

JUNIRAI

The gatha Junirai was written by Nagarjuna (c.2nd-3rd cent. BCE) the 1st. of the Seven Masters of Jodo Shinshu. It expresses eloquently the depth of Nagarjuna's gratitude of the Amida Buddha.

Nagarjuna's Madhyamika philosophy is considered by many to be the foundation of Mahayana Buddhism. His exposition of the essential Buddhist concept of "interdependent origination" (pratiya-samutpada) 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, Nagarjuna advocated the "Easy Path" of calling the Name of the Amida Buddha.

English Translation

Before Amida Buddha whom Deva and men worship,
I humble myself in deepest reverence.
In his wondrous land of Bliss,
Surrounded is he by countless Bodhisattvas.

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.

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.
Thus I prostrate myself before Amida Buddha.

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.

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 maras always venerate him.
He dwells with Vow-power for the sake of all beings.
Thus I prostrate myself before Amida Buddha.

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.
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.

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 expediences
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.