

SAN BUTSU GE

(Gāthā In Praise Of The Buddha)

SAN BUTSU GE is a *gāthā* or poem found in the *Larger Sūtra of the Buddha of Immeasurable Life* (*Dai Muryō Ju 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 vows that must be fulfilled before he can attain Buddhahood. Upon the fulfillment of all these vows, Bodhisattva Dharmākara becomes the Amida Buddha.

When the historical Śākyamuni Buddha delivered this Sūtra, his face was transfigured with such joy and radiance, that Ananda, his trusted disciple, noticed and asked the reason for this unusual countenance. The Buddha's reply was that the reason for his brilliant radiance was due to the fact that the sole purpose for appearing in this world was to deliver the True Teachings that are found in this Sūtra on the Buddha of Immeasurable Life.

The San Butsu Ge can be found after the Bodhisattva Dharmākara comes into the presence of Lokeśvararāja Buddha. As Ananda praises the features and virtues of Śākyamuni Buddha, in a similar way, the Bodhisattva Dharmākara uses this Gāthā to praise the features and virtues of this Buddha as well. Following these praises, the Bodhisattva Dharmākara makes his 48 vows, practices for an incalculable length of time (*kalpas*), fulfills them and attains the Supreme Attainment of Buddhahood.

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.

SAN BUTSU GE
(Gāthā In Praise Of The Buddha)

●●Leader:

BUS-SETSU MU RYŌ JU KYŌ

Sangha:

KŌ GEN GI GI
I JIN MU GOKU
NYO ZE EN MYŌ
MU YO TŌ SHA

GAN GA SA BUTSU
ZAI SHŌ HŌ Ō
KA DO SHŌ JI
MI FU GE DATSU

NICHI GATSU MA NI
SHŪ KO EN NYŌ
KAI SHITSU ON PEI
YŪ NYAKU JU MOKU

FU SE JŌ I
KAI NIN SHŌ JIN
NYO ZE SAN MAI
CHI E I JŌ

NYO RAI YŌ GEN
CHŌ SEI MU RIN
SHŌ GAKU DAI ON
KŌ RU JIP-PŌ

GO SEI TOKU BUTSU
FU GYŌ SHI GAN
IS- SAI KU KU
I SA DAI AN

KAI MON SHŌ JIN
SAN MAI CHI E
I TOKU MU RYO
SHU SHŌ KE U

KE SHI U BUTSU
HYAKU SEN NOKU MAN
MU RYŌ DAI SHO
SHU NYO GŌ JA

JIN TAI ZEN NEN
SHO BUTSU HŌ KAI
GU JIN JIN NŌ
KU GO GAI TAI

KU YŌ IS- SAI
SHI TŌ SHO BUTSU
FU NYO GU DO
KEN SHŌ FU GYAKU

MU MYŌ YOKU NU
SE SON YŌ MU
NIN- NO SHI SHI
JIN TOKU MU RYŌ

HI NYO GŌ JA
SHO BUTSU SE KAI
BU FU KA GE
MU SHU SETSU DO

KU KUN KŌ DAI
CHI E JIN MYŌ
KO MYO I SŌ
SHIN DŌ DAI SEN

KO MYŌ SHIS- SHŌ
HEN SHI SHO KOKU
NYO ZE SHŌ JIN
I JIN NAN RYŌ

RYŌ GA SA BUTSU
KOKU DO DAI ICHI
GO SHU KI MYŌ
DŌ JŌ CHŌ ZETSU

KOKU NYO NAI ON
NI MU TO SO
GA TO AI MIN
DO DATSU IS- SAI

JIP- PŌ RAI SHŌ
SHIN NETSU SHŌ JŌ
I TO GA KOKU
KE RAKU AN- NON

KŌ BUTSU SHIN MYŌ
ZE GA SHIN SHŌ
HOTSU GAN- NO HI
RIKI SHŌ SHŌ YOKU

JIP- PŌ SE SON
CHI E MU GE
JŌ RYŌ SHI SON
CHI GA SHIN GYŌ

KE RYŌ SHIN SHI
SHO KU DOKU CHU
GA GYŌ SHŌ JIN
NIN JU FE 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●

SAN BUTSU GE

(Gāthā in Praise of the Buddha)

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

*Your radiant countenance is majestic;
And your dignity is boundless.
Radiant splendor such as yours
Has no equal.*

*Even the blazing light of
The Sun, moon and mani-jewels
Is completely hidden and obscured,
And looks like a mass of black ink-
sticks.*

*The countenance of the Tathagata
Is unequalled in the world;
The great voice of the Perfectly
Enlightened One
Resounds throughout the ten quarters.*

*Your observance of precepts, learning,
diligence,
Meditation, and wisdom –
The magnificence of these virtues is
peerless,
Excellent and unsurpassed.*

*Deeply and clearly mindful
Of the ocean of the Dharma of all
Buddhas,
You know its depth and breadth,
And reach its farthest end.*

*Ignorance, greed and anger
Are completely absent in the World-
Honored One,
You are a lion, the most courageous of
all humans,
Having immeasurable majestic virtues.*

*Your meritorious accomplishment is
vast,
And your wisdom is deep and supreme;
The majestic glory of your light
Shakes the great thousand worlds.*

*I vow to become a Buddha,
Equal to you, the most honored King of
the Dharma,
And to bring sentient beings from
birth-and-death
To the final attainment of
emancipation.*

*My practice of giving, self-discipline,
Observance of precepts, forbearance,
diligence,
And also mediation and wisdom
Shall be unsurpassed.*

*I resolve that, when I become a Buddha,
I will fulfill this vow in every possible
way,
And to all beings who live in fear,
I will give great peace.*

*Even though there are Buddhas
As many as a thousand million kotis,,
Or countless great sages
As many as the sands of the Ganges,*

*I will make offerings
To all these Buddhas,
Nothing surpasses my determination
To seek the Way steadfastly and
untiringly.*

*Even though there are Buddha-worlds
As many as the sands of the Ganges,
And also innumerable lands
Beyond calculation,*

*My light shall illumine
All of these lands.
I will make such efforts
That my divine power may be
boundless*

*When I become a Buddha,
My land shall be the most exquisite;
People there shall be unrivaled and
excellent
Any my seat of enlightenment shall be
beyond compare.*

*My land shall be like nirvana.
Being supreme and unequalled.
Out of compassion and pity,
I will bring all to emancipation.*

*Those who come from the ten quarters,
Shall rejoice with pure hearts;
Once they reach my Land,
They shall dwell in peace and
happiness.*

May you, the Buddha, be my witness

*And attest to the truthfulness of my
resolution.
I have thus made my aspiration;
I will endeavor to fulfill it.*

*The World-honored Ones in the ten
quarters
Have unimpeded wisdom;
May these honored ones
Always know my intentions.*

*Even if I should be subjected
All kinds of suffering and torment,
Continuing my practice undeterred,
I would endure it and never have any
regrets.*

*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*