

30

Affirming Faith in Mind

(Hsin Hsin Ming) by Kanchi Sosan Zenji

Note: Indented lines are dropped a tone.

The Great Way is not difficult for those
who do not pick and choose.

When preferences are cast aside,
the Way stands clear and un-disguised.

But even slight distinctions made
set earth and heaven far apart.

If you would clearly see the truth,
discard opinions pro and con.

To founder in dislike and like is nothing but
the mind's disease.

And not to see the Way's deep truth
disturbs the mind's essential peace.

The Way is perfect like vast space,
where there's no lack and no excess.

Our choice to choose and to reject
prevents our seeing this simple truth.

Both striving for the outer world as well as for
the inner void condemn us to entangled lives.

Just calmly see that all is one
and by themselves false views will go.

Attempts to stop activity will fill you with activity
Remaining in duality,
you'll never know of unity.

And not to know this unity lets conflict
lead you far astray.

When you assert that things are real
you miss their true reality.

But to assert that things are void also
misses reality.

The more you talk and think on this
the further from the truth you'll be.

Cut off all useless thoughts and words
and there's nowhere you cannot go.

Returning to the root itself,
you'll find the meaning of all things.

If you pursue appearances you overlook
the primal source.

Awakening is to go beyond
both emptiness as well as form.

All changes in this empty world seem real
because of ignorance.

Do not go searching for the truth,
just let those fond opinions go.

Abide not in duality,
refrain from all pursuit of it.

If there's a trace of right and wrong,
true-mind is lost, confused, distraught.

From One-mind comes duality,
but cling not even to this One.

When this One-mind rests undisturbed
then nothing in the world offends.

And when no thing can give offense,
then all obstructions cease to be.

If all thought-objects disappear
the thinking subject drops away.

For things are things because of mind,
as mind is mind because of things.

These two are merely relative
and both at source are emptiness.

In emptiness these are not two,
yet in each are contained all forms.

Once coarse and fine are seen no more,
then how can there be taking sides?

The Great Way is without limit,
beyond the easy and the hard.

But those who hold to narrow views
are fearful and irresolute;
their frantic haste just slows them down.

If you're attached to anything,
you surely will go far astray.

Just let go now of clinging mind,
and all things are just as they are.
In essence nothing goes or stays.

See into the true self of things, and you're in
step with the Great Way,
thus walking freely, undisturbed.

But live in bondage to your thoughts,
and you will be confused, unclear.

This heavy burden weighs you down –
so why keep judging good and bad?

If you would walk the highest Way,
do not reject the sense domain.

For as it is, whole and complete,
this sense world is enlightenment.

The wise do not strive after goals,
but fools themselves in bondage put.

The One Way knows no differences,
the foolish cling to this and that.

To seek Great Mind with thinking mind
is certainly a grave mistake.

From small mind come rest and unrest,
but mind awakened transcends both.

Delusion spawns dualities –
these dreams are merely flowers of air –
why work so hard at grasping them?

Both gain and loss, and right and wrong –
once and for all get rid of them.

When you no longer are asleep,
all dreams will vanish by themselves.

If mind does not discriminate,
all things are as they are, as one.
To go to this mysterious source
frees us from all entanglements.

When all is seen with “equal mind,”
to our self-nature we return.
This single mind goes right beyond
all reasons and comparison.

Seek movement and there’s no-movement,
seek rest and no-rest comes instead.
When rest and no-rest cease to be,
then even oneness disappears.

This ultimate finality’s beyond all laws,
can’t be described.
With single mind one with the Way,
all ego-centered strivings cease.

Doubts and confusion disappear,
and so true faith pervades our life.
There is no thing that clings to us,
and nothing that is left behind.

All’s self-revealing, void and clear,
without exerting power of mind.
Thought cannot reach this state of truth,
here feelings are of no avail.

In this true world of emptiness
both self and other are no more.

To enter this true empty world,
immediately affirm, “not-two.”

In this “not-two” all is the same,
with nothing separate or outside.

The wise in all times and places
awaken to this primal truth.

The Way’s beyond all space, all time,
one instant is ten thousand years.

Not only here, not only there,
truth’s right before your very eyes.

Distinctions such as large and small
have relevance for you no more.

The largest is the smallest too –
here limitations have no place.

What is – is not, what is not – is.
If this is not yet clear to you,
you’re still far from the inner truth.

One thing is all, all things are One –
know this and all’s whole and complete.

When faith and mind are not separate,
and not separate are mind and faith,
this is beyond all words, all thought.

For here there is no yesterday,
no tomorrow, no today.



Genjo Koan – The Way of Everyday Life

by Dogen Zenji

(Drop the tone on the indented lines)

(All)

When all dharmas are Buddha-Dharma –
there are enlightenment and delusion,
practice, life and death,
Buddhas and creatures.

When the ten thousand dharmas are
without self,
There is no delusion, no enlightenment,
no Buddhas, no creatures,
no life and no death.

The Buddha Way transcends being and
non-being,
therefore, there are life and death,
delusion and enlightenment,
Buddhas and creatures.

Nevertheless, flowers fall with our attachment,
and weeds spring up
with our aversion.

To carry the self forward and realize the ten
thousand dharmas is delusion.
That the ten thousand dharmas advance
and realize the self is enlightenment.

It is Buddhas who enlighten delusion. It is creatures who are deluded in enlightenment.

Further, there are those who attain enlightenment above enlightenment, there are those who are deluded within delusion.

When Buddhas are truly Buddhas, one need not be aware of being Buddha.

However, one is the realized Buddha and further advances in realizing Buddha.

Seeing forms with the whole body and mind, hearing sounds with the whole body and mind, one understands them intimately.

Yet it is not like a mirror with reflections nor like water under the moon –

When one side is realized, the other side is dark.

(Officiant or Ino)

To study the Buddha Way is to study the self.

To study the self is to forget the self.

To forget the self is to be enlightened by the ten thousand dharmas.

To be enlightened by the ten thousand dharmas is to free one's body and mind and the body and mind of others.

No trace of enlightenment remains, and this traceless enlightenment continues forever.

(All)

When one first seeks the truth one separates oneself far from its environs.

When one has already correctly transmitted the truth to oneself, one is one's original face at that moment.

When riding on a boat, if one watches the shore one may assume that the shore is moving.

But watching the boat directly, one knows that it is the boat that moves.

If one examines the ten thousand dharmas with a deluded body and mind,

one will suppose that one's mind and nature are permanent.

But if one practices intimately and returns to the true self,

it will be clear that the ten thousand dharmas are without self.

(Officiant or Ino)

*Firewood turns into ash and
does not turn into firewood again.
But do not suppose that the ash is
after and the firewood is before.
We must realize that the firewood is
in the state of being firewood and
has its before and after.
Yet having this before and after
it is independent of them.
Ash is in the state of being ash and
has its before and after.
Just as firewood does not become
firewood again after it is ash,
so after one's death one does not
return to life again.*

(All)

Thus, that life does not come before death is a confirmed teaching of the Buddha-Dharma.

For this reason life is called
the non-born.

That death does not become life is a confirmed teaching of the Buddha-Dharma.

Therefore, death is called the
non-extinguished.

Life is a period of itself.

Death is a period of itself.

For example, they are like winter and spring. We should not think that winter becomes spring, nor should we say that spring becomes summer.

Gaining enlightenment is like the moon reflecting in the water.

The moon does not get wet
nor is the water disturbed.

Although its light is extensive and great, the moon is reflected even in a puddle an inch across.

The whole moon and the whole sky are reflected in a dewdrop in the grass, in one drop of water.

Enlightenment does not disturb the person just as the moon does not disturb the water.

A person does not hinder enlightenment just as a dewdrop does not hinder the moon in the sky.

The depth of the drop is the height of the moon. As for the duration of the reflection -

You should examine the water's vastness or smallness, and you should discern the brightness or dimness of the heavenly moon.

(Officiant or Ino)

*When the truth does not fill our body and
mind, we think that we have enough.
When the truth fills our body and mind,
we realize that something is missing.*

(All)

For example when we view the four directions
from a boat on the ocean where no land
is in sight,

we see only a circle and nothing else.
No other aspects are apparent.

However this ocean is neither round nor square
and its realities are infinite in variety.

It is like a palace, it is like a jewel.

It just seems circular as far as the eye can
reach at the time.

The ten thousand dharmas are like this.

Ordinary life and enlightened life assume many
aspects,

but, we only recognize and understand
through practice what the penetrating
power of our vision can reach.

In order to appreciate the ten thousand
dharmas, we should know that although they
may look round and square,

the other qualities of oceans and
mountains are infinite in variety.

Furthermore, other universes lie in all quarters.
It is so not only with ourselves but also right
here, and in a single drop of water.

When a fish swims in the ocean, there is no
end to the water - no matter how far it swims.
When a bird flies in the sky there is no end
to the air - no matter how far it flies.

Yet no fish or bird has ever left its element
since the beginning.

When the need is great,
the function is great.
When the need is small,
the function is small.

Thus, no creature ever comes short of its own
fullness. Wherever it is, it functions freely.

If a bird leaves the air, it will die at once.
If a fish leaves the sea, it will die at once.

Know then that water is life.
Know that air is life.

Life is the bird and life is the fish.

Beyond this there is still more to see.

It is the same with practice and
enlightenment, mortality and immortality.

Yet if a bird or a fish tries to move beyond
the sky or sea,
this bird or this fish will not find
a path or place.

Attaining this Place, one's daily life
 reveals the truth,
 attaining this Way,
 one's daily life reveals the truth.

This Place and this Way are not large or small,
 not self or other.
 They neither existed before
 nor are arising just now.
 They are just as they are.

Thus if one practices and real-i-zes
 the Buddha Way,
 when one real-i-zes one dharma,
 one penetrates one dharma.
 When one encounters one activity,
 one practices one activity.

Because the Place is right here
 and the Way leads everywhere,
 the limits of what can be known,
 cannot be known.

This knowing and the total penetration
 of the Buddha-Dharma
 arise together and are practiced together.

Attaining this Place, do not think it becomes
 one's own knowledge or idea.
 Even though this penetrating real-i-za-tion
 manifests at once, the most intimate nature
 is not easily understood.

Some may real-ize it and some may not.

(All)

Priest Pao-Ch'e of Ma-Ku Shan was fanning himself. A monk approached and asked, "The nature of wind is eternal, and there is no place it does not reach. Why, then, must you still fan yourself? "

(Officiant or Ino)

Although you understand "the nature of wind is eternal," you do not understand that "there is no place it does not reach."

(All)

"How does it reach everywhere?"

(Officiant or Ino)

The master just fanned himself.

(All)

The monk bowed with deep respect.

(All)

*This is the enlightened experience
of Buddha-Dharma
And the vital way
of its correct transmission.*

Those who say we should not use a fan
because the wind is eternal, and so we
should know the existence of wind without
using a fan,
 know neither the eternal
 nor the nature of wind.

Because the nature of wind is eternally present,
the wind of Buddhism ac-tual-li-zes
the gold of the earth
 and turns our life's long river
 into sweet cream.



Loving-kindness (Metta) Sutta

This is what should be done

By one who is skilled in good-ness

And who knows the path of peace:

Let them be able and up-right,

Straight forward and gentle in speech,

Humble and not conceited,

Contented and easily satisfied,

Unburdened with duties

And frugal in their ways,

Peaceful and calm,

And wise and skillful,

Not proud and demanding in nature.

Let them not do the slightest thing

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That the wise would later reprove.

Wishing: In gladness and in safety,

May all beings be at ease.

Whatever living beings there may be,

Whether they are weak or strong,

O-mit-ting none: The great or the mi-ghty,

Medium, short or small;

The seen and the unseen;

Those living near and far away,

Those born and to-be-born

May all beings be at ease.

Let none de-ceive another,

Or despise any being in any state;

Let none through anger or ill-will

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Wish harm upon another.

Even as a mother protects with her life

Her child, her on-ly child,

So with a bound-less heart

Should one cherish all liv-ing beings;

Radiating kind-ness, over the en-ti-re world,

Spreading upwards to the skies

And downwards to the depths,

Outwards and unbounded,

Freed from hatred and ill-will.

Whether standing or walking,

Seated or lying down,

Free from drow-siness,
▼

One should sus-tain this re-col-[▲]lec-tion.
▼ ▼

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This is said to be the sub-[▲]lime a-bi-ding:
▼ ▼ ▼

By not holding to fixed views,
▼

The pure [▲]hear-ted one,
▼ ▼

Having clarity of vis-[▲]ion,
▼

Being freed from all sense [▲]de-sires,
▼ ▼

Is not [▲]born [▲]a-gain in-to this world.
▼



Song of Zazen

by Hakuin Zenji

From the beginning all beings are Buddhas,
like water and ice; without water, no ice.
Outside us, no Buddhas.
How near the truth, yet how far we seek,
like one in water crying, "I thirst!"

Like the son of a rich man
wandering poor on this earth,
we endlessly circle the six worlds.
The cause of our sorrow is ego delusion.
From dark path to dark path
we've wandered in darkness.
How can we be free from
the wheel of samsara?
The gateway to freedom is zazen samadhi.

Beyond exaltation, beyond all our praises
the pure Mahayana.
Observing the precepts,
repentance and giving,
the countless good deeds
and the way of right living
all come from zazen.

Thus one true samadhi extinguishes evils,
it purifies karma, dissolving obstructions.
Then where are the dark paths to
lead us astray?

The pure lotus land is not far away.
Hearing this truth, heart humble and grateful.
To praise and embrace it, to practice its wisdom
brings unending blessings, brings mountains of
merit.

And if we turn inward and prove our true nature,
that True Self is no-self, our own self is no-self,
we go beyond ego and past clever words. Then
the gate to the oneness
of cause-and-effect is thrown open.

Not two and not three, straight ahead runs the
way. Our form now being no-form, in going and
returning we never leave home.
Our thought now being no-thought, our dancing
and songs are the voice of the dharma.

How vast is the heaven of boundless samadhi!
How bright and transparent the moonlight of
wisdom! What is there outside us? What is
there we lack?

Nirvana is openly shown to our eyes.
This earth where we stand is the pure lotus
land and this very body the body of Buddha.



Vow for Awakening

by Dai E Zenji

Our deepest prayer is to be firm in our determination to give ourselves completely to the Buddha's Way, so that no doubts arise however long the road seems to be; to be light and easy in the four parts of the body; to be strong and undismayed in body and in mind; to be free from illness and drive out both depressed feelings and distractions;

To be free from calamity, misfortune, harmful influences and obstructions; not to seek the Truth outside of ourselves, so we may instantly enter the right way; to be unattached to all thoughts that we may reach the perfectly clear bright mind of Prajna and have immediate enlightenment on the Great Matter.

Thereby we receive the transmission of the deep wisdom of the Buddhas to save all sentient be-ings who suffer in the round of birth and death. In this way we offer our gratitude for the compassion of the Buddhas and ancestors.

Our further prayer is not to be extremely ill
or to be suf-fer-ing at the time of departure,
to know its coming seven days ahead so that
we can quiet the mind to abandon the body
and be unattached to all things at the last
moment

Wherein we return to the Original Mind
in the realm of no birth and no death
and merge infinitely into the whole universe
to manifest as all things in their True Nature
and with the great wisdom of the Buddhas
to awaken all beings to the Buddha Mind.

We offer this to all Buddhas and Bodhisattva-
Mahasattvas of the past, present and future
in the ten quarters and to the
Maha Prajna Paramita.



Bodhisattva Vow

by Torei Zenji

Disciples, when I humbly observe the true nature of things, all are the marvelous manifestation of the Tathagata's truth. Atom by atom, instant by instant, all are none other than his mysterious radiance. Because of this our virtuous ancestors extended loving care and reverence toward even such beings as birds and beasts.

How, then, can we be but humbly grateful for the food, drink, and clothing that nourishes and protects us throughout the day, these being in essence the warm skin and flesh of the great masters, the incarnate compassion of the Buddha?

If it is so even with inanimate objects, how much more should we be kind and merciful towards human beings, even those who are foolish? Though they become our sworn enemies, reviling and persecuting us, we should regard them as bodhisattva manifestations who, in their great compassion, are employing skillful means to help emancipate us from the twisted karma we have produced over countless kalpas through our biased, self-centered views.

If we awaken in ourselves this deep, pure faith,
 offering humble words and taking sincere
 refuge in the Buddha, then with every thought
 there will bloom a lotus flower, each with a
 Buddha.

These Buddhas will establish Pure Lands
 everywhere and reveal the radiance of the
 Tathagata beneath our very feet.

May we extend this mind throughout the
 universe, so that we and all sentient beings
 may equally bring to fruition the seeds of
 wisdom.



Night Chant

Even as the night darkens the green earth,
 The wheel turns ~~~
 Death follows birth.
 Strive through the night with every breath. ~~~
 That you may wake
 Past day, past death!



Shantideva's Way of the Bodhisattva

(Chant with melody notations)

I rejoice in the vir-tue of all beings

▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

Which frees them from suf-fer-ing!

▼ ▲ ▼

To help them at-tain the Way,

▼ ▼ ▼

I offer any vir-tue that I have.

▼ ▼ ▲

Thus, may the pain of eve-ry living crea-ture

▲ ▼ ▲ ▼

be com-plete-ly cleared a-way!

▲ ▼

May I become doc-tor and med-icine;

▲ ▼

May I be the nurse for all sick be-ings

▼ ▲ ▲

in the world un-til every-one is healed.

May a rain of food and drink descend

to clear a-way the pain of thirst and hunger.

And dur-ing the a-ges marked by scar-city

may I change in-to food and drink!

May I be-come an in-ex-haus-ti-ble trea-sure,

for those who are poor and des-ti-tute.

May I turn in-to all things they need, and may

these be placed close be-side them!

Whene-ver[▲] those who en-coun-ter me
 ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

Conceive a sin-gle faith-ful or ang-ry[▲] thought,
 ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

May e-ven that be-come the source[▲]
 ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

for ful-fill-ing[▲] all their goals!
 ▼ ▼

May all who say bad things to me,[▲]
 ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

Or cause me an-y o-ther[▲] harm,
 ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

And those who mock me and in-sult[▲] me
 ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

have the for-tune to awaken ful-ly![▲]
 ▼

May I be a pro-tec-tor of those with-out one,[▲]
 ▼

A guide for all tra-ve-lers on the way.
 ▼ ▼ ▼ ▲ ▼

May I be a bridge a boat and a ship
 ▼ ▼

for all who wish to cross the wa-ter!
 ▲ ▼

May I be an island for those who seek one
 ▼ ▲

and a lamp for those de-si-ring light!
 ▼ ▲ ▼

May I be a bed for all who wish to rest
 ▼ ▲

and a servant to those in need.
 ▼ ▲ ▼

May I be a wishing jewel a magic vase
 ▼ ▼

a great man-tra and potent me-dicine.
 ▼ ▲ ▼

May I be a wish-fulfil-ing tree

and a cow of plen-ty for the world!

Just like the great el-e-ments such as earth,

En-dur-ing as space it-self,

May I al-ways sup-port the life of

boundless un-told be-ings!

And until they pass be-yond pain,

May I also be the source of life

for all the realms of var-ied beings,

That reach unto the ends of space!

Just as the pre-vi-ous Bud-das em-braced

The a-wak-ened state of mind,

And just as they step by step em-bod-ied

the Bo-dhi-satt-va prac-tices,

Likewise for the sake of all li-ving beings

Do I a-dopt the Spi-rit of En-light-enment

And will al-so fol-low the Way

of the Bo-dhi-satt-va.



Teidai Denpo Busso no Myogo

Dharma Lineage Harada Roshi

(past Buddhas)

Bibashi Butsu
Shiki Butsu
Bishafu Butsu
Kurason Butsu
Kunagon Muni Butsu
Kasho Butsu
Shakyamuni Butsu

Bashu Banzu Sonja
Manura Sonja
Kaku Rokuna Sonja
Shishi Sonja
Basha Shita Sonja
Funyo Mitta Sonja
Hannya Tara Sonja

(Indian Ancestors)

Maka Kasho Sonja
Anan Sonja
Shona Washu Sonja
Uba Kikuta Sonja
Dai Taka Sonja
Mishaka Sonja
Bashu Mitsu Sonja
Butta Nandai Sonja
Fukuda Mitta Sonja
Kyo Sonja
Funa Yasha Sonja
Memyo Sonja
Kabimora Sonja
Ryuju Sonja
Kana Daiba Sonja
Ragorata Sonja
Sogya Nandai Sonja
Kayashata Sonja
Kumorata Sonja
Shayata Sonja

(Chinese Ancestors)

Bodai Dharuma Daishi
Niso Eka Daishi
Sanso Kanchi Zenji
Doshin Dai'i Zenji
Gunin Daiman Zenji
Eno Taikan Zenji
Nangaku Ejo Zenji
Baso Do'itsu Zenji
Hyakujo Ekai Zenji
Obaku Kiun Zenji
Rinzai Gigen Zenji
Koke Zonsho Zenji
Nan'in Egyo Zenji
Fuketsu Ensho Zenji
Shuzan Sei Nen Zenji
Fun'yo Zensho Zenji
Sekiso Soen Zenji
Yogi Hoe Zenji
Haku'un Shutan Zenji
Goso Hoen Zenji

Engo Kokugon Zenji
 Kukyu Joryu Zenji
 Oan Donge Zenji
 Mittan Kanketsu Zenji
 Shogen So Gaku Zenji
 Un'an Fugan Zenji
 Kido Chigu Zenji

(Japanese Ancestors)

Nampo Jomyo Zenji
 Shuho Myocho Zenji
 Kanzan Egen Zenji
 Juo Sohitsu Zenji
 Muin Soin Zenji
 Nippo Soshun Zenji
 Giten Gensho Zenji
 Sekko Soshin Zenji
 Toyo Eicho Zenji
 Taiga Tankyo Zenji
 Koho Genkun Zenji
 Sensho Zuisho Zenji
 Ian Chisatsu Zenji
 Tozen Soshin Zenji
 Yozan Keiyo Zenji
 Gudo Toshoku Zenji
 Shido Munan Zenji
 Dokyo Etan Zenji
 Hakuin Ekaku Zenji
 Gasan Jito Zenji
 Inzan Ien Zenji
 Taigen Shigen Zenji

Gisan Zenrai Zenji
 Tekisui Giboku Zenji
 Ryoen Genseki Zenji
 Seisetsu Genjo Zenji
 Taishitsu Mumon Zenji

(Dedication)

Kaka Shokan Fuin Yo Kon
 Ji Ho San Shi I Shi Shi Fu
 Shi Son Bu Sa Mo Ko Sa
 Mo Ko Ho Ja Ho Ro Mi



Shari Raimon

Is-shin cho rai man toku en man sha ka
nyo rai shin jin sha ri hon ji hos-shin hok-
kai to ba ga to rai kyo i ga gen shin nyu
ga ga nyu butsu ga ji ko ga sho bo dai i
butsu jin riki ri yaku shu jo hotsu bo dai
shin shu bo satsu gyo do nyu en jaku byo
do dai chi kon jo cho rai

Verse of Homage to Buddha's Relics

With wholehearted reverence we bow to the
relics of the true body of the Tathagata
Shakyamuni, who is fully endowed with myriad
virtues; to the dharma body, which is the
fundamental ground; and to his stupa, which is
the whole universe.

With deep respect we venerate the one who
manifested a body for our sake. Through the
sustaining power of the Buddha, which enters
us even as we enter it, we verify awakening.

By means of the Buddha's spiritual power, we
benefit living beings, arouse the thought of
awakening, cultivate Bodhisattva practice, and
together enter perfect peace, the knowledge of
the equality of all things.
Now let us reverently bow.



The Five Remembrances

I am of the nature to grow old;
there is no way to escape growing old.

I am of the nature to have ill health;
there is no way to escape having ill health.

I am of the nature to die;
there is no way to escape death.

All that is dear to me and everyone I love
are of the nature of change;
there is no way to escape
being separated from them.

My deeds are my closest companions;
I am the beneficiary of my deeds.
my deeds are the ground
on which I stand.



Song of the Grass Roofed Hermitage

by Shitou Xiqian (Sekito Kisen; 700-790)

I built a grass hut where there's nothing of value. After it was completed, fresh weeds appeared.

Now it is lived in covered by weeds.
After eating, I relax and enjoy a nap.

The person in the hut lives here calmly,
not stuck to inside, outside, or in-between.

Places worldly people live, he does not live.
Realms worldly people love, she does not love. Though the hut is small, it includes the entire world.

In ten feet square, an old man illumines forms
and their nature. Thus this bodhisattva trusts
without doubt.

The middling or lowly can't help wondering;
Will this hut perish or not? Perishable or not,
the original master is present,

Not dwelling south or north, east or west.
Firmly based on steadiness,
it can not be surpassed.

A shining window below the green pines –
jade palaces or vermilion towers
can't compare.

Just sitting with head covered
all things are at rest. Thus, this mountain monk
does not understand at all.

Living here he no longer works to get free.
Who would proudly arrange seats,
trying to entice guests?

Turn the light to shine within, then just return.
The vast inconceivable source can not be
faced or turned away from.

Meet the ancestral teachers,
be intimate with their instructions,
bind grasses to build a hut,
and do not give up.

Let go of hundreds of years and relax
completely. Open your hands and walk,
innocently.

Thousands of words, myriad interpretations,
are only to free you from obstructions.

If you want to know the undying person
in the hut, do not separate from this skin bag
here and now.



Sharing of Blessings

*(Now let us chant the verses
of sharing and aspir-a-tion.)*

Through the goodness that ar-i-ses from
my prac-tice, may my spiri-tual tea-chers
and guides of great vir-tue;
my mother, my fa-ther and my re-latives,
the sun and the moon,
and all vir-tuous lea-ders of the world.
May the highest gods and evil for-ces;
Celes-ti-al beings,
guar-dian spir-its of the earth
and the lord of death;

▲

may those who are frien-dly,

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indifferent or hos-tile;

may all beings receive the blessings of my life.

May they soon attain the three-fold bliss

and realize the death-less.

Through the goodness that ar-i-ses from

my prac-tice, and through this act of shar-ing,

May all de-sires and at-tach-ments quick-ly

cease, and all harmful states of mind.

Until I realize Nib-ban-a, in every kind of birth,

may I have an up-right mind

with mindfulness and wis-dom,

aus-ter-ity and vi-gor.

May the forces of de-lu-sion not take hold

nor weaken my re-solve.

70

The Buddha is my ex-cel-lent re-fuge,

un-sur-passed is the pro-tec-tion of the

Dham-ma, the solitary Bud-dha is my no-ble

guide, the Sangha is my su-preme sup-port.

Through the supreme power of all these,

May darkness and de-lu-sion be dis-pelled.



Reflections on Universal Well-Being

May I abide in well-being

In freedom from affliction

In freedom from hostility

In freedom from ill-will

In freedom from an-xi-ety

And may I main-tain well-being in myself.

May everyone abide in well-being

In freedom from hostility

In freedom from ill-will

In freedom from an-xi-ety

And may they main-tain well-being

in themselves.

May all beings be releas[▲]ed from all suffering

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And may they not be parted from

The good for-tune they have attained.

When they act upon intention

All beings are the owners of their action

And inherit its results.

Their future is born from such action

Companion to such action

And its re-sults will be their home.

All actions, with intention

Be they skill-ful or harm-ful;

Of such acts, they will be the heirs.



Universally Recommended Instructions for Zazen

(Fukanzazengi) by Dogen Zenji

The way is originally perfect and all pervading. How could it be contingent on practice and realization? The true vehicle is self-sufficient. What need is there for special effort? Indeed, the whole body is free from dust. Who could believe in a means to brush it clean? It is never apart from this very place. What is the use of traveling around to find it?

And yet, if there is a hairsbreadth deviation, it is like the gap between heaven and earth. If the least like or dislike arises, the mind is lost in confusion. Suppose you are confident in your understanding and rich in enlightenment, gaining the wisdom that knows at a glance, attaining the way and clarifying the mind, arousing an aspiration to reach for the heavens. You are playing in the entranceway, but you are still short of the vital path of emancipation.

Consider the Buddha: although he was wise at birth, the traces of his six years of upright sitting can yet be seen. As for Bodhidharma, although he had received the mind-seal, his nine years of facing a wall is celebrated still.

If even the ancient sages were like this, how can we today dispense with wholehearted practice?

Therefore, put aside the intellectual practice of investigating words and chasing phrases, and learn to take the backward step that turns the light and shines it inward. Body and mind of themselves will drop away, and your original face will manifest. If you want such a thing, get to work on it immediately.

For practicing Zen, a quiet room is suitable. Eat and drink moderately. Put aside all involvements and suspend all affairs. Do not think “good” or “bad.” Do not judge true or false. Give up the operations of mind, intellect, and consciousness; stop measuring with thoughts, ideas, and views. Have no designs on becoming a Buddha. How could that be limited to sitting or lying down?

At your sitting place, spread out a thick square mat and a round cushion. Sit either in the full-lotus or half-lotus position. In the full-lotus position, place your right foot on your left thigh, then your left foot on your right thigh. In the half-lotus, simply place your left foot on your right thigh. Tie your robes loosely and arrange them neatly.

Place your right hand on your left leg and your left hand on your right palm, thumb-tips touching lightly. Straighten your body and sit upright, leaning neither left nor right, neither forward nor backward. Align your ears with your shoulders and your nose with your navel. Rest the tip of your tongue against the front of the palate, with teeth and lips closed. Keep your eyes open and breathe softly through your nose.

Once you have adjusted your posture, take a breath and exhale fully, rock your body right and left, and settle into steady, immovable sitting. Think of not thinking. Not thinking – what kind of thinking is that? Non-thinking. This is the essential art of zazen.

The zazen I speak of is not meditation practice. It is simply the dharma gate of joyful ease, the practice-realization of totally culminated enlightenment. It is the koan realized; traps and snares can never reach it. If you grasp the point, you are like a dragon gaining the water, like a tiger taking to the mountains. For you must know that the true dharma appears of itself, so that from the start dullness and distraction are struck aside.

When you arise from sitting, move slowly and quietly, calmly and deliberately. Do not rise suddenly or abruptly.

In surveying the past, we find that transcending the mundane and the sacred, and dying while either sitting or standing, have depended entirely on the power of zazen.

In addition, triggering awakening with a finger, a banner, a needle, or a mallet, and effecting realization with a whisk, a fist, a staff, or a shout – these cannot be understood by discriminative thought, much less can they be known through supernatural power. They must represent conduct beyond seeing and hearing. Are they not a standard prior to knowledge and views?

This being so, intelligence or lack of it is not an issue; make no distinction between the dull and the sharp-witted. If you concentrate your effort single-mindedly, that in itself is whole-heartedly engaging the Way. Practice- realization is naturally undefiled. Going forward is, after all, an everyday affair.

In our world and others, in both India and China, all equally hold the Buddha-seal. While each lineage expresses its own style, they are all simply devoted to sitting, totally cast in resolute stability. Although there are ten thousand distinctions and a thousand variations, they just wholeheartedly engage the Way in zazen.

Why leave behind the seat in your own home to wander in vain through the dusty realms of other lands? If you make one misstep, you stumble past what is directly in front of you.

You have gained the pivotal opportunity of human form. Do not pass your days and nights in vain. You are taking care of the essential activity of the Buddha Way.

Who would take wasteful delight in the spark from a flint stone? Form and substance are like dew on the grass, the fortunes of life are like a dart of lightning – emptied in an instant, vanished in a flash.

Please, honored followers of Zen, long accustomed to groping for the elephant, do not doubt the true dragon. Devote your energies to the way that points directly to the real thing. Revere the one who has gone beyond learning and is free from effort. Accord with the enlightenment of all the Buddhas; succeed to the samadhi of all the ancestors.

Continue to live in such a way, and you will be such a person. The treasure store will open of itself, and you may enjoy it freely.



Verse of the Diamond Sutra

A star at dawn,

A bub-ble in a stream,
▼

▲
A flash of light-ning in a sum-mer cloud,
▼

A flick-ering lamp,
▼

A phan-tom and a dream,
▼

So is this fleeting world.
▼



Liberation from All Obstructions

(In Appreciation of Shodo Harada, Roshi)

In the presence of Sangha, in the light of
Dharma, in oneness with Buddha –
may my path to complete enlightenment
benefit everyone!

In this passing moment karma ripens and
all things come to be.

I vow to affirm what is:

If there's cost, I choose to pay.
If there's need, I choose to give.
If there's pain, I choose to feel.
If there's sorrow, I choose to grieve.
When burning, I choose heat.
When calm, I choose peace.
When starving, I choose hunger.
When happy, I choose joy.
Whom I encounter, I choose to meet.
What I shoulder, I choose to bear.
When it's my birth, I choose to live.
When it's my death, I choose to die.
Where this takes me, I choose to go.
Being with what is, I respond to what is.

This life is as real as a dream;
the one who knows it can not be found;
and truth is not a thing, therefore I vow
to choose THIS Dharma entrance gate!
May all Buddhas and Wise Ones
help me live this vow.

Guidepost for the Hall of Pure Bliss

by Hongzhi Zhengjue (Wanshi Shogaku; 1091 – 1157)

By seeking appearances and sounds
one cannot truly find the Way.

The deep source of realization
comes with constancy,
bliss, self, and purity.

Its purity is constant,
its bliss is myself.

The two are mutually dependent,
like firewood and fire.

The self's bliss is not exhausted,
constant purity has no end.

Deep existence is beyond forms.
Wisdom illuminates
the inside of the circle.

Inside the circle the self vanishes,
neither existent nor non-existent.

Intimately conveying spiritual energy,
it subtly turns the mysterious pivot.

When the mysterious pivot
finds opportunity to turn,
the original light auspiciously appears.

When the mind's conditioning
has not yet sprouted,
how can words and images be distinguished?

Who is it that can distinguish them?
Clearly understand and know by yourself.

Whole and inclusive with inherent insight,
it is not concerned with discriminative thought.

When discriminating thought is not involved,
it is like white reed flowers shining in the snow.

One beam of light's gleam
permeates the vastness.

The gleam permeates through all directions,
from the beginning not covered or concealed.

Catching the opportunity to emerge,
amid transformations it flourishes.

Following appropriately amid transformations,
the pure bliss is unchanged.

The sky encompasses it, the ocean seals it,
every moment without deficiency,

In the achievement without deficiency,
inside and outside are interfused.

All dharmas transcend their limits,
all gates are wide open.

Through the open gates
are the byways of playful wandering.

Dropping off senses and sense objects
is like the flowers of our gazing
and listening falling away.

Gazing and listening
are only distant conditions
of thousands of hands and eyes.

The others die from being too busy,
but I maintain continuity.

In the wonder of continuity
are no traces of subtle identifications.

Within purity is bliss,
within silence is illumination.

The house of silent illumination
is the hall of pure bliss.

Dwelling in peace and forgetting hardship,
let go of adornments and become genuine.

The motto for becoming genuine:
nothing is gained by speaking.

The goodness of Vimalakirti
enters the gate of non-duality.



Dalai Lama's Vow

From: The Way of the Bodhisattva

For as long as space endures
And for as long as living beings remain
So then may I too abide
To dispel the misery of the world.

Chant for the Hungry Spirits

Calling all you hungry hearts
Everywhere through endless time
You who wander, you who thirst
I offer you this bodhi mind.

Calling all you hungry spirits
All the lost and the left behind
Calling all you hungry hearts
Everywhere through endless time
Gather round and share this meal
Your joy and your sorrow, I make it mine.



Guidepost for Silent Illumination

by Hongzhi Zhengjue (Wanshi Shogaku; 1091 – 1157)

Silent and serene, forgetting words,
bright clarity appears before you.

When you reflect it you become vast,
where you embody it
you are spiritually uplifted.

Solitary and shining, inner illumination
restores wonder.

Dew in the moonlight, a river of stars,
snow-covered pines,
clouds enveloping the peak.

In darkness it is most bright,
while hidden all the more manifest.

The crane dreams in the wintery mists.
The autumn waters flow far in the distance.

Endless kalpas are totally empty,
all things completely the same.

When wonder exists in serenity,
all achievement is forgotten
in illumination.

What is this wonder?
Alertly seeing through confusion
is the way of silent illumination
and the origin of subtle radiance.

Vision penetrating into subtle radiance
is weaving gold on a jade loom.

Upright and inclined yield to each other;
light and dark are interdependent.

Not depending on sense faculty and object,
at the right time they interact.

Drink the medicine of good views.
Beat the poisoned-smeared drum.

When they interact,
killing and giving life are up to you.

Through the gate the self emerges
and the branches bear fruit.

Only silence is the supreme speech,
only illumination the universal response.

Responding without falling into achievement,
speaking without involving listeners,
the ten thousand forms majestically glisten
and expound the dharma.

All objects certify it,
each one in dialogue.

Conversing and certifying,
they respond appropriately to each other;
but if illumination neglects serenity
then aggressiveness appears.

Certifying and conversing they respond
to each other appropriately;
but if serenity neglects illumination,
murkiness leads to wasted dharma.

When silent illumination is fulfilled,
the lotus blossoms,
the dreamer awakens.

A hundred streams flow into the ocean,
a thousand ranges face the highest peak.

Like geese preferring milk,
like bees gathering nectar,
when silent illumination reaches the ultimate,
I offer my teaching.

The teaching of silent illumination penetrates
from the highest down to the foundation.

The body being empty,
the arms are in activity,

From the beginning to end
the changing appearances and
ten thousand differences share one pattern.

But even a gift of precious jade has its flaws.

Facing changes has its principles,
the great function is without striving.

The ruler stays in the kingdom,
the general goes beyond the frontiers.

Our school's affair hits the mark
straight and true.

Transmit it in all directions
without desiring to gain recognition.



Work and Dedication

▲
Now Let Us Chant the Verses of

▲
Work and Ded-i-ca-tion:
▼ ▼ ▼

▲
Let us strive to puri-fy our minds;
▼

▲
Let us strive to actualize our prac-tice;
▼ ▼ ▼

Let us strive to benefit the earth;
▼

▲
Let us strive to liberate all be-ings.
▼ ▼ ▼

▲
To all Buddhas past, present and fu-ture;
▼

▲
To all beings in the six realms;
▼

▲
To all those dedicated to the truth;

▲
We offer the merits of our la-bor.
▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼



Jizo Dharani (Sanskrit)

Om ha ha ha vis ma e sva ha



Suffusion With The Divine Abidings

(Solo:) Now let us make the Four Boundless Qualities shine forth.

(All:) I will abide pervading one quarter

with a mind imbued with loving kindness;

Likewise the second,

likewise the third,

Likewise the fourth;

So above and below, around and everywhere;

And to all as to myself.

I will abide pervading the all-encompassing

World with a mind imbued with loving kindness

Abundant, exalted, immeasurable,

Without hostility and without ill will.

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I will abide pervading one quarter with a

mind imbued with compassion;

Likewise the second,

likewise the third,

Likewise the fourth;

So above and below, around and everywhere;

And to all as to myself.

I will abide pervading the all-encompassing

world with a mind imbued with compassion;

Abundant, exalted, immeasurable,

Without hostility and without ill will.

I will abide pervading one quarter with a

mind imbued with gladness;

Likewise the second,

likewise the third,

Likewise the fourth;

So above and below, around and everywhere;

And to all as to myself.

I will abide pervading the all-encompassing

world with a mind imbued with gladness;

Abundant, exalted, immeasurable,

without hostility and without ill will.

I will abide pervading one quarter with a

mind imbued with equanimity;

Likewise the second,

likewise the third,

Likewise the fourth;

So above and below, around and everywhere;

And to all as to myself.

I will abide pervading the all-encompassing

world with a mind imbued with equanimity;

Abundant, exalted, immeasurable,

without hostility and without ill will.



The Highest Blessings (Mangala Sutta)

Thus have I heard that the Blessed One -

was staying at Savatthi,

residing at the Jeta's Grove -

in Ana-tha-pindika's park.

Then in the dark of the night, a radiant deva,

illuminated all Jeta's Grove.

She bowed down low before the Blessed One,

then standing to one side she said:

"Devas are concerned for happiness,

and ever long for peace.

The same is true for humankind.

What then are the highest blessings?"

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"Avoiding those of foolish ways,
associating with the wise,
and hon-or-ing those worthy of honor.

These are the highest blessings."

"Living in places of suitable kinds,
with the fruits of past good deeds,
and guided by the rightful way.

These are the highest blessings."

"Accomplished in learning -

and crafts-man skills,

with discipline, highly trained, and

speech that is true and pleasant to hear.

▲ ▲

These are the highest blessings."

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"Providing for mother and father's support,

and cherishing family,

ways of work that harm no being.

These are the highest blessings."

"Giving with Dhamma in the heart,

offering help to relatives and kin,

acting in ways that leave no blame.

These are the highest blessings."

"Steadfast in restraint, and shunning evil ways,

avoiding intoxicants that dull the mind,

heedfulness in all that a-ri-ses.

These are the highest blessings."

"Respectfulness and humble ways,
 ▼
 ▲
 contentment and gratitude,
 ▼
 ▲ ▲ ▲
 and hearing the Dhamma frequently taught.
 ▲ ▲
These are the highest blessings."
 ▼

▲
 "Patience and willingness -
 to accept one's faults,
 ▼
 ▲ ▲
 seeing venerated seekers of the truth,
 ▼
 ▲
 and sharing words of the Dhamma.
 ▼
 ▲ ▲
These are the highest blessings."
 ▼

"The Holy Life lived with ardent effort,
 ▼ ▼
 ▲ ▲
 seeing for oneself the Noble Truths,
 ▼
 the real-i-zation of Nibbana.
 ▼
 ▲ ▲

These are the highest blessings."



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"Although involved in worldly ways,



unshaken the mind remains,



beyond all sorrow, spotless, secure.



These are the highest blessings."



"They who live by following this path,



know victory wherever they go,



and every place for them is safe.



These are the highest blessings."



Gyaku On Jin Shu

Namu fudo ya
Namu damo ya
Namu sun gya ya
Namu jiho shi bu
Namu shi bu sa
Mokosa
Namu shi shin sun
Namu shu shi
Sara gya
Sara gya
Sara gya
Muto nan ki
Agya ni ki
Nigya shi ki
Agya na ki
Hara ni ki
Abi ra ki
Ha dai ri ki
Shik ko shik ko
Maku toku ku ju



Soto Women's Ancestral Lineage

Prajna paramita Dai Osho

Maha Maya Dai Osho

Sri mala Dai Osho

Tara Dai Osho

Ratna vati Dai Osho

Pra bhuta Dai Osho

Sinha vi-jurm bhita Dai Osho

(Indian Ancestors)

Great Teacher Maha paja pati Gotami

Great Teacher Khema

Great Teacher Sunder nanda

Great Teacher Patacara

Great Teacher Bhadda

Great Teacher Kundalakesa

Great Teacher Sumana

Great Teacher Kisagotami

Great Teacher Dhamma

Great Teacher Uppalavanna

Great Teacher Yashodhara

Great Teacher Soma

Great Teacher Sakula
Great Teacher Bhadda
Great Teacher Kapilani
Great Teacher Singalaka mata
Great Teacher Samavati
Great Teacher Sanghamitta Theri
Great Teacher Prasannasilla

(Chinese Ancestors)

Great Teacher Jing jian
Great Teacher Zong ji
Great Teacher Empress Wu
Great Teacher Ling zhao
Great Teacher Ling Xing po
Great Teacher Mo shan Liao ran
Great Teacher Liu Tie mo
Great Teacher Miao xin
Great Teacher Shi ji
Great Teacher Ju han Dao jen
Great Teacher Dao shen
Great Teacher Hui guang
Great Teacher Hui wen
Great Teacher Fa deng

Great Teacher Yu Dao po
Great Teacher Miao dao
Great Teacher Zhi dong
Great Teacher Miao zong
Great Teacher Lady Qin guo
Great Teacher Miao hui
Great Teacher Zhi yuan Xing gang
Great Teacher Ji zong Xing che
Great Teacher Ji fu Zu kui
Great Teacher Shen yi

(Japanese Ancestors)

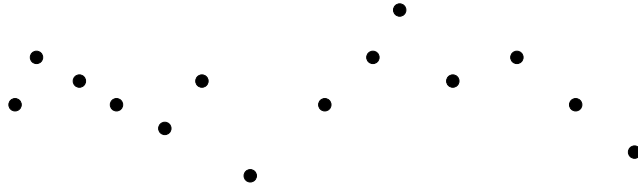
Great Teacher Zen shin
Great Teacher Kō myō
Great Teacher Ryō nen
Great Teacher Sho gaku
Great Teacher Egi
Great Teacher Mugai Nyo dai
Great Teacher Kaku zan Shido
Great Teacher E kan Dai shi
Great Teacher Kon tō Ekyu
Great Teacher Moku fu So nin
Great Teacher So itsu

Great Teacher E shun
Great Teacher Yō dō
Great Teacher Ko getsu
Great Teacher So shin
Great Teacher Ten shu
Great Teacher Dai tsu Bun chi
Great Teacher Ryo nen Gensō
Great Teacher Tachi bana Someko
Great Teacher Toku gon Riho
Great Teacher Satsu
Great Teacher Ohashi
Great Teacher Tei jitsu
Great Teacher Ota gaki Ren getsu
Great Teacher Ten myō Jo rin
Great Teacher Ho ri Mitsu jo
Great Teacher Naga sawa So zen
Great Teacher Sato mi Myo do
Great Teacher Ken dō Koji ma
Great Teacher Yo shida E shun
Great Teacher Ka sai Jo shin
Great Teacher Ku do Sumi ko

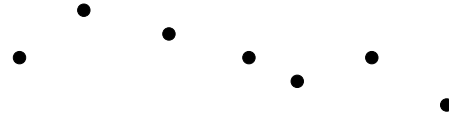


Moonlight of Wisdom

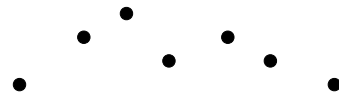
All ~~~~ Beings, All~~~~~ Buddhas,



Standing deep inside the truth,



Yet however far we seek.



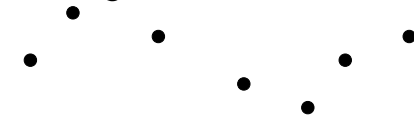
Wandering in darkness,

Still the wheel keeps turning.

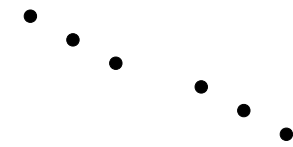
Endlessly circling,

Circling delusion.

- Turning from samsaric dreams,



Za~~zen Samadhi.



Humble with a grateful heart,
Whispers of the lotus land,

Seeking inward vanishes,
Empty self the ever being,

Resting in a single mind,
Never turning.

- Darkness falling through the stillness,
Zazen Samadhi.

- Songs of heaven vast and boundless,
Moonlight; Samadhi.

Traveling through formlessness,
Never leaving home.

- This land is the Lotus Land,
And this body Buddha.



Formal Meal Verses

Before Meals

Buddha was born in Kapilavastu,
Enlightened in Magadha,
Taught in Varanasi,
Entered nirvana in Kushinagara.
Now we set out Buddha's bowls.
May we, with all beings realize the emptiness
of the three wheels - giver, receiver, and gift.

Leader: (before serving)

In the midst of the Three Treasures which
verify our understanding, entrusting ourselves
to the Sangha, we invoke:

(begin serving)

Vairochana Buddha pure Dharmakaya,
Locana Buddha complete Sambhogakaya,
Shakyamuni Buddha myriad Nirmanakaya,
Maitreya Buddha of future birth, All Buddhas
throughout space and time, Lotus of the
Wondrous Dharma Mahayana Sutra,
Manjushri Bodhisattva of great wisdom,
Samantabhadra Bodhisattva of great activity,
Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva
of great compassion,
Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva of great vows,
All honored ones, Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas,
Wisdom beyond wisdom,
Maha Prajna Paramita.

Leader: (at breakfast after serving)

This morning meal of ten benefits nourishes us in our practice. Its rewards are boundless, filling us with ease and joy

Leader: (at lunch after serving)

The three virtues and six tastes of this meal are offered to Buddha and Sangha. May all sentient beings in the universe be equally nourished.

(before eating)

We reflect on the effort that brought us this food and consider how it comes to us.

We reflect on our virtue and practice, and whether we are worthy of this offering.

We regard it as essential to keep the mind free from excesses such as greed.

We regard this food as good medicine to sustain our life. For the sake of enlightenment we now receive this food.

Oh spirits, we now give you an offering:
This food is for all of you in the Ten Directions.

First, this is for the Three Treasures
Next, for the four benefactors;
Finally, for the beings in the six realms
may all be equally nourished.

The first bite is to end all evil.
The second is to cultivate all good.
The third is to free all beings,

May we all realize the Buddha Way.

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Bowl Cleaning

We use this water to wash our bowls,
it tastes like heavenly nectar.
We offer it to the many spirits to satisfy them.
Om, Maha-ku-sha-laya Svaha!

Leader: (after meal)

Abiding in this ephemeral world
like a lotus in muddy water,
the mind is pure and goes beyond.
In gratitude we bow to Buddha.



Notes on Gassho and Bowing

by Taizan Maezumi Roshi (revised)

Many people ask about gassho (hands palm to palm) and bows (or prostrations). They ask, "why do we do them and what do they mean?" and "how do you do them correctly?" These questions deserve careful consideration.

It should be noted that the gassho and the bow are common to all sects of Buddhism. When Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment occurred, he went to see five of his former comrades with whom he had practiced various austerities and spiritual disciplines prior to his enlightenment. These five men, who were very devout monks, had felt that their companion went astray when he abandoned their customary practices. "Come," they said to each other, "Let's not pay any attention to poor Gautama, he no longer is one of us." But when the Buddha approached them, they were so struck by his serenity and the radiance of his personality, that they spontaneously placed their palms together and greeted him with full bows. Perhaps it is a little misleading to say that they greeted him. More accurately, it should be said that they were bowing not to their old friend Gautama, but rather to the Buddha - the Enlightened One.

What the Buddha has experienced was the Supreme Great Enlightenment (in Sanskrit, *Anuttara-Samyak-Sambodhi*), the direct and conscious realization of the oneness of the whole universe, and of his own unity with all things. This is what enlightenment means. The very realization is actually in itself the act of being the Buddha. And it was to this enlightened state that the five monks bowed.

When the Buddha was enlightened, the first thing he said was: "Wonder of wonders! All sentient beings have this same (enlightened) nature!" What this implies is that in bowing to the Buddha, the monks were actually bowing to themselves, and to all beings. These monks were recognizing the great unity which their former companion had directly and profoundly experienced.

The word **gassho** literally means "to place the two palms together." Of all the mudras (symbolic hand-gestures or positions) we use, it is perhaps the most fundamental, for it arises directly from the depths of enlightenment. Most commonly it is employed to express respect, to prevent scattering of the mind, to unify all polarities (such as left and right, passive and dominant, etc.) and to express the One Mind - the total unity of Being.

How to make a Gassho:

It is made by placing the hands together, palm to palm, in front of the face. The fingers are straight, placed together, while the palms are slightly pressed together so that they meet. The elbows are held somewhat out from the body, the upper arms are not quite parallel with the floor. There is about one fist's distance between the tip of the nose and the hands. Fingertips are at about the same height from the floor as the top of the nose. The eyes should be focused upon the tips of the middle fingers. This gassho has the effect of helping to establish an alert and reverential state of mind. No matter when it is used the fundamental point of the gassho is to be one with the Three Treasures: Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

Of course, we can look at the Three Treasures from many perspectives, and with varying degrees of depth

and clarity.

At perhaps the most superficial level, the Three Treasures are seen as external objects of supreme reverence for all Buddhists. Unfortunately, in this view, the Three Treasures tend to be perceived as something other than oneself. But as our vision opens up, we experience that each of us is, in fact, the Buddha. We see clearly that everything we encounter in the world is none other than the Dharma - the functioning of underlying enlightenment. And, realizing the oneness of all beings, we come to realize that the Sangha - the all-embracing community of practice is simply all composite things, including each of us. Having this awareness we become or rather, we are -one with the Three Treasures.

So, joining our hands palm to palm, we simultaneously create and express the absolute, the oneness which goes beyond all dichotomies. It is from this perspective that we make the gassho, and that we bow.

How to Bow:

Dogen Zenji once said: "As long as there is true bowing, the Buddha Way will not deteriorate." In bowing, we totally pay respect to the all-pervading virtue of wisdom, which is the Buddha.

When we bow, it is always accompanied by gassho, although the gassho itself may not always be accompanied by bowing. There are two main kinds of bows which we use in our daily practice.

1. The Standing Bow. This bow is used upon entering the zendo, and in greeting one another and our teachers. The body is erect, with the weight distributed evenly and the feet parallel to each other. The hands are held in gassho. To bow, the body bends at the waist, so that the torso forms an angle with the legs of -

approximately 45 degrees. The hands (in gassho) do not move relative to the face, but remain in position and move only with the whole body.

2. The Deep or Full Bow. This bow is most often used at the beginning and end of services, and upon entering and leaving sanzen (or interviews with the teacher). It is somewhat more formal than the standing bow, and requires continuous concentration during its execution so that it is not sloppily done.

The full bow begins like the standing bow, but once the body is bent from the waist, the knees also bend and one assumes a kneeling position. From the kneeling position, the movement of the torso continues with the hands separating and moving, palms upward, into a position parallel with the forehead. As the bowing movement progresses, the backs of the hands and the forehead come to rest on the floor. At this point, the body is touching the floor at knees, elbows, hands, and forehead. The hands are then slowly raised, palms upward and parallel to the floor, to a point just above the ears.

The hands then slowly return to the floor. This action is a symbolic placing of the Buddha's feet above one's head as an act of reverence and humility. Once the hands have been raised and lowered, rise to stand again with the hands still in gassho. In bowing, movement should not be jerky or disjointed, but should flow smoothly and continuously without either disruption or arrested motion.

Zen Master Ōbaku bowed so frequently for so long that he had a large callus on his forehead at the point where it touched the hard floor. He was also famous for frequently admonishing his students, "Don't expect anything from the Three Treasures."

Time after time he was heard to say this. One day when Master Ōbaku was bowing he was challenged by a student about this practice: "You always tell your students not to expect anything from the Three Treasures and yet you constantly make deep bows. What do you expect to gain from this?" Master Ōbaku replied, "I don't expect anything. I just bow." This is the state of being one with the Three Treasures.

