

CASTLEMAINE ZEN

Sutra Book



Castlemaine Zen Sutras First Edition (June 2022)

Castlemaine Zen Sutras is based on the Zen Open Circle sutra book, derived from Diamond Sangha sutras.

English translations are originally those of Robert Aitken in collaboration with his teacher, Yamada Koun, unless otherwise stated.

The translation of *Taking Part in the Gathering* is by John Tarrant and Joan Sutherland.
Relying on Mind is an edited version of the translation by Nelson Foster and Jack Shoemaker.
The translation of *Genjokoan* is by Robert Aitken and Kazuaki Tanahashi.
Shantideva's Vow and *The Five Remembrances of the Buddha* have been adopted from the Great Vow Monastery Chants and Sutras.
Liberation Within Obstruction is drawn on a winding path from words attributed to Shodo Harada Roshi, modified from the form recorded in the Great Vow Monastery Chants and Sutras.

Texts in *italics* are non-recited translations or instructions.

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The sutras are sacred words.

Please handle your sutra book with respect and care, to prolong its life.

Note ~ Sutra books are held in a formal way during sutra recitation:

Holding the book up open at eye-level, the middle three fingers of each hand support the back of the book on each side, while thumb and little finger press gently back to hold the open pages steady and in place.

This way of holding the book is a form of *gassho*, which brings you into accord with the ritual intention to offer your undivided attention to the words of the Dharma.

Please ask, if you feel unsure about how to hold your Sutra book correctly.

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All images by Hakuin Ekaku (1686 – 1769)

Front cover: “Snail”

Sutras: “Hand”

Jukai: “Midst”

Back cover: “Mu”

Sutras

*I wear the robe of liberation,
The formless field of benefaction,
The teachings of the Tathagata,
Saving the many beings.*

- Verse of the Rakusu

PURIFICATION

(3 times)

All the harm and suffering ever created by me, since of old;
On account of my beginningless greed, hatred, and ignorance;
Born of my conduct, speech and thought;
I now confess openly and fully.

VANDANA

Namo 'Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammasambuddhassa

I venerate the Sacred One, the Great Sage, the Truly Enlightened One.

TI-SARANA

Buddham saranam gacchami

Dhammam saranam gacchami

Sangham saranam gacchami

*I take refuge in the Buddha;
I take refuge in the Dharma;
I take refuge in the Sangha.*

MAKA HANNYA HARAMITA SHIN GYO

(Heart Sutra in Sino-Japanese)

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 I
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
SHIM-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 SAM-MYAKU SAM-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 TO 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

THE GREAT PRAJÑA PARAMITA HEART SUTRA

Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva, practicing deep Prajña Paramita,
clearly saw that all five skandhas are empty,
transforming anguish and distress.
Shariputra, form is no other than emptiness,
emptiness no other than form;
form is exactly emptiness, emptiness exactly form;
sensation, perception, formulation, consciousness are also like this.
Shariputra, all things are essentially empty – not born, not destroyed;
not stained, not pure; without loss, without gain.
Therefore in emptiness there is no form, no sensation,
perception, formulation, consciousness;
no eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind,
no colour, sound, scent, taste, touch, thought;
no seeing and so on to no thinking;
no ignorance and also no ending of ignorance,
and so on to no old age and death,
and also no ending of old age and death;
no anguish, cause of anguish, cessation, path;
no wisdom and no attainment.
Since there is nothing to attain,
the Bodhisattva lives by Prajña Paramita,
with no hindrance in the mind;
no hindrance and therefore no fear;
far beyond delusive thinking, right here is Nirvana.
All Buddhas of past, present, and future live by Prajña Paramita,
Attaining Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi.
Therefore know that Prajña Paramita is the great sacred mantra,
the great vivid mantra, the unsurpassed mantra, the supreme mantra,
which completely removes all anguish.
This is truth, not mere formality.
Therefore set forth the Prajña Paramita mantra,
set forth this mantra and proclaim:
Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate
Bodhi Svaha!

SHO SAI MYO KICHIJO DHARANI

(3 times)

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 SHUSHI RI SHUSHI RI

SOHA JA SOHA JA SENCHI GYA SHIRI EI SOMO KO

The Dharani of Good Fortune that Averts Calamities

NO MO SAN MAN DA MOTO NAN

Veneration to all Buddhas!

OHA RA CHI KOTO SHA SONO NAN

The incomparable Buddha-power that banishes suffering.

TO JI TO EN GYA GYA GYA KI GYA KI UN NUN

Om! The Buddha of reality, wisdom, Nirvana!

SHIFU RA SHIFU RA HARA SHIFU RA HARA SHIFU RA

Light! Light! Great light! Great light!

CHISHU SA CHISHU SA SHUSHI RI SHUSHI RI

With no categories, this mysterious power

SOHA JA SOHA JA SENCHI GYA SHIRI EI SOMO KO

Saves all beings; suffering goes, happiness comes, Svaha!

FIRST SUTRA SERVICE DEDICATION

INO Buddha nature pervades the whole universe, existing right here now.
With our reciting of

The Great Prajña Paramita Heart Sutra
[or] *Maka Hannya Haramita Shin Gyo*

and the *Sbo Sai Myo Kichijo Dharani*
[or] Liberation Within Obstruction

let us unite with:

ALL The Ancient Seven Buddhas, Dai Busso,
Shakyamuni Buddha, Dai Busso,
Mahapajapati, Dai Busso
Patacara, Dai Busso
Bodhidharma, Dai Busso,
Dongshan Liangjie, Dai Busso,
Dogen Kigen, Dai Busso,
Keizan Jokin, Dai Busso,
Dai'un Sogaku, Dai Busso,
Haku'un Ryoko, Dai Busso,
Ko'un Zenshin, Dai Busso;
Robert Aitken, Dai Busso;

INO all the untold women, generations of enlightened women, Dai Busso;
all founding teachers, past, present, future, Dai Busso;
let true Dharma continue, Sangha relations become complete.

ALL All Buddhas throughout space and time;
all Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas;
the great Prajña Paramita

THE BUDDHA'S WORDS ON LOVING-KINDNESS

This is what should be done
By one who is skilled in goodness,
And who knows the path of peace:

Let them be able and upright,
Straightforward 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 or demanding in nature.

Let them not do the slightest thing
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, omitting none,
The great or the mighty, 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 deceive another,
Or despise any being in any state.
Let none through anger or ill-will
Wish harm upon another.
Even as a mother protects with her life
Her child, her only child,

So with a boundless heart
Should one cherish all living beings;
Radiating kindness over the entire 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 drowsiness,
One should sustain this recollection.

This is said to be the sublime abiding.
This is said to be the sublime abiding.

TOREI ZENJI: BODHISATTVA'S VOW

Torei Zenji (1721-1792)

INO

I am only a simple disciple, but I offer these respectful words:

ALL

When I regard the true nature of the many dharmas,
I find them all to be sacred forms of the Tathagata's never-failing essence.
Each particle of matter, each moment,
is no other than the Tathagata's inexpressible radiance.

With this realization, our virtuous ancestors,
with compassionate minds and hearts,
gave tender care to beasts and birds.
Among us, in our own daily lives,
who is not reverently grateful for the protections of life:
food, drink and clothing!
Though they are inanimate things,
they are nonetheless the warm flesh and blood,
the merciful incarnations of Buddha.

All the more, we can be especially sympathetic
and affectionate with foolish people,
particularly with someone who becomes a sworn enemy
and persecutes us with abusive language.
That very abuse conveys the Buddha's boundless loving-kindness.
It is a compassionate device to liberate us entirely
from the mean-spirited delusions we have built up
with our wrongful conduct from the beginningless past.
With our open response to such abuse
we completely relinquish ourselves,
and the most profound and pure faith arises.

At the peak of each thought a lotus flower opens,
and on each flower there is revealed a Buddha.
Everywhere is the Pure Land in its beauty.
We see fully the Tathagata's radiant light right where we are.

May we retain this Mind
and extend it throughout the world
so that we and all beings
become mature in Buddha's wisdom.

ENMEI JIKKU KANNON GYO

(7 times)

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

Ten Verse Kannon Sutra of Timeless Life (Robert Aitken and Yamada Koun Version)

KAN ZE ON

Kanzeon!

NA MU BUTSU

I venerate the Buddha;

YO BUTSU U IN

with the Buddha I have my source,

YO BUTSU U EN

with the Buddha I have affinity –

BUP-PO SO EN

affinity with Buddha, Dharma, Sangha,

JO RAKU GA JO

constancy, ease, assurance, purity.

CHO NEN KAN ZE ON

Mornings my thought is Kanzeon,

BO NEN KAN ZE ON

evenings my thought is Kanzeon,

NEN NEN JU SHIN KI

thought after thought arises in mind,

NEN NEN FU RI SHIN

thought after thought is not separate from Mind.

Chant of Boundless Compassion (Great Vow Monastery Version)

KAN ZE ON

Absorbing the sounds of the world

NA MU BUTSU

Awakens a Buddha right here!

YO BUTSU U IN

This Buddha the source of compassion!

YO BUTSU U EN

This Buddha receives only compassion!

BUP-PO SO EN

Buddha, Dharma, Sangha – just compassion.

JO RAKU GA JO

Thus the pure heart always rejoices!

CHO NEN KAN ZE ON

In the light recall this!

BO NEN KAN ZE ON

In the dark recall this!

NEN NEN JU SHIN KI

Moment after moment the true heart arises.

NEN NEN FU RI SHIN

Time after time there is nothing but THIS!

SECOND SUTRA SERVICE DEDICATION

INO The Buddha and her/his teachers and his/her many sons and daughters
turn the Dharma wheel to show the wisdom of the stones and clouds;
we dedicate the virtues of reciting:

The Buddha's Words on Loving-Kindness
[or] *Torei Zenji's Bodhisattva's Vow*
[or] *Shantideva's Way of the Bodhisattva*
and the *Enmei Jikku Kannon Gyo* to:

ALL Mitta Soen, Dai Busso
Tan Shin Gyo'un, Dai Busso

INO and to our relatives and companions of the past
who rest in deepest Samadhi.

We especially dedicate our sutras and our zazen to you –
[personal dedication here]

ALL All Buddhas throughout space and time;
all Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas;
the great Prajña Paramita

GREAT VOWS FOR ALL

(3 times)

The many beings are numberless, I vow to save them;
Greed, hatred, and ignorance rise endlessly, I vow to abandon them;
Dharma gates are countless, I vow to wake to them;
The buddha way is unsurpassed, I vow to embody it fully.

HAKUIN ZENJI: SONG OF ZAZEN

Hakuin Ekaku (1685-1768)

All beings by nature are Buddha,
as ice by nature is water;
apart from water there is no ice,
apart from beings, no Buddha.
How sad that people ignore the near
and search for truth afar,
like someone in the midst of water
crying out in thirst,
like a child of a wealthy home
wandering among the poor.
Lost on dark paths of ignorance
we wander through the six worlds,
from dark path to dark path we wander,
when shall we be freed from birth and death?
For this the zazen of the Mahayana
deserves the highest praise:
offerings, precepts, paramitas,
nembutsu, atonement, practice –
the many other virtues –
all rise within zazen.
Those who try zazen even once
wipe away immeasurable crimes –
where are all the dark paths then?
The Pure Land itself is near.
Those who hear this truth even once
and listen with a grateful heart,
treasuring it, revering it,
gain blessings without end.
Much more, if you turn yourself about,
and confirm your own self-nature –
self-nature that is no nature –
you are far beyond mere argument.
The oneness of cause and effect is clear,
not two, not three, the path is straight;
with form that is no form,
going and coming – never astray,
with thought that is no thought
singing and dancing are the voice of the Law.
How boundless and free is the sky of Samadhi,
How bright the full moon of wisdom,
Truly is anything missing now?
Nirvana is right here, before our eyes,
this very place is the Lotus Land,
this very body the Buddha.

SESSHIN EVENING SERVICE DEDICATION

INO The sky of Samadhi and the moonlight of wisdom
form the temple of our practice;
our friends and family members
guide us as we walk the ancient path.
We dedicate the virtues of reciting:

Hakuin Zenji's *Song of Zazen*

[or] Shitou Xiqian's *Taking Part in the Gathering* to:

ALL Linji Yixuan, Dai Busso,
Hakuin Ekaku, Dai Busso,

INO and to the guardians of the Dharma and the protectors of our sacred hall.

ALL All Buddhas throughout space and time;
all Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas;
the great Prajña Paramita

GREAT VOWS FOR ALL

(3 times)

The many beings are numberless, I vow to save them;
Greed, hatred, and ignorance rise endlessly, I vow to abandon them;
Dharma gates are countless, I vow to wake to them;
The buddha way is unsurpassed, I vow to embody it fully.

SESSHIN-ENDING DEDICATION

INO In the purity and clarity of the Dharmakaya,
in the fullness and perfection of the Sambhogakaya,
in the infinite variety of the Nirmanakaya,
we dedicate our sesshin and our reciting of:

The Great Prajñā Paramita Heart Sutra
[or] *Maka Hannya Haramita Shin Gyo* to:

ALL The Ancient Seven Buddhas, Dai Busso,
Shakyamuni Buddha, Dai Busso,
all founding teachers, past, present, future, Dai Busso;

INO and for the enlightenment of bushes and grasses
and the many beings of the world.

ALL All Buddhas throughout space and time;
all Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas;
the great Prajñā Paramita

GREAT VOWS FOR ALL

(3 times)

The many beings are numberless, I vow to save them;
Greed, hatred, and ignorance rise endlessly, I vow to abandon them;
Dharma gates are countless, I vow to wake to them;
The buddha way is unsurpassed, I vow to embody it fully.

TEISHO

ON OPENING THE DHARMA

(3 times)

The Dharma, incomparably profound and minutely subtle,
Is rarely encountered, even in hundreds of thousands of millions of kalpas;
We now can see it, listen to it, accept and hold it:
May we completely realize the Tathagata's true meaning.

SHIGU SEIGAN MON

Great Vows for All in Sino-Japanese

(3 times)

SHU JO MU HEN SEI GAN DO

BONNO MU JIN SEI GAN DAN

HO MON MU RYO SEI GAN GAKU

BUTSU DO MU JO SEI GAN JO

Great Vows for All

*The many beings are numberless, I vow to save them;
Greed, hatred, and ignorance rise endlessly, I vow to abandon them;
Dharma gates are countless, I vow to wake to them;
The buddha way is unsurpassed, I vow to embody it fully.*

SHODOKA

Song of the True Way

Zhengdao ge by Yongjia Xuanjue (665 – 713)

PART I

There is the leisurely one,
Walking the Tao, beyond philosophy,
Not avoiding fantasy, not seeking truth.
The real nature of ignorance is the Buddha-nature itself;
The empty delusory body is the very body of the Dharma.

When the Dharma body awakens completely,
There is nothing at all.
The source of our self-nature
Is the Buddha of innocent truth.
Mental and physical reactions come and go
Like clouds in the empty sky;
Greed, hatred, and ignorance appear and disappear
Like bubbles on the surface of the sea.

When we realize actuality,
There is no distinction between mind and thing
And the path to hell instantly vanishes.
If this is a lie to fool the world,
My tongue may be cut out forever.

Once we awaken to the Tathagata-Zen,
The six noble deeds and the ten thousand good actions
Are already complete within us.
In our dream we see the six levels of illusion clearly;
After we awaken the whole universe is empty.

No bad fortune, no good fortune, no loss, no gain;
Never seek such things in eternal serenity.
For years the dusty mirror has gone uncleaned,
Now let us polish it completely, once and for all.

Who has no-thought? Who is not-born?
If we are truly not-born,
We are not un-born either.
Ask a robot if this is not so.
How can we realize ourselves
By virtuous deeds or by seeking the Buddha?

Release your hold on earth, water, fire, wind;
Drink and eat as you wish in eternal serenity.
All things are transient and completely empty;
This is the great enlightenment of the Tathagata.

Transience, emptiness, and enlightenment –
These are the ultimate truths of Buddhism;
Keeping and teaching them is true Sangha devotion.
If you don't agree, please ask me about it.
Cut out directly the root of it all –
This is the very point of the Buddha-seal.
I can't respond to any concern about leaves and branches.

People do not recognize the Mani-jewel.
Living intimately within the Tathagata-garbha,
It operates our sight, hearing, smell, taste, sensation, awareness;
And all of these are empty, yet not empty.

The rays shining from this perfect Mani-jewel
Have the form of no form at all.
Clarify the five eyes and develop the five powers;
This is not intellectual work – just realize, just know.
It is not difficult to see images in a mirror,
But who can take hold of the moon in the water?

Always working alone, always walking alone,
The enlightened one walks the free way of Nirvana
With melody that is old and clear in spirit
And naturally elegant in style,
But with body that is tough and bony,
Passing unnoticed in the world.

We know that Shakya's sons and daughters
Are poor in body, but not in the Tao.
In their poverty, they always wear ragged clothing,
But they have the jewel of no price treasured within.

This jewel of no price can never be used up
Though they spend it freely to help people they meet.
Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya, Nirmanakaya,
And the four kinds of wisdom
Are all contained within.
The eight kinds of emancipation and the six universal powers
Are all impressed on the ground of their mind.

The best student goes directly to the ultimate,
The others are very learned but their faith is uncertain.
Remove the dirty garments from your own mind;
Why should you show off your outward striving?

Some may slander, some may abuse;
They try to set fire to the heavens with a torch
And end by merely tiring themselves out.
I hear their scandal as though it were ambrosial truth;
Immediately everything melts

And I enter the place beyond thought and words.
When I consider the virtue of abusive words,
I find the scandal-monger is my good teacher.
If we do not become angry at gossip,
We have no need for powerful endurance and compassion.

To be mature in Zen is to be mature in expression,
And full-moon brilliance of dhyana and prajña
Does not stagnate in emptiness.
Not only can I take hold of complete enlightenment by myself,
But all Buddha-bodies, like sands of the Ganges,
Can become awakened in exactly the same way.

The incomparable lion-roar of the doctrine
Shatters the brains of the one hundred kinds of animals.
Even the king of elephants will run away, forgetting his pride;
Only the heavenly dragon listens calmly, with pure delight.

I wandered over rivers and seas, crossing mountains and streams,
Visiting teachers, asking about the Way in personal interviews;
Since I recognized the Sixth Founding Teacher at Ts'ao Ch'i,
I know what is beyond the relativity of birth and death.

Walking is Zen, sitting is Zen;
Speaking or silent, active or quiet, the essence is at peace.
Even facing the sword of death, our mind is unmoved;
Even drinking poison, our mind is quiet.

Our teacher, Shakyamuni, met Dipankara Buddha
And for many eons he trained as Kshanti, the ascetic.
Many births, many deaths;
I am serene in this cycle – there is no end to it.

Since I abruptly realized the unborn,
I have had no reason for joy or sorrow
At any honour or disgrace.

I have entered the deep mountains to silence and beauty;
In a profound valley beneath high cliffs,
I sit under the old pine trees.
Zazen in my rustic cottage
Is peaceful, lonely, and truly comfortable.

When you truly awaken,
You have no formal merit.
In the multiplicity of the relative world,
You cannot find such freedom.
Self-centered merit brings the joy of heaven itself,
But it is like shooting an arrow at the sky;
When the force is exhausted, it falls to the earth,

And then everything goes wrong.

Why should this be better
Than the true way of the absolute,
Directly penetrating the ground of Tathagata?

Just take hold of the source
And never mind the branches.
It is like a treasure-moon
Enclosed in a beautiful emerald.
Now I understand this Mani-jewel
And my gain is the gain of everyone endlessly.

The moon shines on the river,
The wind blows through the pines –
Whose providence is this long beautiful evening?
The Buddha-nature jewel of morality
Is impressed on the ground of my mind,
And my robe is the dew, the fog, the cloud, and the mist.

A bowl once calmed dragons
And a staff separated fighting tigers;
The rings on this staff jingle musically.
The form of these expressions is not to be taken lightly;
The treasure-staff of the Tathagata
Has left traces for us to follow.

The awakened one does not seek truth –
Does not cut off delusion.
Truth and delusion are both vacant and without form,
But this no-form is neither empty nor not empty;
It is the truly real form of the Tathagata.

The mind-mirror is clear, so there are no obstacles.
Its brilliance illuminates the universe
To the depths and in every grain of sand.
Multitudinous things of the cosmos
Are all reflected in the mind,
And this full clarity is beyond inner and outer.

To live in nothingness is to ignore cause and effect;
This chaos leads only to disaster.
The one who clings to vacancy, rejecting the world of things,
Escapes from drowning but leaps into fire.

Holding truth and rejecting delusion –
These are but skillful lies.
Students who do zazen by such lies
Love thievery in their own children.

They miss the Dharma-treasure;
They lose accumulated power;
And this disaster follows directly upon dualistic thinking.
So Zen is the complete realization of mind,
The complete cutting off of delusion,
The power of wise vision penetrating directly to the unborn.

PART 2

Students of vigorous will hold the sword of wisdom;
The prajña edge is a diamond flame.
It not only cuts off useless knowledge,
But also exterminates delusions.

They roar with Dharma-thunder;
They strike the Dharma-drum;
They spread clouds of love, and pour ambrosial rain.
Their giant footsteps nourish limitless beings;
Sravaka, Pratyeka, Bodhisattva – all are enlightened;
Five kinds of human nature all are emancipated.

High in the Himalayas, only fei-ni grass grows.
Here cows produce pure and delicious milk,
And this food I continually enjoy.
One complete nature passes to all natures;
One universal Dharma encloses all Dharmas.

One moon is reflected in many waters;
All the water-moons are from the one moon.
The Dharma-body of all Buddhas has entered my own nature,
And my nature becomes one with the Tathagata.

One level completely contains all levels;
It is not matter, mind, nor activity.
In an instant eighty thousand teachings are fulfilled;
In a twinkling the evil of eons is destroyed.

All categories are no category;
What relation have these to my insight?
Beyond praise, beyond blame –
Like space itself it has no bounds.
Right here it is eternally full and serene,
If you search elsewhere, you cannot see it.
You cannot grasp it, you cannot reject it;
In the midst of not gaining,
In that condition you gain it.

It speaks in silence,
In speech you hear its silence.
The great way has opened and there are no obstacles.
If someone asks, what is your sect
And how do you understand it?
I reply, the power of tremendous prajña.

People say it is positive;
People say it is negative;
But they do not know.
A smooth road, a rough road –
Even heaven cannot imagine.
I have continued my zazen for many eons;
I do not say this to confuse you.

I raise the Dharma-banner and set forth our teaching;
It is the clear doctrine of the Buddha
Which I found with my teacher, Hui Neng,
Mahakashyapa became the Buddha-successor,
Received the lamp and passed it on.
Twenty-eight generations of teachers in India,
Then over seas and rivers to our land
Bodhi Dharma came as our own first founder,
And his robe, as we all know, passed through six teachers here,
And how many generations to come may gain the path,
No one knows.

The truth is not set forth;
The false is basically vacant.
Put both existence and non-existence aside,
Then even non-vacancy is vacant,
The twenty kinds of vacancy have no basis,
And the oneness of the Tathagata-being
Is naturally sameness.

Mind is the base, phenomena are dust;
Yet both are like a flaw in the mirror.
When the flaw is brushed aside,
The light begins to shine.
When both mind and phenomena are forgotten,
Then we become naturally genuine.

Ah, the degenerate materialistic world!
People are unhappy; they find self-control difficult.
In the centuries since Shakyamuni, false views are deep,
Demons are strong, the Dharma is weak, disturbances are many.

People hear the Buddha's doctrine of immediacy,
And if they accept it, the demons will be crushed
As easily as a roofing tile.

But they cannot accept, what a pity!
Your mind is the source of action;
Your body is the agent of calamity;
No pity nor blame to anyone else.
If you don't seek an invitation to hell,
Never slander the Tathagata's true teaching.

In the sandalwood forest, there is no other tree.
Only the lion lives in such deep luxuriant woods,
Wandering freely in a state of peace.
Other animals and birds stay far away.

Just baby lions follow the parent,
And three-year-olds already roar loudly.
How can the jackal pursue the king of the Dharma
Even with a hundred thousand demonic arts?

The Buddha's doctrine of directness
Is not a matter for human emotion.
If you doubt this or feel uncertain,
Then you must discuss it with me.
This is not the free reign of a mountain monk's ego.
I fear your training may lead to wrong views
Of permanent soul or complete extinction.

Being is not being; non-being is not non-being;
Miss this rule by a hair, and you are off by a thousand miles.
Understanding it, the dragon-child abruptly attains Buddhahood;
Misunderstanding it, the greatest scholar falls into hell.

From my youth I piled studies upon studies,
In sutras and sastras I searched and researched,
Classifying terms and forms, oblivious to fatigue.
I entered the sea to count the sands in vain
And then the Tathagata scolded me kindly
As I read "What profit in counting your neighbour's treasure?"
My work had been scattered and entirely useless,
For years I was dust blown by the wind.

If the seed-nature is wrong, misunderstandings arise,
And the Buddha's doctrine of immediacy cannot be attained.
Sravaka and Pratyeka students may study earnestly
But they lack aspiration.
Others may be very clever,
But they lack prajña.

Stupid ones, childish ones,
They suppose there is something in an empty fist.
They mistake the pointing finger for the moon.
They are idle dreamers lost in form and sensation.

Not supposing something is the Tathagata.
This is truly called Kwan-Yin, the Bodhisattva who sees freely.
When awakened we find karmic hindrances fundamentally empty.
But when not awakened, we must repay all our debts.

The hungry are served a king's repast,
And they cannot eat.
The sick meet the king of doctors;
Why don't they recover?
The practice of Zen in this greedy world –
This is the power of wise vision.
The lotus lives in the midst of the fire;
It is never destroyed.

Pradhanashura broke the gravest precepts;
But he went on to realize the unborn.
The Buddhahood he attained in that moment
Lives with us now in our time.

The incomparable lion roar of the doctrine!
How sad that people are stubbornly ignorant;
Just knowing that crime blocks enlightenment,
Not seeing the secret of the Tathagata teaching.

Two monks were guilty of murder and carnality.
Their leader, Upali, had the light of a glow-worm;
He just added to their guilt.
Vimalakirti cleared their doubts at once
As sunshine melts the frost and snow.

The remarkable power of emancipation
Works wonders innumerable as the sands of the Ganges.
To this we offer clothing, food, bedding, medicine.
Ten thousand pieces of gold are not sufficient;
Though you break your body
And your bones become powder –
This is not enough for repayment.
One vivid word surpasses millions of years of practice.

The King of the Dharma deserves our highest respect.
Tathagatas, innumerable as sands of the Ganges,
All prove this fact by their attainment.
Now I know what the Mani-jewel is:
Those who believe this will gain it accordingly.

When we see truly, there is nothing at all.
There is no person; there is no Buddha.
Innumerable things of the universe
Are just bubbles on the sea.
Wise sages are all like flashes of lightning.

However the burning iron ring revolves around my head,
With bright completeness of dhyana and prajña
I never lose my equanimity.
If the sun becomes cold, and the moon hot,
Evil cannot shatter the truth.
The carriage of the elephant moves like a mountain,
How can the mantis block the road?

The great elephant does not loiter on the rabbit's path,
Great enlightenment is not concerned with details.
Don't belittle the sky by looking through a pipe.
If you still don't understand,
I will settle it for you.