



Thousand Harbours Zen

CHANTS, VERSES, & READINGS

*All buddhas throughout space and time,
all honored ones, bodhisattvas, mahasattvas,
wisdom beyond wisdom, maha-prajnaparamita.*

Table of Contents

3

CEREMONY 1

Heart of Great Perfect Wisdom Sutra, Harmony of Difference and Equality, Daihi Shin Darani, Bodhisattva Vows

10

CEREMONY 2

Universal Gateway, Chant of Boundless Compassion, Bodhisattva Vows

15

CEREMONY 3

Maka Hannya Haramitta Shingyo, Precious Mirror Samadhi, Metta Sutta, Bodhisattva Vows

22

CEREMONY 4

Repentance Verse, Refuge, Buddha Ancestors, Bodhisattva Vows

26

EVENING CEREMONY

Three Refuges

27

Universally Recommended Instructions for Zazen

30

OTHER VERSES

Robe Verse, Sutra-Opening Verse, Bodhisattva Vows, Invocation, Verse of Five Contemplations

Heart of Great Perfect Wisdom Sutra

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.
There is neither ignorance nor extinction of ignorance...
neither old age and 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 paragate parasamgate bodhi svaha.

Harmony of Difference and Equality

The mind of the great sage of India
Is intimately transmitted from west to east.

While human faculties are sharp or dull,
The way has no northern or southern ancestors.

The spiritual source shines clear in the light;
the branching streams flow on in the dark.

Grasping at things is surely delusion;
according with sameness is still not enlightenment.

All the objects of the senses
transpose and do not transpose.

Transposing, they are linked together;
not transposing, each keeps its place.

Sights vary in quality and form;
sounds differ as pleasing or harsh.

Darkness merges refined and common words;
brightness distinguishes clear and murky phrases.

The four elements return to their natures,
just as a child turns to its mother.

Fire heats, wind moves,
water wets, earth is solid.

Eye and sights, ear and sounds,

nose and smells, tongue and tastes;

thus for each and every thing,
according to the roots, the leaves spread forth.

Trunk and branches share the essence;
revered and common, each has its speech.

In the light there is darkness,
but don't take it as darkness.

In the dark there is light,
but don't take it as light.

Light and dark oppose one another
like the front and back foot in walking.

Each of the myriad things has its merit,
expressed according to function and place.

Existing phenomenally like box and cover joining,
according with principle like arrow points meeting.

Hearing the words, understand the meaning;
don't establish standards of your own.

Not understanding the way before your eyes,
how do you know the path you walk?

Walking forward is not a matter of far or near,
but if you are confused, mountains and rivers block your way.

We respectfully urge you who study the mystery,
don't pass your days and nights in vain.

Daihi Shin Darani (rhythmic)

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
YU KI YU 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
HOYA MONO
SOMO KO

SHIDO YA
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.

(DEDICATION OF MERIT)

Bodhisattva Vows

Beings are countless; I vow to free them all.
Delusions are inexhaustible; I vow to put an end to them.
Dharma gates are infinite; I vow to enter them.
The awakened way is unsurpassable; I vow to embody it.

UNIVERSAL GATEWAY

Bodhisattva Akshayamati
asked a question in verse:

"Oh World-honored One, of wondrous form,
I inquire again of that buddha-child:
what are the causes of her name,
'Regarding the Cries of the World'?"

The Honored One, of wondrous form,
replied in verse to Akshayamati:
"Listen to the activities of Avalokiteshvara,
who aptly responds in every quarter.

With vast pledge as deep as oceans,
throughout kalpas beyond reckoning,
Avalokiteshvara served many thousands of millions of buddhas,
bringing forth this great pure vow.

For you I explain it briefly:
hearing the name or seeing the form of
compassion with mindful remembrance is not in vain,
for the woes of existence can thus be relieved.

Even if someone with harmful intent
should push you into a fiery pit,
by mindfully invoking the power of compassion
the pit of fire will turn into a pool.

If floating on a vast sea,
menaced by dragons, fish, or demons,
by mindfully invoking the power of compassion,
the billowing waves cannot drown you.

If, from Mount Sumeru's lofty peak,

someone were to throw you down,
by mindfully invoking the power of compassion,
like the sun you would stand firm in the sky.

If pursued by wicked men
down from Diamond Mountain,
by mindfully invoking the power of compassion,
they could not harm a single hair.

If surrounded by vicious bandits,
each with a sword drawn to strike,
by mindfully invoking the power of compassion,
at once their hearts will turn to compassion.

If, persecuted by rulers,
you face torture and execution,
by mindfully invoking the power of compassion,
their weapons will thereby shatter to pieces.

If imprisoned in shackles and chains,
hands and feet bound in restraints,
by mindfully invoking the power of compassion,
suddenly you shall be released.

If by curses or poisonous herbs
someone wishes to hurt your body,
by mindfully invoking the power of compassion,
the harmful intent will return to its source.

If you meet evil creatures,
poison dragons, or various demons,
by mindfully invoking the power of compassion,
none will dare to harm you.

If surrounded by raging beasts
with sharp fangs and dreadful claws,
by mindfully invoking the power of compassion,
they will quickly scatter in all directions.

If venomous snakes or scorpions
threaten with deadly breath of fire,
by mindfully invoking the power of compassion,
at the sound of your voice they will turn and depart.

If clouds, thunder, and lightning strike,
hailstones fall, and it rains in torrents,
by mindfully invoking the power of compassion,
instantly they will dissipate.

When living beings suffer hardships,
burdened by immeasurable woes,
mindfully invoking the power of compassion
can relieve the suffering of the world.

Fully endowed with miraculous powers,
widely practicing wisdom and skillful means,
in every land in all directions,
in no realm does compassion not appear.

In all the various evil destinies
of hell beings, hungry ghosts, and animals,
the sufferings of birth, old age, sickness, and death
are gradually relieved by compassion.

Oh you of the true gaze, of the pure gaze,
of the gaze of broad and great wisdom,
of the compassionate gaze and the gaze of good will,
ever longed for, ever revered.

Unblemished, serene radiance,
benevolent sun, dispelling all gloom—
compassion can subdue the wind and fire of woes,
clearly illuminating all the world.

The precepts of compassion roar like thunder;
the kind heart is wondrous as great clouds,

pouring dharma rain of sweet dew,
quenching all flames of troubling passion.

In disputes before judges,
or fearful in the midst of battle,
by mindfully invoking the power of compassion,
all hostilities will be dispersed.

The wondrous voice of compassion,
Brahma-voice, voice of the rolling tides,
surpasses all sounds within the world;
therefore, ever keep it in mind.

In each thought, with never a doubt,
the embodiment of compassion, the pure sage,
in pain, agony, or death's distress,
can provide a sure support.

Fully endowed with all virtues,
eyes of compassion behold all beings,
assembling a boundless ocean of happiness;
thus, with reverence, you should make prostrations."

Then Bodhisattva Dharanim-dharo arose from their seat,
went before the Buddha, and said:

"Oh World-honored One, if there are living beings who hear this
chapter of the embodiment of compassion, the benefits will not be
slight for those people who come to know its deeds, its manifestation
of a universal gateway, and its supernatural powers."

When the Buddha had preached this "Universal Gateway" chapter,
the eighty-four thousand beings in the assembly all aroused the
thought of unsurpassed, complete, perfect enlightenment.

Chant of Boundless Compassion (3x)

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!

(DEDICATION OF MERIT)

Bodhisattva Vows

Beings are countless; I vow to free them all.
Delusions are inexhaustible; I vow to put an end to them.
Dharma gates are infinite; I vow to enter them.
The awakened way is unsurpassable; I vow to embody it.

CEREMONY #3

Maka Hannya Haramitta Shingyō (rhythmic)

KAN JI ZAI
BO SATSU 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 SHOKU 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 KEI GE
MU KEI 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
SAN MYAKU SAN BO DAI
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
HARA SO GYA TEI
BO JI SOWA KA
HAN-NYA SHIN GYO.

Precious Mirror Samadhi

The dharma of thusness 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 a 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.

Although it is not constructed,
it is not beyond words.

Like 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;
“Baba wawa”—is anything said or not?

In the end it says nothing,
for the words are not yet right.

In the hexagram “double fire,”
when main and subsidiary lines are transposed,

piled up they become three;
the permutations make five.

Like the taste of the five-flavored herb,
like the five-pronged vajra.

Wondrously embraced within the complete,
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 dimension.

A hairsbreadth deviation,
and you are out of tune.

Now there are sudden and gradual,
in which teachings and approaches rise.

With teachings and approaches distinguished,
each has its standard.

Whether teachings and approaches are 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.

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 kalpas.

Like a battle-scarred tiger,
like a horse with shanks gone grey.

Because some are vulgar,
jeweled tables and ornate robes.

Because others are wide-eyed,

cats and white oxen.

With his archer's skill,
Yi hit the mark at a hundred paces.

But when arrows meet head-on,
how could it be a matter of skill?

The wooden man starts to sing,
the 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 continue in this way
is called the host within the host.

Metta Sutta

This is what should be accomplished by the one who is wise, who seeks the good and has obtained peace:

Let one be strenuous, upright and sincere, without pride,
easily contented and joyous;
Let one not be submerged by the things of the world;
Let one not take upon oneself the burden of riches;
Let one's senses be controlled;
Let one be wise but not puffed up;
Let one not desire great possessions even for one's family;
Let one do nothing that is mean or that the wise would reprove.

May all beings be happy.
May they be joyous and live in safety.

All living beings,
whether weak or strong,
in high or middle or low realms of existence,
small or great,
visible or invisible,
near or far,
born or to be born,
may all beings be happy.

Let no one deceive another, nor despise any being in any state;
Let none by anger or hatred wish harm to another.

Even as a mother at the risk of her life
watches over and protects her only child,
so with a boundless mind should one cherish all living things,
suffusing love over the entire world,
above, below, and all around without limit;
so let one cultivate an infinite good will toward the whole world.

Standing or walking,
sitting or lying down,
during all one's waking hours let one cherish the thought
that this way of living is the best in the world.

Abandoning vain discussion,
having a clear vision,
freed from sense appetites,
one who is made perfect
will never again know rebirth
in the cycle of creation of suffering
for ourselves or for others.

(DEDICATION OF MERIT)

Bodhisattva Vows

Beings are countless; I vow to free them all.
Delusions are inexhaustible; I vow to put an end to them.
Dharma gates are infinite; I vow to enter them.
The awakened way is unsurpassable; I vow to embody it.

Repentance Verse

All my past and harmful karma,
born from beginningless greed, hate, and delusion,
through body, speech, and mind,
I now fully avow.

Refuge

I take refuge in Buddha.
I take refuge in Dharma.
I take refuge in Sangha.

I take refuge in Buddha—
May all beings
embody the great way,
resolving to awaken.

I take refuge in Dharma—
May all beings
deeply enter the teachings,
wisdom like an ocean.

I take refuge in Sangha—
May all beings
support harmony in the community,
free from hindrance.

I have completely taken refuge in Buddha.
I have completely taken refuge in Dharma.
I have completely taken refuge in Sangha.

Buddha Ancestors

Actualizing Buddha ancestors means to uphold and see them in veneration. It is not limited to buddhas of the past, present, and future, but it is going beyond buddhas who are going beyond themselves. It is taking up those who have maintained the face and eye of buddha ancestors, formally bowing and encountering them. They have manifested the power of the buddha ancestors, dwelt in it, and actualized it in the body.

BIBASHI BUTSU DAIOSHŌ
SHIKI BUTSU DAIOSHŌ
BISHAFU BUTSU DAIOSHŌ
KURUSON BUTSU DAIOSHŌ
KUNAGONMUNI BUTSU DAIOSHŌ
KASHŌ BUTSU DAIOSHŌ
SHAKAMUNI BUTSU DAIOSHŌ
MAKAKASHŌ DAIOSHŌ
ANANDA DAIOSHŌ
SHŌNAWASHU DAIOSHŌ
UBAKIKUTA DAIOSHŌ
DAITAKA DAIOSHŌ
MISHAKA DAIOSHŌ
BASHUMITSU DAIOSHŌ
BUTSUDANANDAI DAIOSHŌ
FUDAMITTA DAIOSHŌ
BARISHIBA DAIOSHŌ
FUNAYASHA DAIOSHŌ
ANABOTEI DAIOSHŌ
KABIMORA DAIOSHŌ
NAGYAHARAJUNA DAIOSHŌ
KANADAIBA DAIOSHŌ
RAGORATA DAIOSHŌ
SŌGYANANDAI DAIOSHŌ
KAYASHATA DAIOSHŌ
KUMORATA DAIOSHŌ
SHAYATA DAIOSHŌ
BASHUBANZU DAIOSHŌ
MANURA DAIOSHŌ
KAKUROKUNA DAIOSHŌ
SHISHIBODAI DAIOSHŌ

BASHASHITA DAIOSHŌ
FUNYOMITTA DAIOSHŌ
HANNYATARA DAIOSHŌ
BOD AidARUMA DAIOSHŌ
TAISO EKA DAIOSHŌ
KANCHI SŌSAN DAIOSHŌ
DAI DŌSHIN DAIOSHŌ
DAIMAN KŌNIN DAIOSHŌ
DAIKAN ENŌ DAIOSHŌ
SEIGEN GYŌSHI DAIOSHŌ
SEKITŌ KISEN DAIOSHŌ
YAKUSAN IGEN DAIOSHŌ
UNGAN DONJŌ DAIOSHŌ
TŌZAN RYŌKAI DAIOSHŌ
UNGO DŌYŌ DAIOSHŌ
DŌAN DŌHI DAIOSHŌ
DŌAN KANSHI DAIOSHŌ
RYŌZAN ENKAN DAIOSHŌ
TAIYŌ KYŌGEN DAIOSHŌ
TŌSHI GISEI DAIOSHŌ
FUYŌ DŌKAI DAIOSHŌ
TANKA SHIJUN DAIOSHŌ
CHŌRO SEIRYŌ DAIOSHŌ
TENDŌ SŌKAKU DAIOSHŌ
SETCHŌ CHIKAN DAIOSHŌ
TENDŌ NYOJŌ DAIOSHŌ
EIHEI DŌGEN DAIOSHŌ
KOUN EJŌ DAIOSHŌ
TETTSŪ GIKAI DAIOSHŌ
KEIZAN JŌKIN DAIOSHŌ

...With a formal bow, I completed receiving these buddha ancestors.
This can only occur between a buddha and a buddha.

(DEDICATION OF MERIT)

All buddhas throughout space and time,
all honored ones, bodhisattvas, mahasattvas,
wisdom beyond wisdom, maha-prajnaparamita.

Bodhisattva Vows

Beings are numberless; I vow to free them all.
Delusions are inexhaustible; I vow to put an end to them.
Reality is boundless; I vow to perceive it.
The buddha way is unsurpassable; I vow to embody it.

EVENING CEREMONY

Three Refuges

Officiant (1x)

Buddham saranam gacchami
Dhammam saranam gacchami
Sangham saranam gacchami

All (8x)

Buddham saranam gacchami
Dhammam saranam gacchami
Sangham saranam gacchami

Universally Recommended Instructions for Zazen

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 practice? 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 still are 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 such a thing 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 mat and put a cushion on it. Sit either in the full-lotus or half-lotus position. In the full-lotus

position, first 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. Then place your right hand on your left leg and your left hand on your right palm, thumb-tips lightly touching. 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 roof of your mouth, with teeth and lips together both shut. Always 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 transcendence of both mundane and sacred, and dying while either sitting or standing, have all 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 thinking, much less can they be known through the practice of supernatural power. They must represent conduct beyond seeing and hearing. Are they not a standard prior to knowledge and views?

This being the case, 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 wholeheartedly engaging

the way. Practice-realization is naturally undefiled. Going forward is, after all, an everyday affair.

In general, 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 blocked in resolute stability. Although they say that 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? Besides, form and substance are like the dew on the grass, the fortunes of life 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.

Robe verse

How great the robe of liberation,
a formless field of merit.
Wrapping ourselves in Buddha's teaching,
we free all living beings.

Sutra-opening Verse

The unsurpassed, profound, and wondrous dharma
is rarely met with,
even in a hundred thousand million kalpas.
Now we can see and hear it, accept and maintain it;
may we unfold the meaning of the Tathagatha's truth.

Bodhisattva Vows

Beings are countless; I vow to free them all.
Delusions are inexhaustible; I vow to put an end to them.
Dharma gates are infinite; I vow to enter them.
The awakened way is unsurpassable; I vow to embody it.

Invocation

All buddhas throughout space and time,
all honored ones, bodhisattvas, mahasattvas,
wisdom beyond wisdom, maha-prajnaparamita.

Verse of Five Contemplations

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 greed as the obstacle to freedom of mind.
We regard this meal as medicine to sustain our life.
For the sake of realization, we now receive this food.