1 Hymn to the Perfection of Wisdom

Homage to the Perfection of Wisdom, the Lovely, the Holy!
The Perfection of Wisdom gives light.
Unstained, the entire world cannot stain her.
She is a source of light,
And from everyone in the Triple World,
She removes darkness.
Most excellent are her works.
She brings light so that all
Fear and distress may be forsaken,
and disperses the gloom and darkness of delusion.
She, herself, is an organ of vision;
She has a clear knowledge of the own-being of all dharmas,
For she does not stray away from it.
The Perfection of Wisdom of the Buddhas, the Lords,
Sets in motion the Wheel of Dharma.

2 Heart of Great Perfect Wisdom Sutra

Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva, when deeply practicing Prajñā Pāramitā, clearly saw that all five aggregates are empty and thus relieved all suffering. “Śāriputra, form does not differ from emptiness, emptiness does not differ from form. Form itself is emptiness, emptiness itself, form. Sensation, perception, formation and consciousness are also like this. Śāriputra, 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 eye, no ear, 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 Prajñā Pāramitā, and thus the mind is without hindrance. Without hindrance, there is no fear. Far beyond all inverted views, one realizes Nirvāṇa. All Buddhas of past, present,
Maka Hannya Haramitta Shin Gyō (Japanese Heart Sutra)

ka ni zai bo satsu gyo jin han nya ha ra mi tta 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 ze sshin 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 to kko bo dai sa tta
e ha nnya ha ra mi tta ko shin mu kei ge
mu kei ge ko mu u ku fu on ri i ssai ten do mu so
ku gyo ne han san ze sho butsu
e ha nnya ha ra mi tta ko
toku a noku ta ra san myaku san bo dai
ko chi ha nnya ha ra mi tta
ze dai jin shu ze dai myo shu
ze mu jo shu ze mu to do shu
no jo i ssai ku shin jitsu fu ko
ko setsu ha nnya ha ra mi tta shu
soku setsu shu watsu
gya tei gya tei ha ra gya tei
hara so gya tei bo ji sowa ka
ha nnya shin gyo
4 Shō Sai Myō Kichijō Dhāraṇī (Disaster Preventing Mantra)

no mo sam 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-

5 En Mei Jukku Kannon Gyō
(Ten-Character Life-Extending Kannon Sutra)

kan ze on
na mu butsu
yō butsu ū in
yō butsu ū en
bu ppō sō en
jō raku ga jō
chō nen kan ze on
bō nen kan ze on
nen nen jū shin ki
nen nen fū ri shin
9 Names of the Buddhas and Ancestors


jûn Dáioshô Butsumôn Sogaku Dáioshô Gyokujûn Soûn Dáioshô Shôgaku Shûnryû Dáioshô

10 Names of the Women Ancestors

Ácârâyâ Mahâpajâpatî Ácârâyâ Mitâ Ácârâyâ Yasodhârâ Ácârâyâ Tissâ Ácârâyâ Uпасâmâ Ácârâyâ Visûkha Ácârâyâ Khêmâ Ácârâyâ Uppâlaqûnâ Ácârâyâ Sundarî-Nandrâ Ácârâyâ Vaddhesi Ácârâyâ Paṭcârâ Ácârâyâ Ut-tamâ Ácârâyâ Bhadda-Kûndalaksa Ácârâyâ Nanduttarâ Ácârâyâ Dantikâ Ácârâyâ Sakulâ Ácârâyâ Sîhâ Ácârâyâ Dhammadinnâ Ácârâyâ Kisaqottamê Ácârâyâ Vâsethî Ácârâyâ Ubhî Ácârâyâ Isidâsi Ácârâyâ Bhadda-Kapilañi Ácârâyâ Muttâ Ácârâyâ Câpâ Ácârâyâ Dhammâ Ácârâyâ Cittâ Ácârâyâ Sumanâ Ácârâyâ Vimalâ Ácârâyâ Addhakasî Ácârâyâ Padumâvâti Ácârâyâ Ambâpâli Ácârâyâ Anopamâ Ácârâyâ Abhirûpâ-Nandrâ Ácârâyâ Jenti
Dai Hi Shin Dhāraṇī
(Heart of Great Compassion Dhāraṇī)

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 ei 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 rya chi i
kiri mo ko fuji sa to sa bo sa bo mo ra mo ra mo ki mo ki ri to en 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 za 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.
15 Victorious Topknot Dhāraṇī
(Uṣṇīṣa Viśya Dhāraṇī (Skt.), Bucchö Sonshö Darani (J.))

nō bō bagya bā tē tare roki yā hara chī bishu
daya bō daya bagya bā tē tani yā tō on bishu daya bishu daya
sama sama san man dā haba shā soha ran dā gyachi gyagya nō
soba han bā bishu tē abi shin shā tō man sogya tā hara
hasha nō ā miri tā bī sē kē maka man dara hā dāi ā kara ā kara ayu
san dara nī shuda yā shuda yā gyagya nō bishu tē ushu nisha bishya yā
bishi tē saka sara ara shin mei san soni tē sara bā tata gyā tā
baro gyanī sata hari mita hari hora nī sara bā tata gyā tā
kiri tā yā chishu tan nō chishu chī tē maka boda rē bā zara gyāyā
sugya tā nō bishu tē sara bā hara dā baya tori gyachi hari
bishi tē hara chini hara daya ā yoku shū tē san mā yā
chishu chī tē mani mani maka mani tadān da boda kuchi hari shū tē biso
bō dā boji shū tē shā yā shā yā bisha yā bisha yā
san mora san mora sara bā bō dā chishu chī tē shū tē bā jiri bā
zara gyara bē bā zara ban bā tō mā mā shari ran sara bā
sato ban nan shaqya yā hari bishu tē sara bā gyachi hari shū tē sara bā
tata gyā tā shishā mē san mā jin bā sā en tō sara bā tata gyā tā
san mā jin bā sā chishu chī tē bō jiya bō jiya bibo jiya bibo
jiya bō daya bō daya bibo daya bibo daya san man dā hari shū tē
sara bā tata gyā tā kiri tā yā chishu tan nō chishu chī tē
maka boda rē so wa kā

16 Lotus Sūtra Universal Gateway Chapter Gāthās

Listen to the practices of Avalokiteśvara,
Which pertain to everyone!
Her vow is deep as the ocean
And her era is of inconceivable length.

Having waited upon
Many thousands of koṭis of Buddhas,
She made a great, pure vow;
I will now briefly explain it to you.
If you hear her name and see her form,
And contemplate her in thought,
Your life will not be in vain,
And you will end all suffering.
If anyone would hurt you,
And pushes you into a raging fire,
If you contemplate the power of Avalokiteśvara
The fire will change into a pool of water.
If you drift upon the great ocean and meet danger
From dragons, fishes and demons,
If you contemplate the power of Avalokiteśvara
You will not be swallowed by the waves.
If you are on the peak of Sumeru
And are pushed off by someone,
If you contemplate the power of Avalokiteśvara
You will stay suspended in the air like the sun.
If any evil being chases you
And pushes you off of Mt. Diamond,
If you contemplate the power of Avalokiteśvara
Not even a single hair will be hurt.
If evil bandits surround you
Each with a sword and the intent to harm,
If you contemplate the power of Avalokiteśvara
The thought of mercy will awaken in them.
If you suffer under the punishment of a king
And your life is to be ended by execution,
If you contemplate the power of Avalokiteśvara
The sword of doom will immediately break into pieces,
If you are imprisoned with chains about the neck,
Your hands and feet fettered,
If you contemplate the power of Avalokiteśvara
The bonds will disappear and you will be released,
If anyone wants to injure your body
By curses or poison,
If you contemplate the power of Avalokiteśvara
These ills will rebound upon their author.
If you meet evil rākṣasas,
Venomous dragons or demons,
If you contemplate the power of Avalokiteśvara
They will not dare to hurt you.
If you are surrounded by evil beasts
Whose teeth and claws are fearfully sharp,
If you contemplate the power of Avalokiteśvara
They will swiftly run away
To a great distance.
If there are lizards, snakes, vipers or scorpions,
Whose poisonous breath is like flame and smoke,
If you contemplate the power of Avalokiteśvara
Those vapors will disappear immediately.
If thunder sounds and lightning flashes,
Hail falls and heavy rain pours out of the clouds,
If you contemplate the power of Avalokiteśvara
This will all disappear immediately.
If sentient beings are in great adversity
And immeasurable pain afflicts them,
The wonderful power of the wisdom of Avalokiteśvara
Can relieve the sufferings of the world.
Endowed with transcendent powers
And having fully mastered wisdom and skillful means,
In all the worlds in the ten directions,
There is no place where she will not manifest herself.
The sufferings of those in the troubled states of being,
Hell-dwellers, hungry ghosts and animals,
And the sufferings of birth, old age, illness and death
Will gradually be extinguished.
She who perceives the world with truth, purity,
And vast knowledge,
And with benevolence and compassion,
Should ever be longed for and looked up to.
She is a spotless, pure ray of light,
A sun of wisdom which destroys darkness,
A flame which withstands the wind of calamities.
She brilliantly illuminates the entire world.
Her will, the essence of which is compassion,
Vibrates like thunder,
And her mind of mercy
Is like a beautiful, o’er-spreading cloud
Which brings the Dharma-rain of the Deathless
And extinguishes the fire of desire.
In a dispute before judges,
Or fearful in the midst of battle,
If you contemplate the power of Avalokiteśvara
All enemies will flee away.
She has a wondrous voice,
The voice of one who hearkens to the world,
A voice like Brahma, a voice like the rolling tide,
A voice unsurpassed in this realm.
For this reason you should always contemplate her.
You should have no doubt, even for a moment.
The pure sage Avalokiteśvara will be a refuge
When suffering distress or the misery of death.
She is endowed with every quality,
Sees sentient beings with her benevolent eyes,
And her ocean of merit is boundless.
For this reason you should pay her homage.

17 Fukan Zazen Gi
(A Universal Recommendation of the Principles of Seated Meditation)

The Way is basically perfect and all-pervading. How could it be contingent upon practice and realization? The Dharma-vehicle is free and untrammeled. What need is there for concentrated effort? Indeed, the whole body is far beyond the world’s dust. Who could believe in a means to brush it clean? It is never apart from one, right where one is. What is the use of going off here and there to practice?

And yet, if there is the slightest discrepancy, the Way is as distant as heaven from earth. If the least like or dislike arises, the mind is lost in confusion. Suppose you gain pride of understanding and are rich in enlightenment, gaining the wisdom that knows at a glance, attaining the Way and clarifying the mind, raising an aspiration to escape the very sky. You are playing in the entrance way, 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 are 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 to attain suchness, you should practice suchness without delay.

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 administer pros and cons. 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 together and lips 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. 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 engaged 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