

JŪ SEI GE

(Gāthā of the Important Vows)

JŪ SEI GE is a poem or *gāthā* found in the *Larger Sūtra of the Buddha of Immeasurable Life* (*Dai Muryō Jū Kyō* or *Dai-Kyō* for short), one of the three Principal Sūtras of Jōdo Shinshu. This Sūtra delivered by Śākyamuni Buddha, relates how all sentient beings will attain liberation from suffering and sorrow in this world through the compassion of Amida Buddha. The historical Śākyamuni Buddha does this by telling the tale of the Bodhisattva Dharmākara who declares, in the presence of Lokeśvararāja Buddha, his intentions to become a Buddha himself. In the process, Bodhisattva Dharmākara declares a total of 48 vow that must be fulfilled before he can attain Buddhahood. Upon the fulfillment of all these vows, Bodhisattva Dharmākara becomes the Amida Buddha.

The JŪ SEI GE can be found following all of the 48 vows and can be looked upon as a summary of these vows into three basic pledges. For this reason, in some traditions this Gāthā is sometimes called the *San Sei Ge* meaning the Gāthā of the Three Sacred Pledges. They refer to Dharmākara's pledge to:

1. Establish the most incomparable vow in the world.
2. Become a great provider and aid all those in suffering and need.
3. Attain Buddhahood and have his Name (*Namo Amida Butsu*) heard throughout the ten quarters of the universe.

The establishment of the vows by a bodhisattva is very important in the process of attaining Buddhahood. They are a reflection of the heart and mind of that Bodhisattva manifesting true wisdom and compassion. What is of importance in the Larger Sūtra is the sincerity and diligence by the Bodhisattva Dharmākara to carry out these vows for eons until their completion and finally attaining the Supreme Attainment of Buddhahood becoming the Amida Buddha.

The English translation of this *gāthā* is from *The Three Pure Land Sutras, volume II: The Larger Sutra*, as part of the Shin Buddhist Translation Series, published by Jōdo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha, Kyoto, 2009.

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(Gāthā of the Important Vows)



Leader:

BUS-SETSU MU RYŌ JU KYŌ

Sangha:

GA GON CHŌ SEI GAN
HIS- SHI MU JŌ DŌ
SHI GAN FU MAN ZOKu
SEI FU JŌ SHŌ GAKu

GA O MU RYŌ KŌ
FU I DAI SE SHŪ
FU SAI SHO BIN GU
SEI FU JŌ SHŌ GAKu

GA SHI JŌ BUTSU DŌ
MYŌ SHŌ CHŌ JIP- PŌ
KU KYŌ MI SHO MON
SEI FU JŌ SHŌ GAKu

RI YOKU JIN SHŌ NEN
JO E SHU BON GYŌ
SHI GU MU JŌ DŌ
I SHO TEN NIN SHI

JIN RIKI EN DAI KŌ
FU SHO MU SAI DŌ
SHŌ JŌ SAN KU MYŌ
KŌ SAI SHU YAKU NAN

KAI HI CHI E GEN
MES- SHI KON MŌ AN
HEI SOKU SHO AKU DŌ
TSŪ DATSU ZEN SHU MON

KO SO JŌ MAN ZOKu
I YŌ RO JIP- PŌ
NICHİ GATSU SHŪ JU KI
TEN KŌ ON PU GEN

I SHU KAI HŌ ZŌ
KŌ SE KU DOKU HŌ
JŌ O DAI SHU CHŪ
SEP- PŌ SHI SHI KU

KU YŌ IS- SAI BUTsu
GU SOKU SHU TOKU HON
GAN E SHITSU JŌ MAN
TOKU I SAN GAI O

NYO BUTSU MU GE CHI
TSŪ DATSU MI FU SHŌ
GAN GA KU E RIKI
TŌ SHI SAI SHŌ SON

SHI GAN NYAK- KOK- KA
DAI SEN Ō KAN DŌ
KO KU SHO TEN NIN
TŌ U CHIN MYŌ KE ●

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

Leader:

GAN NI SHI KU DOKU

Sangha:

BYŌ DŌ SE IS- SAI
DŌ HOTSU BO DAI SHIN
Ō JŌ AN ● RAK-● KOKu●

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(Gāthā of the Important Vows)

The Sūtra on The Buddha of Immeasurable Life -- delivered by Śākyamuni Buddha

*I have established the all-surpassing vows
And will unfailingly attain supreme
enlightenment.*

*If these vows should not be fulfilled,
May I not attain perfect enlightenment.*

*If for countless kalpas to come,
I should not become a great benefactor
And save all the destitute and afflicted
everywhere,
May I not attain perfect enlightenment.*

*When I have fulfilled the Buddha-way,
My name shall pervade the ten quarters;
Should there be any place it is not heard,
May I not attain perfect enlightenment.*

*Freed from greed and with deep right-
mindedness
And pure wisdom, I will perform the sacred
practices
In pursuit of supreme enlightenment,
And become the teacher of devas and
humans.*

*Emitting a great light with my majestic
power,*

*I will completely illuminate the boundless
worlds;
Dispelling, thereby, the darkness of the three
defilements
I will deliver all beings from suffering and
affliction.*

*Having acquired the eye of wisdom,
I will remove the darkness of blind passions;
Blocking the path to the evil realms,
I will open the gate to the good realms.*

*When my practice and merits are fulfilled,
My majestic brilliance shall reach
everywhere in the ten quarters,*

*Outshining both the sun and the moon;
Even the heavenly lights shall be hidden
and obscured.*

*For the sake of all beings I will open forth
the Dharma-Store
And universally bestow its treasure of
virtue upon them.
Among the multitudes of beings
I will always preach the Dharma with a
lion's roar.*

*Making offerings to all the Buddhas,
I will acquire all the roots of virtue;
With my vows fulfilled and wisdom
perfected,
I will be the hero of the three worlds.*

*Like your unimpeded wisdom O Buddha
Lokeśvararāja,
My wisdom shall reach everywhere and
illuminate all;
May the power of my virtue and wisdom
Be equal to that of yours, O Most Honored
One.*

*If these vows are to be fulfilled,
The great thousand worlds will shake in
accord,
And, from the sky, all the devas
Will rain down rare and wondrous flowers.*

*I take refuge in Amida Buddha
I take refuge in Amida Buddha
I take refuge in Amida Buddha
I take refuge in Amida Buddha
I take refuge in Amida Buddha
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*