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Verse of the Kesa

Great Robe of Liberation,
Virtuous Field far beyond form and Emptiness,
Wearing the Tathagata's teaching
Is the vow to save all beings.

The Four Vows

To save all sentient beings,
though they are numberless.

To be released from all desires,
though they are inexhaustible.

To learn the Teachings,
though they are boundless.

To live the Buddha Way,
though it is unsurpassable.

Formless Admission

All the karma ever created by me
Since of old through greed, anger, and self-delusion,
Which has no beginning,
born of my body, speech, and thought
I now make full open admission of it.

The Three Pure Precepts

Preceptor

In the presence of all beings,

Everyone

I vow to live in enlightenment,
I vow to practice noninjury,
I vow to live for the benefit of all beings.

The Ten Grave Precepts

Preceptor

Self-nature is clear and obvious.
Within the ever-abiding Dharma,
Not nursing a view of extinction
Is called the precept of not killing.

Everyone

A follower of the Way
does not kill.

Preceptor

Self-nature is clear and obvious.
Within the unattainable Dharma,
Not producing a thought of attainment
Is called the precept of not stealing.

Everyone

A follower of the Way
does not take what is not given.

Preceptor

Self-nature is clear and obvious.
Within the unstained Dharma,
Not giving rise to a view of attachment
Is called the precept of not indulging sensual
desire.

Everyone

A follower of the Way
does not engage in sensual misconduct.

Preceptor

Self-nature is clear and obvious.
Within the unutterable Dharma,
Not speaking a single word
Is called the precept of not committing false
speech.

Everyone

A follower of the Way
does not speak deceptively.

Preceptor

Self-nature is clear and obvious.
Within the intrinsically pure Dharma,
Not giving rise to ignorance
Is called the precept of refraining from intoxicants.

Everyone

A follower of the Way
does not intoxicate oneself or others.

Preceptor

Self-nature is clear and obvious.
Within the flawless Dharma,
Not speaking erroneously
Is called the precept of not speaking of the
faults of others.

Everyone

A follower of the Way
does not slander others.

Preceptor

Self-nature is clear and obvious.
Within the undifferentiated Dharma,
Not distinguishing between self and other
Is called the precept of not praising oneself.

Everyone

A follower of the Way
does not praise self.

Preceptor

Self-nature is clear and obvious.
Within the suchness of all-pervading Dharma,
Not clinging to a single form
Is called the precept of not being avaricious.

Everyone

A follower of the Way
does not possess anything selfishly.

Preceptor

Self-nature is clear and obvious.
Within the selfless Dharma,
Not measuring a self
Is called the precept of not giving way to anger.

Everyone

A follower of the Way
does not harbor ill will.

Preceptor

Self-nature is clear and obvious.
Within the One Dharma,
Not holding a dualistic view of ordinary and
Enlightened
Is called the precept of not abusing the
Three Treasures.

Everyone

A follower of the Way
does not abuse the Three Treasures.

The Heart Sutra

Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva

When practicing deeply the Perfection of Wisdom
Perceived that all five skandhas are Empty
And was saved from all suffering and distress.

“O Shariputra, form does not differ from Emptiness;
Emptiness does not differ from form.

That which is form is Emptiness;

That which is Emptiness, form.

The same is true of sensations, conceptions,
inclinations, perception.

O Shariputra, all dharmas are marked with Emptiness;
They do not appear nor disappear,
Are not tainted nor pure,
Do not increase nor decrease.

Therefore in Emptiness, no form,
No sensations, no conceptions, no inclinations, no
perception;

No eyes, no ears, no nose, no tongue, no body,
no mind;

No color, no sound, no smell, no taste, no touch,
no object of mind;

No realm of eyes and so forth until no realm of
mind-consciousness;

No ignorance and also no extinction of it, and so
forth until no old age and death and also no
extinction of them;

No suffering, no origination, no stopping, no path;
No cognition, also no attainment.

With nothing to attain,

The bodhisattva depends on the Perfection of Wisdom
And the mind is no hindrance.

Without any hindrance, no fears exist;

Far apart from every perverted view the bodhisattva
dwells in Nirvana.

All Buddhas, past, present, and future, depend on
the Perfection of Wisdom,
And attain unsurpassed, complete, perfect
Enlightenment.

Therefore know the Perfection of Wisdom

Is the great transcendent mantra,

Is the great bright mantra,

Is the utmost mantra,

Is the supreme mantra,

Which is able to relieve all suffering

And is true, not false.

So proclaim the Perfection of Wisdom mantra,

Proclaim the mantra that says:

Gate, gate, paragate, parasamgate! Bodhi! Svaha!”

The Merging of Difference and Unity

The mind of the great sage of India
Is intimately communicated between east and west.
While human faculties may be keen or dull,
The path has no southern or northern Ancestors.
The subtle Source is clear and bright;
The branching streams flow through darkness.
Grasping things is delusion;
According with Absolute is still not enlightenment.
All objects of the senses
Interact yet do not interact.
When interacting, they merge—
Otherwise, they keep their own place.
Forms vary in material and appearance;
Sounds differ in pleasant or harsh quality.
The word “dark” is used to merge high and low;
The word “light” is employed to distinguish pure
and defiled.
The four elements return to their natures
As a child to its mother.
Fire heats, wind moves,
Water wets, earth is solid.
Eye and form, ear and sound,
Nose and smell, tongue and taste—
Each is independent of the other,
But these different leaves spread from the same root.
The whole process must return to the source;
The words “noble” and “base” are used relatively.

Within light there is darkness,
But don't take it as darkness.
Within darkness there is light,
But don't see it as light.
Light and dark are relative to one another
Like forward and backward steps.
Each thing appears to have its own intrinsic value,
Yet is related to ev'rything else in function and
position.
Phenomena fit Absolute like box and cover joining;
Absolute accords the relative like arrows meeting
in air.
Hearing these words, you should know the Source;
Don't set up standards of your own.
If you don't see the path as it meets your eyes,
How will you know the Way as you walk?
Practice is not a matter of “far” or “near,”
But if you are confused, mountains and rivers
block the way.
I humbly say to those who would awaken,
Don't waste time.

Song of the Jewel Mirror Awareness

The teaching of Thusness
Has been intimately communicated by Buddhas and
Ancestors;
Now you have it, so keep it well.
A silver bowl heaped with snow,
A heron fading into bright moonlight—
They look alike, but are not the same;
When placed side by side, you can see which is which.
Meaning is not in words,
Yet it yields to the inquiring spirit.
To discriminate becomes a pitfall;
To fall into hesitation is to let slip.
Turning away and touching are both wrong,
For it is like a mass of fire.
To express it in elegant words
Is to defile it.
It is bright at midnight;
At dawn there appears no light.
It acts as a guide for beings—
Its use removes all sorrow.
Although it is not fabricated,
It is not inexpressible.
It is like facing a jewel mirror;
Form and image behold each other—
You are not it.
It actually is you.

It is like a babe in the world,
In five aspects complete;
It does not go or come,
Nor rise, nor stand.
In saying “baba wawa,”
Using words that are not words,
Ultimately nothing is grasped,
Because speech is not precise.
It is like the six lines of the double split hexagram;
The relative and Absolute integrate—
Piled up, they make three;
The complete transformation makes five.
It is like the taste of the five-flavored herb,
Like the diamond thunderbolt.
Subtly included within the True,
Inquiry and response come together.
Communing with the Source and communing with the
process,
It includes integration and includes the road.
Merging is auspicious; do not violate it.
Naturally Real, yet inconceivable,
It belongs neither to delusion nor enlightenment.
When the time is ripe and conditions are arranged,
In utter silence it shines brightly.
In its fineness it enters spacelessness;
In its greatness it has no location.
A hair’s breadth of deviation
Puts ev’rything out of tune.

Now there are sudden and gradual,
In connection with which are set up basic approaches.
Once basic approaches are distinguished,
Then there are guiding rules.
But even though the basic is reached and the
 approach comprehended,
Truth eternally flows.
Outwardly still while inwardly restless,
Like a tethered colt, a trapped rat—
The ancient teachers pitied them,
And transmitted the Dharma.
According to their delusions,
They called black as white—
When erroneous imaginations cease,
The acquiescent Mind realizes itself.
If you want to conform to the ancient Way,
Please observe the ancients of former times:
When about to fulfill the Way of Buddhahood,
One gazed at a tree for ten aeons,
Like a tiger leaving part of its prey,
Like a horse with hobbled hind legs.
Because there is the base, there are
Jewel pedestals, fine clothing;
Because there is the startlingly different,
There are house cat and cow.
Yi, with his archer's skill,
Could hit a target at a hundred paces;

But when arrow points meet head on,
What has this to do with the power of skill?
When the wooden man begins to sing,
The stone woman gets up to dance;
It's not within reach of feeling or discrimination—
How could it admit of consideration in thought?
Ministers serve their lord,
Children obey their father.
Not obeying is not filial,
And not serving is no help.
Practice secretly, working within,
As though a fool, like an idiot—
If you can achieve continuity,
This is called the host within the host.

Meal Sutras

Before Meals

Everyone

Buddha was born at Lumbini,
Enlightened at Bodhagaya,
Taught at Varanasi,
Entered Nirvana at Kusinagara.

Now we open Buddha Tathagata's eating bowls.
May donors, receivers, and offerings
All be free from self-clinging
With all sentient beings.

During Serving

Leader

In the midst of the Three Treasures
With all sentient beings,
Let us recite the names of Buddha:

Everyone

Homage to the boundless Dharmakaya Vairocana
Buddha;
The complete Sambhogakaya Vairocana Buddha;
The manifest Nirmanakaya Shakyamuni Buddhas;
All Buddhas past, present, and future in all directions;
The many Bodhisattva Mahasattvas;
The Maha Prajñāparamita.

After Serving

Everyone

Innumerable labors have brought us this food;
We should know how it comes to us.
As we receive this offering, we should consider
Whether our virtue and practice deserve it.

As we desire the natural condition of mind
To be free from clinging, we must be free from greed.

To support our life we take this food;
To attain the Buddha Way we take this food.

This food is for the Three Treasures
And for all beings everywhere.

Thus we eat this food with everyone;
We eat to practice what is wholesome,
To end what is unwholesome,
To save all sentient beings,
And to accomplish the Buddha Way.

Bowl Cleaning

Everyone

The water with which I wash these bowls tastes
delectable.
I offer it to the various beings to satisfy them.

After Meals

Leader

In this world of Emptiness,
May we exist in muddy water with purity like a lotus.
Nothing surpasses the boundless Mind.
Thus we bow to Buddha.

Trusting the Heartmind

The Great Way is not difficult

There is nothing It prefers.

Only when you neither love nor hate
Does It appear clearly, without disguise.

A hair's breadth of difference
And heaven and earth are set apart.

If you wish to see It,
Then hold no opinions either for or against.

To set what you like against what you dislike
Is the disease of the mind.

Not knowing the profound quality of the Way,
We disturb our original peace of mind to no purpose.

Perfect like great space,
The Way has nothing lacking, nothing extra.

By our accepting and rejecting,
We lose sight of the true nature of things.

Neither chase after outer entanglements,
Nor dwell in Emptiness.

Be serene in the Oneness of things
And confusion will vanish of its own accord.

When movement is stopped in order to get rest,
This rest will itself be restless.

If you linger in either extreme,
How can you realize that there are not two?

Without a thorough understanding of Oneness,
Both movement and rest will be insufficient.

Banish reality, and you fall into it;
Seek Emptiness, and you deny Its nature.

The more talking and thinking,
The further from the Truth.

Abandon wordiness and intellection,
And there is nothing you cannot penetrate.

Return to the root, and discover the essence;
Pursue illumination, and lose the Source.

The moment we reverse the light,
Appearance and Emptiness are transcended.

The recurring movement between apparent and Empty
Arises only because of our ignorance.

Do not seek after Truth;
Only cease to cherish opinions.

Do not remain in the relative view of things;
Avoid such pursuits carefully.

If there is the slightest trace of this and that,
The mind is lost in confusion.

The two exist because of the One,
But do not hold on to the One.

When the mind is not disturbed,
There is neither offense nor blame.

When nothing offends,
The multitude of things vanish along with the mind.

When no discriminating thoughts arise,
The mind ceases to appear.

When mind vanishes, things follow it.
Object is object for the subject; subject is subject
for the object.

The thoroughgoing relativity of these two
Is originally one Emptiness.

In Emptiness, mind and thing are indistinguishable,
And each contains within itself the whole world.

If you do not discriminate between coarse and fine,
How can you be for this and against that?

The Great Way is All-embracing;
It is neither easy nor difficult.

Limited views are flighty and insecure—
Now rushing head-long, now holding back.

In clinging to “this,” which is beyond measure,
The mind enters a path that leads it astray.

Let things take their own course,
And experience neither going nor staying.

Obeying the nature of things, we are in accord with
the Way,
Wandering freely, without annoyance.

When our thought is fettered, it turns from Truth;
It is dark, heavy, unclear.

The burdensome practice of judging
Brings annoyance and weariness.

It is foolish to irritate the mind;
Why shun this to be friends with that?

If you wish to enter the One Vehicle,
Do not flee from the six dusts.

Indeed, not hating the world of the senses
Is identical with true enlightenment.

The wise have no motives;
Fools shackle themselves.

There is One Dharma, not many;
Distinctions arise from foolishly clinging to this and that.

Seeking Mind with discriminating mind—
Is not this the greatest mistake?

Ignorance begets motion and rest;
Wisdom neither loves nor hates.

All dualities derive from false inference.
They are like dreams, phantoms, flowers in air.

Why so anxiously pursue them?
Gain and loss, right and wrong—away with them
once and for all!

If the eye does not sleep,
All dreaming will naturally cease.

If the mind makes no discrimination,
All things are as they are, of a single Essence.

In the deep mystery of this One Essence,
Entanglements drop away.

When all things are seen equally,
Timeless Thus-in-Itself is reached.

Forget the "why?" of things
When there can be no measuring or comparing.

When motion stops, there is no motion;
When rest is set in motion, there is no rest.

Since "two" cannot be established,
How can there be One?

Arriving where there is no further,
There can be no law or description to apply.

For the unified Mind in accord with the Way,
All self-centered striving ceases.

Doubts and irresolutions vanish;
Faith is confirmed.

There is nothing left behind,
Nothing to remember.

Empty, lucid, self-illuminated,
The Mind does not exert itself.

This is where thought is useless,
What sense or feeling cannot fathom.

In this world of Suchness,
There is neither self nor other.

To come directly into harmony with Truth,
All that can be said is "not two."

In this "not two," nothing is separate,
Nothing is excluded.

The Enlightened of all times and places
Have all entered into this Truth.

This Truth is not extended in time or space;
For in It, a moment and an eon are one.

There is neither here nor there,
Yet this Truth is manifest in all directions.

The infinitely small is as the infinitely great
When limits are forgotten.

The very large is as the very small
When outlines are dissolved.

Being is an aspect of nonbeing;
Nonbeing, an aspect of being.

Don't waste time in doubts and arguments
That would not have it so.

The One is none other than the All,
The All is none other than the One.

If only this is realized,
The rest will follow of its own accord.

Trusting the Heartmind is the "not-two,"
For nonduality is one with Faith.

This is where words fail,
For the Way is neither yesterday, today, nor tomorrow.

Dogen Zenji's Fukanzazengi

The Way is basically perfect and all-pervading. How could it be contingent upon practice and realization? The Truth-vehicle is free and untrammled. What need is there for one's concentrated effort? Indeed, the Whole Body is far beyond the world's dust. Who could believe in a means to brush it clean? It is never apart from one right where one is. What is the use of going off here and there to practice?

And yet, if there is the slightest discrepancy, the Way is as distant as heaven from earth. If the least like or dislike arises, the mind is lost in confusion. Suppose one gains pride of understanding and inflates one's own enlightenment, glimpsing the wisdom that runs through all things, attaining the Way and clarifying the Mind, raising an aspiration to scale the very sky. One is making initial, partial excursions about the frontiers but is still somewhat deficient in the vital Way of total emancipation.

Need I mention the Buddha, who was possessed of inborn knowledge? The influence of his six years of upright sitting is noticeable still. Or Bodhidharma's transmission of the Mind-seal? The fame of his nine years of wall-sitting is celebrated to this day. Since this was the case with the saints of old, how can people of today dispense with negotiation of the Way?

You should therefore cease from practice based on intellectual understanding, pursuing words and following after speech, and learn the backward step that turns your light inward to illuminate your self. Body and mind of themselves will drop away, and your original face will be manifest. If you want to attain Suchness, you should practice Suchness without delay.

For sanzen, a quiet room is suitable. Eat and drink moderately. Cast aside all involvements and cease all affairs. Do not think good or bad. Do not administer pros and cons. Cease all movements of the conscious mind, the gauging of all thoughts and views. Have no designs on becoming a buddha. Sanzen has nothing whatever to do with sitting or lying down.

At the site of your regular sitting, spread out thick matting and place a cushion above it. Sit in a cross-legged position with your knees directly upon the mat. You should have your clothes and belt loosely bound and arranged in order. Then place your right hand on your left leg and your left palm facing upward on your right palm, thumb tips touching. Thus sit upright in correct bodily posture, neither inclining to the left nor to the right, neither leaning forward nor backward. Be sure your ears are on a plane with your shoulders and your nose is in line with your navel. Place your tongue against the front roof of your mouth, with teeth and lips both shut. Your eyes should always remain open, and you should breathe gently through your nose.

Once you have adjusted your posture, take a deep breath, inhale and exhale, rock your body right and left, and settle into a steady, immobile sitting position. Think of not-thinking. How do you think of not thinking? Non-thinking. This in itself is the essential art of zazen.

The zazen I speak of is not learning meditation. It is simply the Dharma-gate of repose and bliss, the practice-realization of totally culminated enlightenment. It is the manifestation of ultimate Reality. Traps and snares can never reach it. Once its heart is grasped, you are like the dragon when he gains the water, like the tiger when she enters the mountain. For you must know that just there, in zazen, Truth is manifesting itself, and from the first, 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 unenlightenment and enlightenment, and dying while either sitting or standing, have all depended entirely on the strength of zazen.

In addition, the bringing about of enlightenment by the opportunity provided by a finger, a banner, a needle, or a mallet, and the effecting of realization with the aid of a whisk, a fist, a staff, or a shout, cannot be fully understood by one's discriminative thinking. Indeed, it cannot be known by the practicing or realizing of

supernatural powers, either. It must be department beyond one's hearing and seeing—is it not a principle that is prior to one's knowledge and conceptions?

This being the case, intelligence or lack of it does not matter; between the dull and the sharp-witted there is no distinction. If you concentrate your effort single-mindedly, that in itself is negotiating the Way. Practice-realization is naturally undefiled. Going forward is a matter of everydayness.

In general, this world and other worlds as well, both in India and China, equally hold the Truth-seal, and over it all prevails the character of this school, which is simply total engagement in immobile sitting. Although it is said that there are as many minds as there are people, still all negotiate the Way solely in zazen. Why leave behind the seat that exists in your home and go aimlessly off to the dusty realms of other lands? If you make one misstep you go astray from the Way which is even now directly before you.

You have gained the pivotal opportunity of human form. Do not use your time in vain. You are maintaining the essential working of the Way. Who would take wasteful delight in the spark from the flintstone? Besides, form and substance are like dew on the grass, destiny like the 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 be suspicious of the true dragon. Devote your energies to a way that directly indicates the Absolute. Revere the person of complete attainment who is beyond all human agency. Gain accord with the enlightenment of the Buddhas; succeed to the legitimate lineage of the Ancestors' samadhi. Constantly perform in such a manner and you are assured of being a person such as they. Your treasure-store will open of itself, and you will use it at will.

