
Hannya Shingyo

Essence of the Sutra of the Great Wisdom that Leads to the Other Shore

By intensely practicing the great wisdom that leads to the other shore, the Bodhisattva of true liberty realizes that the five *skandha* (*) are only emptiness (ku), and in realizing this he helps all suffering beings.

O Sariputra, phenomena do not differ from ku, ku does not differ from phenomena. The phenomena are nothing but ku. Ku is nothing but the phenomena. This applies to sensations, perceptions, mental constructions and consciousness as well.

O Sariputra, every existence manifests the characteristic of emptiness: they are not born nor do they die, they are neither pure nor defiled, they neither increase nor decrease.

Therefore in ku there is no form, no sensation, perception, mental construction or consciousness; no eye, ear, tongue, nose, body or mind; no colour, sound, smell, taste, touch or thought.

In ku there is no world of the senses, no world of consciousness; there is neither ignorance nor cessation of ignorance, neither delusion nor cessation of delusion. There is neither old age and death nor elimination of old age and death; no suffering, cause, cessation or way; no wisdom, no gaining and no non-gaining.

In this wisdom that leads to the other shore, the mind of the Bodhisattva is free from obstacles and is fearless. Every illusion, every attachment is eliminated and he can attain the ultimate goal of life, nirvana.

All Buddhas of the past, the present and the future, living in this wisdom that leads to the other shore, can attain the most perfect enlightenment.

Therefore you must know that the wisdom that leads to the other shore is the greatest, most brilliant, highest and incomparable mantra, which is able to stop all suffering, truly and unblemished.

This is the mantra of the wisdom that leads to the other shore, which goes like this:
"Going, going together, going further than beyond, to the other shore of satori."

(*) *skandha* = aggregates: body, sensations, perceptions, mental constructions and consciousness.

Takkesa Ge

Kesa Sutra

O robe of Great liberation,
Kesa of the field of unlimited happiness,
In faith I receive the teaching of the Buddha,
In order to help all sentient beings.

Shigu Seigan Mon

The Four Great Bodhisattva Vows

However innumerable the sentient beings are,
I make the Vow to help them all to liberate themselves.

However innumerable my delusions are,
I make the Vow to overcome them all.

However innumerable the Buddha's teachings are,
I make the Vow to study them all.

However perfect the Buddha's Way is,
I make the Vow to realize it.

Sandokai

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 Patriarchs.

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 see 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 two arrow points meeting.

Hearing the words, understand the meaning; do not 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.

I respectfully urge you who study the Way, do not spend your days and nights in vain.

Hokyo Zanmai

The Samadhi of the Precious Mirror

1/2

Such is the Dharma, intimately transmitted by the Buddha and the Patriarchs. Now you have it, so maintain it well.

As a bowl filled with snow, as a heron hidden in the moonshine: similar but not the same, approaching it you see their differences.

Meaning does not dwell in words; the decisive moment makes it appear. Following words, you fall into a trap. Neglecting them, you start doubting.

Rejecting or getting attached to words is wrong, because they are like a raging fire: useful but dangerous.

To describe it literally is to stain it. In the dark of night it is completely bright. In the light of day it is hidden. It is the all-governing law, so use it to cut the root of suffering.

Even though it is not created, it does not transcend words.

It is like the precious mirror. Form and reflection reflect each other, you are not it, but it is you.

It is like a newborn baby, endowed with the five senses, neither coming nor going, neither appearing nor staying; "Baba wawa": does that say anything or not? In the end it does not, because its words are not correct yet.

When the trigram 'fire' is doubled, the inner and outer lines interact. Put on top of each other they become three, transposed they become five.

Like the taste of the plant of five-tastes (chisso) or the arms of the vajra. Harmoniously united in the middle, drum and singing arrive together.

Penetrating the source and embarking on the Way, grasping the landscape and appreciating the path. Respect it, do not disregard it.

Natural and subtle it is not ignorance and not awakening. Amongst the causes and circumstances, time and seasons, it is serene and luminous.

It is so pure that it enters where there is no space; it is so vast that it transcends every dimension. When you deviate only a hair's breadth, you are no longer in harmony.

Now there is the immediate and the gradual, and in them the various teachings and methods manifest themselves. When they distinguish themselves, they each have their norms. But whether you have mastered these teachings and methods or not, reality just flows steadily.

Calm outwardly and excited innerly, is like being a trapped horse or a lurking rat.

The ancient sages pitied them and offered them the Dharma. In their wrong views they mistook black for white. When these wrong views disappear, they realize the mind that naturally harmonizes.

When you want to follow the old Way, please observe the ancient sages. If you are about to realize the way of the Buddha, you have contemplated the tree for ten kalpa.

It is like the tiger's weakness or the horse's limp.

Just because some people lack something, they look for an expensive chair and fancy clothes. Because others have a wide view, they can see that they are like the brown and white ox.

With his incredible skills, Hiei could hit the bull's eye from a hundred yards, but when arrows hit each other in the air, how can this be a matter of agility?

The wooden man starts to sing, the stone woman gets up and dances. This cannot be achieved through sensations or consciousness, so what good is discrimination here?

Ministers serve their sovereign, children obey their parents. Disobedience goes against filial duty, those who do not follow are no real ministers serve their sovereign, children obey their parents. Disobedience goes against filial duty, those who do not follow are no real ministers.

Hide your practice, be discrete, and appear like a fool or an idiot.
Just continuing to do this is called a master among the masters.

Ji ho san shi

To all Buddhas of the past, the present and the future, in the ten directions
All Bodhisattvas and Patriarchs,
The Sutra of Transcending Wisdom.

Gyohatsu Nenju

The Meals Sutra

The Buddha was born in Kapilavastu.

He awakened in Magadha.

He taught in Varanasi.

He entered Nirvana in Kuchinagara.

Now we open the bowls of the Tathagata,

so that he who gives, he who receives

and that which is given can be liberated from all attachments,

and attain liberation together with all beings.

Veneration to the universal purity of Buddha Vairocana, to the accomplished form of Buddha Amitabha and the manifested form of Buddha Shakyamuni.

Veneration to Buddha Maitreya, the Buddha of the future.

Veneration to all Buddhas of the past, the present and the future, in the ten directions.

To the Sutra of the Lotus of the Law of the Great Vehicle.

Veneration to Manjushri, the great Bodhisattva of Wisdom.

To the great and accomplished Bodhisattva Samantabhadra.

To Avalokiteshvara, the Bodhisattva of Great compassion.

To the innumerable bodhisattvas, to all patriarchs and to the Great wisdom that leads to the other shore.

First we should consider how this food came to us. Our gratitude goes to those who contributed to it.

Secondly, while receiving the gift, we should verify whether our virtue and practice really deserve it.

Thirdly, we should return to the normal condition of the mind, become free from all coveting and grasping.

Fourthly, we should eat this food for the health of our bodies.

Fifthly we take this food to get accomplished in the Way of the Buddha.

To all hungry spirits, I now offer this food in order to spread it over the whole universe.

I hope to share it with you.

For the three jewels, Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha,

for all who have helped us, our parents, our teachers, the whole of humanity,

for all beings who suffer, imprisoned in the six worlds of roaming and who cannot liberate themselves, may this food serve all existences of the universe.

Firstly, we eat to cut off all evil.

Secondly to carry out the good.

Thirdly to save all sentient beings.

Let's follow the Way of the Buddha all together.

With this water I wash my bowl, it has the taste of celestial nectar,

I offer it to all the deceased and to all who suffer in their hells,

may it quench their thirst like the morning dew.

In this world of illusion, empty and impermanent, may we exist in the murky water with the purity of the lotus flower. Nothing surpasses the infinite mind. Let us therefore bow before the Buddha.

Eko

Dedication

We humbly implore your true compassion and awakening.
After having chanted the Sutra of Great Wisdom (*or any sutra that has been chanted*), we dedicate this ceremony to each of the following great Masters, in order to express our gratitude for their compassion:

To Buddha Shakyamuni, the most important Master and pillar of the truly benevolent teaching,
To the great Master Bodhidharma, the ancestral founder,
To the great Master Eihei Dogen, the school's ancestor,
To the great Master Keizan Jokin,
To each of the great Masters of the former generations,
And also to the great Master Somon Kodo,
To the great master Mokudo Taisen,
To the great Master Zuigaku Renpo
We express our gratitude.

We pray for the happiness of all who partake in the pure assembly, who have come to the temple of today to practice zazen.

Fueko

Universal Dedication

May the merits of this recitation
Permeate all beings and places,
So that we, sentient beings,
May all together realize the Way of the Buddha.

Gojushichi Butsu

The 57 Buddhas and Patriarchs

1/2

We humbly implore your true compassion and awakening.
Having chanted the Sutra of Great Wisdom (*or any other sutra that has been chanted*), we dedicate this ceremony to the following great Masters as a token of our gratitude for their compassion. For:

The Great Teacher Buddha Vipashyin
The Great Teacher Buddha Shikhin
The Great Teacher Buddha Vishvabhu
The Great Teacher Buddha Krakuchanda
The Great Teacher Buddha Konagamana
The Great Teacher Buddha Kashyapa
The Great Teacher Buddha Shakyamuni
The Great Teacher Mahakashyapa
The Great Teacher Ananda
The Great Teacher Shanavasa
The Great Teacher Upagupta
The Great Teacher Dhritaka
The Great Teacher Micchaka
The Great Teacher Vasumitra
The Great Teacher Buddhanandi
The Great Teacher Buddhamitra
The Great Teacher Parshva
The Great Teacher Punyayashas
The Great Teacher Asvaghosha
The Great Teacher Kapimala
The Great Teacher Nagarjuna
The Great Teacher Kanadeva
The Great Teacher Rahulata
The Great Teacher Sanghanandi
The Great Teacher Gayashata
The Great Teacher Kumarata
The Great Teacher Jayata
The Great Teacher Vasubandhu
The Great Teacher Manorhita
The Great Teacher Haklenayashas
The Great Teacher Aryasimha
The Great Teacher Basiasita
The Great Teacher Punyamitra
The Great Teacher Prajnatara
The Great Teacher Bodhidharma
The Great Teacher T'ai-tsu Hui-k'o

The Great Teacher Chien-chih Seng-ts'an
The Great Teacher Ta-i Tao-hsin
The Great Teacher Ta-man Hung-jen
The Great Teacher Ta-chien Hui-neng
The Great Teacher Ch'ing-yuan Hsing-ssu
The Great Teacher Shih-t'ou Hsi-ch'ien
The Great Teacher Yueh-shan Wei-yen
The Great Teacher Yun-yen T'an-shen
The Great Teacher Tung-shan Liang-chieh
The Great Teacher Yun-chu Tao-ying
The Great Teacher T'ungan Tao-p'i
The Great Teacher T'ungan Kuan-chih
The Great Teacher Liang-shan Yuan-kuan
The Great Teacher Ta-yang Ching-hsuan
The Great Teacher T'ou-tzu I-ch'ing
The Great Teacher Fu-jung Tao-k'ai
The Great Teacher Tan-hsia Tzu-ch'un
The Great Teacher Chen-hsieh Ch'ing-liao
The Great Teacher T'ien-t'ung Tsun-chueh
The Great Teacher Hsueh-tou Chih-chien
The Great Teacher T'ien-t'ung Ju-ching
The Great Teacher Eihei Dogen
The Great Teacher Koun Eju
The Great Teacher Tettsu Gikai
The Great Teacher Keizan Jokin
The Great Teacher Somon Kodo,
The Great Teacher Mokudo Taisen,
The Great Master Zuigaku Renpo.

We express our gratitude. We pray for the happiness of all here present in this pure assembly,
who have come to the temple of to practice zazen.

Fukanzazengi

Universal Instructions for Zazen

1/2

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 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 are 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 to realize such, get to work on such right now.

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 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, immobile sitting. Think from the inmost depths of the not thinking. How can we think from beyond the not thinking? It's what is beyond thinking (hishiryo). And 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's 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 of direct pointing at the real. 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.