JŪNIRAI

The gāthā JŪNIRAI was written by Nāgārjuna (c.2nd-3rd cent. B.C.E.) the 1st. of the Seven Masters of Jōdo Shinshū. It expresses eloquently the depth of Nāgārjuna's gratitude to the Amida Buddha.

Nāgārjuna's Mādhyamika philosophy is considered by many to be the foundation of Mahāyāna Buddhism. His exposition of the essential Buddhist concept of 'interdependent origination' (pratīya-samutpāda) 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.

For those unable to pursue the "Difficult Path" of cultivating the monastic practice of mental and moral discipline, Nāgārjuna advocated the "Easy Path" of calling the Name of the Amida Buddha.

The English translation of this gāthā is from the Shinshū Seiten, Jōdo Shin Buddhist Teaching, published by the Buddhist Churches of America, 1978.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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 māras (demons) always venerate Him. He dwells with Vow-power for the sake of all beings. Thus I prostrate myself before Amida Buddha.

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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.

From the ten quarters Bodhisattvas come, Revealing wondrous powers, they attain blissful state; Honoring His face, they offer eternal homage. Thus I prostrate myself before Amida Buddha.

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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 evil doers, nor 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. なーまんだーぶ・南無阿彌陀佛

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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-virtue
Be shared equally with all beings.
May we together awaken the Bodhi Mind,
And be born in the realm of Serenity and Joy.