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 Shinshū. 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 Shinshū Hongwanji-ha, Kyoto, 2009.
**JŪ SEI GE**

(Gāthā of the Important Vows)

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Leader:
BUS-SETSU MU RYŌ JU KYŌ

Sangha:
GÂ GON CHÔ SEI GAN
HIS- SHI MU JÔ DÔ
SHI GAN FU MAN ZOKu
SEI FU JÔ SHÔ GAKu

GA O MU RYŌ KÔ
FU I DAI SE SHŪ
FU SAI SHO BIN GU
SEI FU JÔ SHÔ GAKu

GA SHI JÔ BUTSU DÔ
MYÔ SHÔ CHÔ JIP- PÔ
KU KYÔ MI SHÔ MÔN
SEI FU JÔ SHÔ GAKu

RI YOKU JIN SHÔ NEN
JO E SHU BÔN GYÔ
SHI GU MU JÔ DÔ
I SHÔ TEN NIN SHI

JIN RIKI EN DAI KÔ
FU SHO MU SAÏ DÔ
SHÔ JÔ SAN KU MYÔ
KÔ SAÏ SHU YAKU NAN

KAI HI CHI E GEN
MES- SHI KÔN MÔ AN
HEI SOKU SHÔ AKU DÔ
TSÛ DATSU ZEN SHU MÔN

KO SO JÔ MAN ZOKu
I YÔ RÔ JIP- PÔ
NICHIGATSU SHU JU KI
TEN KÔ ON PU GEN

Leader:
I SHU KAI HÔ ZÔ
KÔ SE KU DOKU HÔ
JÔ O DAI SHU CHÔ
SEP- PÔ SHI SHI KU

KU YÔ IS- SAÏ BUTsu
GU SOKU SHU TOKU HÔN
GAN E SHITSU JÔ MAN
TOKU I SAN GAI Ô

NYO BUTSU MU GE CHI
TSÛ DATSU MI FU SHÔ
GAN GA KU E RIKI
TÔ SHI SAÏ SHÔ SON

SHI GAN NYAK- KOK- KA
DAI SEN Ô KAN DÔ
KO KU SHÔ TEN NIN
TÔ U CHIN MYÔ 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:
BYÔ DÔ SE IS- SAÏ
DÔ HOTSU BO DAI SHIN
Ô JÔ AN ● RAK-● KOKu●
JŪ SEI GE

(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