JU NI RAI
(The Twelve Verses of Homage to Amida Buddha)

The Gatha JU NI RAI was written by Nagarjuna (c. 2nd – 3rd Cent. B.C.E.) the first of the Seven Masters of Jodo Shinshu. It expresses eloquently the depth of Nagarjuna’s gratitude to the Amida Buddha.

Nagarjuna’s Madhyamika (Emptiness) philosophy is considered by many to be the foundation of Mahayana Buddhism. His exposition of the essential Buddhist concept of “interdependent origination” (pratityasamutpada) clarified how all beings are seen as existing only in interrelationship with others, and thus without permanent or individual reality. Because of the truth of interdependent existence we are able to benefit from the activity of the Buddha’s compassion in our lives.

Because of the importance of Nagarjuna’s contribution to the philosophical development of Mahayana Buddhist thought, he is included in the spiritual lineage of the Eight major schools of Mahayana Buddhism. He was a very prolific writer whose works include the Madhyamika-Karika, Daichido-ron and the Jujubibasha-ron (The commentary on the ten bodhisattva stages). In the ninth section of the 5th chapter of this particular work, Nagarjuna writes about the Easy Practice versus the Difficult Practices. For those unable to pursue the “Difficult Path” of cultivating the monastic practice of the paramitas or mental and moral discipline, Nagarjuna advocates the “Easy Path” of calling the Name of the Amida Buddha (Namo Amida Butsu).

The English translation of this gatha is from the Shinshu Seiten, Jodo Shin Buddhist Teaching, published by the Buddhist Churches of America, 1978
Before Amida Buddha, whom Deva
(heavenly beings) and men worship,
I humble myself in deepest reverence.
In his wondrous Land of Bliss
Surrounded by countless Bodhisattvas.

His golden form shines forth pure, like the
King of Mount (Sumeru);
His practice of Truth is steadfast, like an
elephant’s pace;
His eyes radiate, like pure blue lotus
blossoms.
Thus I prostrate myself before Amida
Buddha.

His countenance is perfectly pure and
round, like the full moon;
His majestic light shines like a thousand
suns and moons;
His voice is like a heavenly drum, yet like a
heavenly bird (Kokila)
Thus I prostrate myself before Amida
Buddha.

Avalokitesvara wears upon his crown,
The image of Amida adorned with many
precious jewels,
He subdues the arrogance of demons and
heretics,
Thus I prostrate myself before Amida
Buddha.

Incomparable, vast, and pure his Virtues
are,
Clearly extending like vast open space,
His acts freely benefiting all.
Thus I prostrate myself before Amida
Buddha.

Bodhisattvas from the ten quarters
And countless maras (demons) always
venerate Him.

He dwells with Vow-power for the sake of all
beings.
Thus I prostrate myself before Amida Buddha.

In the golden treasure pond where the lotus
flowers bloom,
Established with goodness is a wondrous
throne;
Where reigns the Lord, like the King of Mount
(Sumeru)
Thus I prostrate myself before Amida Buddha.

All things are transient and without self
Like the moon on water, lightning, shadow, or
dew.
“The Dharma cannot be expressed by words,”
the Buddha proclaimed.
Thus I prostrate myself before Amida Buddha.

No words of evil are in his Land;
No fear of evildoers, or evil paths;
With sincere heart all beings worship Him.
Thus I prostrate myself before Amida Buddha.

His land of infinite expediencies
Is without degenerate things or wicked beings;
Upon rebirth, Non-Retrogressive Bodhi does
one attain.
Thus I prostrate myself before Amida Buddha.

Thus have I praised the virtues of Amida.
Boundless are they like the water of the sea.
Upon receiving these pure and good qualities
May all beings be reborn into his Land.
**JU NI RAI**
(The Twelve Verses of Homage to Amida Buddha)
Leader:
NA MAN DA BU

Sangha:
NA MAN DA BU
NA MAN DA BU
NA MAN DA BU
NA MAN DA BU
NA MAN DA BU
NA MAN DA I BU

Leader:
GAN NI SHI KU DOKU

Sangha:
BYO DO SE IS- SAI
DO HOTSU BO DAI SHIN
O JO AN I RAK-I KOKAI

I take refuge in Amida Buddha

May this merit and virtue
Be shared equally with all beings.
May we together awaken the Bodhi Mind
And attain birth in the Realm of Serenity
and Joy