

Kokan Shiren's *Zen Precept Procedures*

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Zen Precept Procedures (*Zenkai ki*) was written by the Japanese Rinzai Zen monk Kokan Shiren (1278–1346) in 1325. Shiren was one of the outstanding leaders of the highly cultured Five Mountains (*gozan*) Zen monastic community in Kyoto. Today he is perhaps best known as the author of the *Buddhist Omnibus of the Genkō Era* (*Genkō Shakusho*, 30 fascicles, 1321), the first comprehensive history and ethnography of Buddhism written in Japan. Although Shiren's *Omnibus* describes all aspects of Japanese Buddhism, the founders of its various leading temples, its education system, its major public ceremonies, its outstanding icons, the regional gods (*kami*) that promote the religion, and so forth, the bulk of the text concentrates on biographies of Zen monks. In fact, its primary goal is to link Zen firmly to mainstream Buddhist traditions in Japan. It begins, for example, by describing how Bodhidharma, the legendary first patriarch of Zen, came to Japan and traded Japanese *waka* songs with Prince Shōtoku (547–622), Japan's foremost cultural hero and the founding patron of Japanese Buddhism. Its accounts of famous monks associated with rival styles of Buddhism rarely fail to emphasize the importance of Zen meditation in their spiritual development.

Shiren's *Zen Precept Procedures* also can be seen as an attempt to link Zen to mainstream Japanese Buddhism. It links Zen to the dominant Japanese interpretation of precepts. Based on old Japanese legends, Shiren identifies the exclusive Mahāyāna precept ordinations that were established by Saichō (767–822), the founder of Japanese Tendai, with the unique Zen lineage that Bodhidharma supposedly brought to China in the sixth century. This identification has no historical basis, but it has profound religious implications. This identification has, in fact, radically altered the religious characteristics of Japanese Zen.

The Japanese Tendai conceptions of exclusively Mahāyāna precepts and exclusively Mahāyāna precept ordinations differ radically from the traditional Buddhist precepts observed by Zen monks in China. Japanese Tendai monks labeled the 250 vinaya (*ritsu*) precepts observed by all Chinese monks, including Chinese

Zen monks, as “Hīnayāna” (Shōjō), literally, “inferior Buddhism.” But it is important to note that Japanese Tendai monks did not regard their own bodhisattva precepts merely as a contrasting set of Mahāyāna (Daijō, i.e., “superior Buddhism”) precepts. Instead the bodhisattva precepts were (and are) conceived of as a singular Buddha precept that transcends all distinctions between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna, secular life and monastic life, or good and evil. This singular Buddha precept is the Buddha Mind, the mind of awakening, the vessel of salvation (*jōkai itchi*). The religious power of the precepts is such that proper ritual ordination alone will deliver man, woman, child, or beast from all suffering. In other words, the heart of the ordination is the symbolic confirmation of salvation; it need not represent a change of social status or a decision to join the clergy.

Shiren’s *Zen Precept Procedures* identifies this special Tendai interpretation of the bodhisattva precepts with the Zen transmission of an exclusive patriarchal lineage, which supposedly conferred a unique legitimacy on Zen masters. He argues that the true Mahāyāna precepts that embody awakening are conveyed only within this unique Zen lineage: “Outside of Zen there are no precepts, and outside the precepts there is no Zen.” What is important, therefore, is to have faith in the Zen lineage and faith in the ritual efficacy of the ordination procedure. Faith is the starting point. This ritual alone conferred the status of Buddha and patriarch on the participants. To confirm this spiritual transformation, the precept ordination ceremony concludes with the presentation of Zen blood-lineage charts (*kechimyaku*) to the participants. These lineage charts list the names of all of the Zen patriarchs, beginning with Śākyamuni Buddha and ending with the name of the lay person who was ordained. A red line connects all the names together, signifying that the lay person now has a direct link to the Buddha.

Shiren’s *Zen Precept Procedures* also is known by the more descriptive title, *Procedures for Bodhisattva Precept Ordinations in the Zen School* (*Zenmon ju bosatsukai ki*). It consists of Shiren’s preface plus the following ten sections: (1) Opening Sermon, (2) Exclusions, (3) Arousing Spiritual Aspirations, (4) Repentance, (5) Invoking the Presence of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, (6) Three Refuges, (7) Three Pure Precepts, (8) Ten Major precepts, (9) Minor Precepts, and (10) Transfer of Merit (*ekō*). Many elements in the precept ordination rituals practiced in Japanese Zen, both Rinzai and Sōtō, from the fourteenth century down to the present day conform to Shiren’s procedures. Only the preface and sections 1, 2, and 4 are translated below. These sections emphasize the precepts as salvation, the unique Zen lineage, and the importance of repentance rituals. Although the text says that each ordinand must perform “repentance for three years,” in actual practice usually much shorter terms were allowed. Often the entire precept ceremony would conclude within three days.

The translation is based on *Zenmon ju bosatsukai ki* in *Zengaku taikei*, vol. 7 (Tokyo: Ikkatsusha, 1913).

Further Reading

William M. Bodiford, *Sōtō Zen in Medieval Japan*, Studies in East Asian Buddhism, no. 8 (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993); Paul Groner, *Saichō: The Establishment of the Japanese Tendai School*, Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series (Seoul: Po Chin Chai, 1984).

Zen Precept Procedures

PREFACE

In ancient times Bodhidharma brought the Buddha Mind Seal from southern India to China: pointing directly, a single transmission, fierce and rough. Thus were the bodhisattva precepts granted to the second patriarch and so on to the five houses and seven lineages of Zen. The granting and receiving of the precepts have continued without break. I have seen the precept charts of all other schools of Buddhism. None of their names are affiliated to this lineage. Only our Zen precepts have been handed down from the Buddha Śākyamuni to this day, interlinked without missing a single generation. Therefore, of all precepts, Zen precepts are best.

From the time I was first ordained with these precepts I have wanted to standardize the procedures and condense its elaborate text but lacked the time to do so. Now I have divided the ordination procedures into ten sections and explained the proper ceremony for each.

When an ordination is to be performed, always the chapel (*dōjō*) must be washed and swept. Each ritual furnishing, the incense stands, seating mats for masters and disciples, and so forth must be set out with care as specified in the procedures. First teach those who will receive the precepts to arouse pure faith. The *Brahma's Net Sutra* (*Bonmōkyō*) states: "You will become a Buddha. I have already become a Buddha." If one always believes in this way, then one is fully ordained with the precepts. The *Flower Garland Sutra* (*Kegonkyō*) states: "Faith is the origin of the Way. It is the mother of all virtues." Cultivate and develop all wholesome roots. Oh, you must not consider anything else!

Preface written autumn of 1325 by Kokan Shiren

PART 1: OPENING SERMON

The profound message of all awakened heroes of the past, present, and future consists of the Three Learnings. Meditation and wisdom are middle and last, but precepts come first. Precepts are visible in every action. They are the foundation of the six perfections. How could one's attainment of supreme perfect awakening not derive from them?

There are many varieties of precepts: the 5 and the 8 precepts for lay peo-

ple, the 250 of the vinaya, the 10 major and the 48 minor bodhisattva precepts. Of these, the 5 and the 8 precepts insure rebirth as humans or gods. The 250 lead to realization of the Hīnayāna goal. Only the 10 major and 48 minor lead to accomplishment of the Supreme Way [i.e., Mahāyāna awakening]. Ordination with Śrāvaka [i.e., Hīnayāna] precepts can be nullified. But ordination with the bodhisattva precepts can never be revoked. Even if one violates the precepts after ordination, one is still the Buddha's child. But one who refrains from both ordination and violation is a non-Buddhist. Thus a sutra states: "Just as the scent of champak blossoms, even when withered, smells stronger than that of all other flowers, even precept-violating monks are superior to non-Buddhists." Moreover, the *Brahma's Net Sutra* states: "Living beings who receive ordination with the precepts enter into the ranks of the Buddhas, attaining the same great enlightenment. Truly they are the Buddha's children."

These Vajra Precepts (*kongō kai*) were transmitted from the Lotus throne across the Lotus petals for 1,001 years by Śākyamuni Buddha, by forty-seven Zen patriarchs in India to the West, and by twenty-three Zen patriarchs in China to the East. The Chinese Zen patriarchs, beginning with the seventh, were Nan-yüeh, Ma-tsu, Pai-chang, Huang-po, Lin-chi, Hsing-hua, Nan-yüan, Feng-hsüeh, Shou-shan, Fen-yang, Tz'u-ming, Huang-lung, Hui-t'ang, Ling-yüan, Wu-shih, Hsin-wen, Hsüeh-an, and Hsü-an (J. Nagaku, Baso, Hyakujō, Ōbaku, Rinzai, Kōke, Nan'in, Fuketsu, Shuzan, Fun'yo, Jimei, Ōryō, Meidō, Reigen, Mushi, Shinmon, Setsuan, and Koan). Only our Eisai made the pilgrimage to Sung China to meet Hsü-an, to be ordained with the Buddha Mind Seal. Hsü-an handed over his staff, whisk, as well as the bodhisattva precepts, which constitute the Zen school's Single Great Affair (*ichi daiji*).

Certainly these great precepts do not resemble any of the other varieties. They convey the Mind Seal of master Bodhidharma. Therefore, one who is about to be ordained should arouse pure faith. In the old text of the *Zen Precept Procedures* the opening sermon stated: Good. Good. All children of the Buddha now arouse the supreme faith of the bodhisattva. Seek to receive ordination with the supreme treasure, the precepts. Earnestly contemplate this. All living beings consist of Buddha-nature. Since the beginningless past they have always dwelled in purity: bright without dimness; understanding in constant knowledge. This fundamental state is thusness. It also is known as *tathāgata-garbha* [i.e., the spiritual womb of the Buddhas]. Yet merely because of false thoughts it becomes obscured, and without one being aware of it one sinks into attachments and engenders karma, thereby incurring the suffering of birth and death (*samsāra*). The great awakened one, the Buddha, rues this. He teaches that our true spiritual nature is pure, just like that of all Buddhas. The scripture states: "At that time the Tathāgata surveyed all living creatures throughout the universe and made this declaration: 'How marvelous. All living beings possess the wisdom and virtuous characteristics of the tathāgatas. They are no different from the Buddhas.'"

How sad! Since eons past we have never before encountered the true religion. We have turned our backs on the truth and sought the false. We have wandered through the six courses of rebirth, receiving all kinds of bodily forms. Thousands of births! Millions of deaths! Lacking our own wisdom eye, we have associated with evil companions. In our permissiveness we have committed infinite sins. Sometimes as an animal, sometimes as a human, we have transmigrated without end. Now, having encountered the ultimate teaching, believe that you are originally Buddha. Act in accordance with Buddha action. Match your mind to Buddha mind. Cut off your base habits. Return to the root. Go back to the source.

Children of the Buddha! Now you must want to discard the false and regain the true. You must want to receive the Buddhist precepts. The *Sutra of the Final Teachings* (Yuikyōgyō) states: "Precepts are the foundation that leads to liberation. As a result of precepts one is able to attain all meditative trances and develop the wisdom that eliminates suffering." The *Precept Sutra* says that all sentient beings should embrace the Buddha's precepts: "Living beings who receive ordination with the precepts enter into the ranks of the Buddhas, attaining the same great enlightenment. Truly they are the Buddha's children." Likewise, the *Sutra of Satyaka Niganthaputra* (Sassha Nikenjikyō) states: "If one does not observe the precepts, then one could not even achieve the body of a wild fox with scabies. How then could such a one expect to achieve the adornments of the Dharma Body of a Buddha?" The *Sutra on the Adornments of the Bodhisattva* (Yōrakkyō) states: "There is not a single bodhisattva who attained the Supreme Way, reaching the stage of equality of all things like an empty sky, who did not do so by means of the precepts." It also states: "If among all the living beings of the past, present, and future there is anyone who refuses the bodhisattva precepts, then that person should not be called a living being, should not be called a human. That person is no different from a beast. That person is eternally deprived of the Three Treasures. That person is not a man, is not a woman, is not a human. That person should be called a beast, known for false views, known for a heretical way." For these reasons all the Buddhas and all Zen patriarchs of every generation have been adorned with the pure precepts and have endeavored to propagate them widely throughout the universe. Master Nāgārjuna (Ryūju, ca. 2d–3d c.) said: "Just as someone without legs cannot run, someone without wings cannot fly, or someone without a raft cannot cross over to the other shore, likewise someone without the pure precepts cannot attain the marvelous goal of Buddhahood. If someone discards these precepts, even if he lives a religious life, retires to the mountains, and practices austerity, eating only fruit and medicine, still that person is no different from a beast."

Oh my! The Lord Śākyamuni has entered nirvāṇa. The ages of the True Teaching and Imitation Teaching have passed. We were born during the Decline of the Teaching (*mappō*), the evil age of five hardships. The spiritual faculties of living beings have grown weak. No one sees the true wisdom. Oh,

we are witnesses to the disappearance of the virtuous and sagely, the destruction of the True Teaching. False teachers cover the land preaching false doctrines, practicing false ways, advocating false views, transmitting false explanations. They stir up the dimwitted, leading them to demons and ghosts. In their audiences, even people of noble spiritual faculties cannot distinguish the false from the true. Before they can escape, they are following the false teachers into false doctrines, slandering the True Teaching. It is just like one blind herdsman leading a flock of blind cattle into a fiery pit. Truly they are to be profoundly pitied.

It is for that reason that since long ago all the Zen patriarchs have simply presented the True Teaching, directly pointing to the human heart. Everytime they encountered a new student, the first thing they did was to ensure that he took vows and received the precept ordination. This is knowing the appropriate time. It is matching the teaching to the spiritual faculties of the audience. It is illuminating the meaning transmitted from Buddha to Buddha. It has the power to rescue us from the Decline of the Teaching, from the illness of following the false. Therefore, it is said that in studying Zen and inquiring of the Way, precepts come first. They are the foundation of all religious practices and the source of the six perfections. How else can one eliminate evil and stop error?

How can one become a Buddha and patriarch? Master Bodhidharma said, "One whose behavior and understanding correspond is called a patriarch." [That is, one's behavior and understanding must embody the precepts.] Yet there are many varieties of precepts. Of these, the 5 and the 8 precepts ensure rebirth as humans or gods. The 250 lead to realization of the Hinayāna goal. Only the 10 major and 48 minor bodhisattva precepts lead to accomplishment of the Supreme Way. Ordination with Śrāvaka precepts can be nullified. But ordination with the bodhisattva precepts can never be revoked. How can this be? The 5 and 8 and other Hinayāna precepts depend on physical ordinations. The bodhisattva precepts, however, are based on mind alone. If mind had a limit, then the bodhisattva precepts would have a limit. But because mind is without limit, the precepts are without limit.

The *Sutra on Contemplation of Mental Basis* (*Shinji kangyō*) states: "If a person arouses the mind of *bodhi* (*bodai*), he/she can attain the goal of completing the Supreme Way. By strictly adhering to these highest pure precepts one attains the body of a Dharma King, a Buddha, with its freedom in all activities, its supernatural powers that pervade the ten directions, its ability to embrace all types of living beings. Everyone who observes the bodhisattva precepts attains benefits and virtues freely. It is like the ability of a Wheel-Rolling King (*cakravartin*) to go anyplace his heart desires." The power of these precepts is such that even if one were to violate the grave prohibitions and thereby end up in hell, the precepts would cause one to be the king of all beings in that evil place. By this same principle, any sentient being who receives ordination with these pure bodhisattva precepts and observes them religiously

without violations will always attain rebirth as a king in the human realm who protects the True Teaching of the Tathāgata (i.e., a perfected Buddha). But whoever does not receive ordination with the precepts will not even be able to achieve rebirth in the body of a fox. How could such an evil person ever become a king, the highest ranked, most pleasurable position in the human realm?

The *Sutra on the Adornments of the Bodhisattva* states: "If even one person in all the lands of the universe is converted and receives ordination with the bodhisattva precepts, the merit generated thereby would exceed that produced by erecting 84,000 Buddha stūpas." Just imagine the amount of merit generated by ordinations of two people, or three people, or a hundred, or a thousand. The benefits obtained thereby would be infinite. A husband or wife could receive an ordination and then ordain all the other members of the family. Even if one violates the precepts after ordination, one is still the Buddha's child. But one who refrains from both ordination and violation is a non-Buddhist. Thus a sutra states: "Just as the scent of champak blossoms, even when withered, smells stronger than that of all other flowers, even precept-violating monks are superior to non-Buddhists." Once ordained the efficacy of the precepts can never be lost, even in future lives. Even if one is reborn in hell or as a hungry ghost, ultimately the precepts are not revoked. If in a future life one is again ordained with the bodhisattva precepts, it is not called a new ordination. It just allows one's mind of enlightenment to push aside one's evil mind. Ordination with one precept produces a one-part bodhisattva. Ordination with two precepts creates a two-part bodhisattva, and so forth. Upon ordination with all ten major precepts, one becomes a fully-endowed bodhisattva. Thus, the precept text states: "You will become a Buddha. I have already become a Buddha." If one always believes in this way, then one is fully ordained with the precepts.

These Vajra Treasure Precepts (*kongō hōkai*) are the fundamental basis of all Buddhas, the basis of all bodhisattvas. They are the seeds of Buddha-nature. Know that these precepts were not preached for the first time by the Buddha of this age. These have been the original precepts of all Buddhas since long before. Buddhas after Buddhas have chanted these. Thus Vairocana (Rushana) Buddha seated on his lotus throne chanted these Treasure Precepts and bestowed them on the thousand million Śākyamuni Buddhas. The thousand million Śākyamuni Buddhas each sat under the tree of enlightenment, chanting these precepts fortnightly. Thereupon all the bodhisattvas chanted these precepts. All sentient beings consent to being ordained with these precepts. From the Buddhas and bodhisattvas above down to the most evil low-class beings below, the sagely and the common, Mahāyānists and Hīnayānists, all are included in the great net of these precepts. They are the profound, unobstructed, universal Buddhist teaching. Therefore, the forty-seven Zen patriarchs of the West in India and the twenty-three Zen patriarchs of the East in China each personally handed down these precepts. In China and in Japan all the Zen patriarchs are linked together through this unbroken continuum.

One who is about to be ordained should arouse pure faith and uphold this tradition. Faith is the origin of the Way. It is the mother of all virtues. Reflect on this well.

The great bodhisattva precepts handed down in the Zen school are the great precepts of the formless basis of mind. Master Bodhidharma bestowed the Buddha Mind Seal and the ordination ritual. Thus outside the Zen school there are no precepts, and outside the precepts there is no Zen.

All Buddhas and Zen patriarchs must rely first and foremost on the precept ordination to benefit living creatures. Therefore when Śākyamuni Buddha attained the supreme awakening under the tree of enlightenment, the first thing he did was to chant these precepts. When Bodhidharma came from the West he used these precepts to transmit the Mind Seal. Since then these precepts have been handed down from proper heir to proper heir, without missing a single generation. In this way they have been transmitted to me.

Today, in response to the pleas of the four groups of monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen, I am about to perform the ordination ceremony. I embody neither understanding nor proper behavior. Embarrassed and ashamed, three times I refused, but in the end I could not avoid giving in to your requests. I will bestow on you the Zen precepts and blood-lineage chart (*kechimyaku*).

To be ordained with the great precepts of the Zen school is to obtain the True Teaching and precepts of the Buddhas and patriarchs. It is to arouse the precepts of the formless basis of mind, to open the Eye Perceiving the True Teaching (*shōbōgen*), to universally benefit gods and men. How could there be any doubt? How could you fail to arouse pure faith?

PART 2: EXAMINATION FOR EXCLUSIONS

Every good son who requests ordination with the bodhisattva precepts must be examined for the seven exclusionary sins. If even one of these sins has been committed, then the precepts cannot be conveyed. Naturally, one who has committed two or three exclusionary sins is completely unfit to receive the precept transmission. Only someone who is not guilty of any of the seven exclusions can receive the precept ordination. These seven exclusionary sins are: (1) injuring a Buddha, (2) killing one's father, (3) killing one's mother, (4) killing a senior monk, (5) killing a master of a Buddhist community, (6) violating a *saṅgha* (i.e., creating a schism), and (7) killing an *arhat* (an awakened one). Anyone guilty of these acts cannot receive the great precepts. Therefore, you will be questioned. The *Precept Sutra* says that the ordination master must not admit anyone who has committed the seven exclusionary sins in this present life. Now I will examine each of you. Answer truthfully. If you do not answer truthfully, you will only harm yourself and others. There will be no bounty.

Have you caused a Buddha's body to bleed? The ordinand answers, No.
Have you killed your father?

Have you killed your mother?
 Have you killed a senior monk?
 Have you killed a master of a Buddhist community?
 Have you violated a properly constituted saṅgha?
 Have you killed an arhat?

The above questions are asked and answered three times.

Announce: The master permits those without the seven exclusions to receive the ordination. (The bell and gong are sounded three times. Everyone bows three times.)

PART 4: REPENTANCE

Instruct the ordinands to practice the repentance ritual. Since beginningless eons ago our bodies, speech, and thoughts have produced every type of evil karma. Now all of us must repent. It is like dyeing a cloth. If one first washes away the dirt and then dyes the cloth, its color will be clear and beautiful. Likewise the karmic stains of living beings must be washed clean by the water of repentance if the dye of the precepts is to soak past our defilements to refresh and transform our moral nature.

The Buddha entered nirvāṇa two thousand years ago. The True Teaching has drastically declined. The winds of false doctrines blow vigorously. Unfortunate living beings born into this age have difficulty arousing pure faith even if they happen to hear the truth. It is because their delusions and moral obstructions are so deep rooted. Unless one arouses a truly sincere mind, the karmic burden of one's sins will have no reason to disappear. If the burden of sins is not eliminated, the precepts cannot take hold. For this reason you cannot receive an ordination immediately. Everyone must proceed according to the correct ritual form. First practice the rites of repentance for three years. Then you can receive the precept ordination. You must experience profound penitence and shame by public repentance.

There are two types of repentance: abstract (*ri*) and concrete (*ji*). Concerning abstract repentance, the *Sutra on Contemplation of the Bodhisattva Universal Excellence* (i.e., *Contemplation of Samantabhadra*; *Fugen kangyō*) states:

This ocean of all karmic obstructions
 Arises from our false thoughts.
 Let one who wishes to repent of them,
 Sitting in proper meditation posture,
 Contemplate the true aspect of reality.
 The burden of karmic sins, like frost,
 Evaporates in the sunlight of wisdom.

Concrete repentance consists of three grades. In the highest grade one throws one's body down on the ground, like a mountain crumbling, with

blood oozing from every pore. In the middle grade, one publicly confesses one's crimes with tears of sadness flowing down. In the lowest grade, one acknowledges all faults as a Buddhist master recites a list. This grade relies on the great compassion of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas. But unless living beings become like newborn babies, they will not arouse sincere aspirations, and there will be no basis for a miraculous spiritual response (by the Buddhas and bodhisattvas). It is either like cleaning one's house before inviting a king to visit or like the reflection of the sun not appearing in muddy water. Now I will recite the text of the repentance on your behalf. You must reflect on your beginningless karmic obstructions. This repentance will cause them to be eliminated.

The Repentance Text says:

I, disciple *so-and-so*, reverently beseech all Buddhas, the revered ones throughout the cosmos filling the infinite empty sky, all revered ones free from attachments to elements, all revered ones among the communities of monks.

I, disciple *so-and-so*, throughout infinite lifetimes since the beginningless past until today, afflicted and confused by infinite unwholesome qualities such as lust, hostility, and ignorance, have committed every type of sin. I have violated Buddha stūpas, destroyed Buddhist temples, burned Buddhist scriptures, melted Buddha images, stolen the property of the Buddhist community, slandered the two vehicles, Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna, and spoken of faults in the holy teaching. I have obstructed, inhibited, obscured, and concealed all types of Buddhist practitioners: those who were ordained, those who were not ordained, those who observed the precepts, and those who violated the precepts. I have beaten, abused, and scolded them. I have gossiped about their faults and transgressions. I have imprisoned them. I have stolen their robes and forced them to return to lay society. I have whipped them and ordered them about. I have punished harmony and snuffed out life forces. I have killed my fathers and my mothers. I have caused Buddha bodies to bleed. I have killed *arhat* and violated *saṅgha*. Indulging in grave false views, I have murdered, stolen, and raped. My verbal karma has not been good. I have lied, told fantastic stories, criticized, and used deceitful language. My mental karma has not been good. With false views based on lust and hostility I have defiled my fathers and my mothers. I have defiled monks and nuns, as well as temple grounds. I have violated fasts, broken precepts, drunk alcohol, and eaten meat. I have abused the Three Buddhist treasures (the Buddha, His teachings, and His followers), as well as all creatures, both sentient and insentient, without giving any benefits in return. I have taught others based on views I created in accordance with the ways of the world. In these ways I have committed infinite, limitless sins. I cannot even count them all.

Today with sincerity I do earnestly and publicly repent. From the time

I finish this repentance ritual and forever after I do renounce my deluded, karma creating mind of continuous discriminations. I wholeheartedly request the three treasures to have compassion on me and certify my repentance. Please cause your disciple's burden of sins to disappear.

Let us recite the repentance verse from the *Chapter on the Vows of the Bodhisattva Universal Excellence* (*Fugen bosatsu gyōganbon*). Virtuous ones of the past all have recited this verse to repent. Each of you should chant aloud as I repeat the verse. (The verse is chanted three times. Everyone bows three times.)

Formerly I committed every kind of evil deed.
These evils all arose from beginningless lust, hostility, and ignorance.
These evils produced by my body, by my voice, and by my mind,
Of each and all of these I do now repent.