

Sesshin  
Sutra Book  
Jikyouji – Cedar Rapids

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## Sutras for Services

Morning — Heart of Great Wisdom Sutra

Noon — Harmony of Difference and Sameness or

Song of the Precious Mirror Samadhi

Supper — Jijuyu Zammai

End of day — Fukanzazengi

*At end of second period, after the zazen bell rings:*

**(Robe Verse)**

(for putting on rakusu or okesa)

*3 times*

all:       How great, the robe of liberation!  
            A formless field of merit,  
            Wrapping ourselves in Buddha's teaching  
            We free all beings.

*Put on rakusu or okesa*

## Heart of Great Perfect Wisdom Sutra

*(Maha Prajna Paramita Hridaya Sutra)*

Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva,  
When deeply practicing prajna paramita,  
Clearly saw that all five aggregates are empty  
And thus relieved all suffering.

Shariputra, form does not differ from emptiness,  
Emptiness does not differ from form.  
Form itself is emptiness.  
Emptiness itself form.  
Sensations, perceptions, formations, and consciousness  
are also like this.

Shariputra, all Dharmas are marked by emptiness;  
They neither arise nor cease,  
Are neither defiled nor pure,  
Neither increase nor decrease.

Therefore, given emptiness, there is no form,  
No sensation, no perception, no formation, no consciousness;  
No eyes, no ears, no nose, no tongue, no body, no mind;  
No sight, no sound, no smell, no taste, no touch,  
no object of mind;  
No realm of sight, and so forth, down to  
no realm of mind-consciousness.  
There is neither ignorance nor extinction of ignorance, and so forth  
down to neither old age and death, nor extinction of old  
age and death;  
No suffering, no cause, no cessation, no path;  
No knowledge and no attainment.  
With nothing to attain,  
A bodhisattva relies on prajna paramita,  
And thus the mind is without hindrance.

Without hindrance, there is no fear.  
Far beyond all inverted views, one realizes nirvana.

All buddhas of past, present, and future rely on prajna paramita

And thereby attain unsurpassed, complete, perfect enlightenment.

Therefore, know the prajna paramita  
 As the great miraculous mantra,  
 The great bright mantra,  
 The supreme mantra,  
 The incomparable mantra,  
 Which removes all suffering  
 And is true, not false.  
 Therefore we proclaim the prajna paramita mantra,  
 The mantra that says:

“Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha.”

*Eko (doan)*

May this merit extend universally to all,  
 So that we together with all beings  
 Realize the Buddha Way.

*Dedication (all)*

All Buddhas, ten directions, three worlds  
 All honored ones, bodhisattvas, mahasattvas  
 Wisdom beyond wisdom, Maha Prajna-paramita

## The Harmony of Difference and Sameness

*(Sandokai)*

by Shih T'ou Hsi Ch'ien – Sekito Kisen (700 - 790)

The mind of the great sage of India  
 Is intimately transmitted from west to east.  
 While human faculties are sharp or dull,  
 the Way has no northern or southern ancestors.  
 The spiritual source shines clear in the light;  
 the branching streams flow on in the dark.  
 Grasping at things is surely delusion;  
 according with sameness is still not enlightenment.

All the objects of the senses  
 transpose and do not transpose.  
 Transposing, they are linked together;  
 Not transposing, each keeps its place.  
 Sights vary in quality and form,  
 sounds differ as pleasing or harsh.  
 Darkness merges refined and common words;  
 Brightness distinguishes clear and murky phrases.  
 The four elements return to their natures  
 just as a child turns to its mother.  
 Fire heats, wind moves,  
 water wets, earth is solid.  
 Eye and sights, ear and sounds,  
 nose and smells, tongue and tastes;  
 Thus for each and every thing,  
 according to the roots, the leaves spread forth.  
 Trunk and branches share the essence;  
 revered and common, each has its speech.  
 In the light there is darkness,  
 but don't take it as darkness;  
 In the dark there is light,  
 but don't see it as light.

Light and dark oppose one another  
 like the front and back foot in walking.

Each of the myriad things has its merit,  
 expressed according to function and place.  
 Existing phenomenally like box and cover joining;  
 according with principle like arrow points meeting.

Hearing the words, understand the meaning;  
 don't establish standards of your own.  
 Not understanding the way before your eyes.  
 how do you know the path you walk?  
 Walking forward is not a matter of far or near,  
 but if you are confused, mountains and rivers block your way.

I respectfully urge you who study the mystery,  
 do not pass your days and nights in vain.

*Eko (doan)*

May this merit extend universally to all,  
 So that we together with all beings  
 Realize the Buddha Way.

*Dedication (all)*

All Buddhas, ten directions, three worlds  
 All honored ones, bodhisattvas, mahasattvas□□  
 Wisdom beyond wisdom, Maha Prajna-paramita

## Song of the Precious Mirror Samadhi

*(Hokyo Zammai)*

by Tung Shan Liang Chieh – Tozan Ryokai ( 807 – 869 )

The dharma of thusness is intimately transmitted by buddhas and ancestors;  
Now you have it; preserve it well.

A silver bowl filled with snow; a heron hidden in the moon.  
Taken as similar, they are not the same; not distinguished,  
their places are known.

The meaning does not reside in the words, but a pivotal moment brings it forth.  
Move and you are trapped, miss and you fall into doubt and vacillation.  
Turning away and touching are both wrong, for it is like a massive fire.  
Just to portray it in literary form is to stain it with defilement.  
In darkest night it is perfectly clear; in the light of dawn it is hidden.  
It is a standard for all things; its use removes all suffering.  
Although it is not constructed, it is not beyond words.  
Like facing a precious mirror; form and reflection behold each other.  
You are not it, but in truth it is you.

Like a newborn child, it is fully endowed with five aspects.  
No going, no coming, no arising, no abiding;  
“Baba wawa” – is anything said or not?  
In the end it says nothing, for the words are not yet right.  
In the hexagram “double fire,” when main and subsidiary lines  
are transposed,  
piled up they become three, the permutations make five,  
Like the taste of the five-flavored herb, like the five-pronged vajra.  
Wondrously embraced within the complete,  
drumming and singing begin together.

Penetrate the source and travel the pathways; embrace the territory  
and treasure the roads.  
You would do well to respect this; do not neglect it.  
Natural and wondrous, it is not a matter of delusion or enlightenment.  
Within causes and conditions, time and season, it is serene and illuminating.  
So minute it enters where there is no gap, so vast it transcends dimension.  
A hairsbreadth’s deviation, and you are out of tune.  
Now there are sudden and gradual, in which teachings and approaches arise.  
When teachings and approaches are distinguished, each has its standard.

Whether teachings and approaches are mastered or not,  
reality constantly flows.

Outside still and inside trembling, like tethered colts or cowering rats,  
 The ancient sages grieved for them, and offered them the dharma.  
 Led by their inverted views, they take black for white.  
 When inverted thinking stops, the affirming mind naturally accords.  
 If you want to follow in the ancient tracks, please observe the sages of the past.  
 One on the verge of realizing the buddha way  
     contemplated a tree for ten kalpas,  
 Like a battle-scarred tiger, like a horse with shanks gone gray.  
 Because some are vulgar, jeweled tables and ornate robes;  
 Because others are wide-eyed, cats and white oxen.  
 With his archer's skill, Yi hit the mark at a hundred paces,  
 But when arrows meet head-on, how could it be a matter of skill?

The wooden man starts to sing; the stone woman gets up dancing.  
 It is not reached by feelings or consciousness, how could it involve deliberation?  
 Ministers serve their lords, children obey their parents;  
 Not obeying is not filial, failure to serve is no help.

With practice hidden, function secretly, like a fool, like an idiot;  
 Just to continue in this way is called the host within the host.

*Eko (doan)*

May this merit extend universally to all,  
 So that we together with all beings  
 Realize the Buddha Way.

*Dedication (all)*

All Buddhas, ten directions, three worlds  
 All honored ones, bodhisattvas, mahasattvas  
 Wisdom beyond wisdom, Maha Prajna-paramita

## Jijuyu Zammai

*Self Receiving and Using Samadhi*  
by Eihei Dogen (1200 – 1254)

For all ancestors and buddhas who have been dwelling in and maintaining buddha-dharma, practicing upright sitting in *jijuyu zammai* is the true path for opening up enlightenment. Both in India and China, those who have attained enlightenment have followed this way. This is because each teacher and each disciple has been intimately and correctly transmitting this subtle method and receiving and maintaining its true spirit.

According to the unmistakably handed down tradition, the straightforward buddha-dharma that has been simply transmitted is supreme among the supreme. From the time you begin practicing with a teacher, the practices of incense burning, bowing, *nembutsu*, repentance, and reading sutras are not at all essential; just sit, dropping off body and mind.

When one displays the buddha mudra with one's whole body and mind, sitting upright in this samadhi even for a short time, everything in the entire dharma world becomes buddha mudra, and all space in the universe completely becomes enlightenment. Therefore, it enables the buddha-tathagathas to increase the dharma joy of their own original grounds and renew the splendidness of the way of awakening. Simultaneously, all living beings of the dharma world in the ten directions and six realms become clear and pure in body and mind, realize great emancipation, and their own original face appears. At that time, all things together awaken to supreme enlightenment and utilize buddha-body, immediately go beyond the culmination of awakening, and sit upright under the kingly bodhi tree.

At the same time, they turn the incomparable, great dharma wheel, and begin expressing ultimate and unfabricated profound *prajna*.

There is a path through which the incomparable awareness of all things returns to the person in zazen, and whereby that person and the enlightenment of all things intimately and imperceptibly assist each other. Therefore this zazen person without fail drops off body and mind, cuts away previous tainted views and thoughts, awakens genuine buddha-dharma, universally helps the buddha work in each place, as numerous as atoms, where buddha-tathagathas teach and practice, and widely influences practitioners who are going beyond buddha, vigorously exalting the dharma which goes beyond buddha. At this time, because earth, grasses and trees, fences and walls, tiles and pebbles, all things in the ten-direction-dharma-realm, carry out buddha work, therefore everyone receives the benefit of wind and water caused by this functioning, and all are imperceptively helped by the wondrous and incomprehensible influence of buddha to actualize the enlightenment at hand. Since those who receive and use this water and fire extend the buddha influence of original enlightenment, all who live and talk with these people also share and universally unfold the boundless buddha virtue and they circulate the inexhaustible, ceaseless, incomprehensible, and immeasurable buddha dharma within and without the whole dharma world. However, these various

mutual influences do not mix into the perceptions of this person sitting, because they take place within stillness without any fabrication and they are enlightenment itself. If practice and enlightenment were separate as people commonly believe, it would be possible for them to perceive each other. But that which is associated with perceptions cannot be the standard of enlightenment because deluded human sentiment cannot reach the standard of enlightenment.

Moreover, although both mind and object appear and disappear within stillness, because this takes place in the realm of self-receiving and self-employing without moving a speck of dust or destroying a single form, extensive buddha work and profound, subtle buddha influence are carried out. The grass, trees, and earth affected by this functioning together radiate great brilliance and expound the deep, wondrous dharma endlessly. Grasses and trees, fences and walls demonstrate and exalt it for the sake of living beings, both ordinary and sage; and in turn, living beings, both ordinary and sage, express and unfold it for the sake of grasses and trees, fences and walls. The realm of self-awakening and awakening others is fundamentally endowed with the quality of enlightenment lacking nothing, and allows the standard of enlightenment to be actualized ceaselessly.

Therefore, even if only one person sits for a short time, because this zazen is one with all existence and completely permeates all time, it performs everlasting buddha guidance within the inexhaustible dharma world in the past, present, and future. Zazen is equally the same practice and same enlightenment for both the person sitting and all dharmas.

The melodious sound continues to resonate as it echoes, not only during sitting practice, but before and after striking *sunyata*, which continues endlessly before and after the hammer hits it. Not only that, but all things are endowed with original practice within the original face, which is impossible to measure.

*Eko ( doan says )*

May this merit extend universally to all,  
So that we together with all beings  
Realize the Buddha Way.

*Dedication (all)*

All Buddhas, ten directions, three worlds  
All honored ones, bodhisattvas, mahasattvas  
Wisdom beyond wisdom, Maha Prajna-paramita

*10 minutes before end of zazen*

## **Fukanzazengi**

*Universally Recommended Instructions for Zazen*  
by Eihei Dogen (1200-1254)

The Way is originally perfect and all-pervading. How could it be contingent on practice and realization? The true vehicle is self-sufficient. What need is there for special effort? Indeed, the whole body is free from dust. Who could believe in a means to brush it clean? It is never apart from this very place; what is the use of traveling around to practice? And yet if there is a hairsbreadth's deviation it is like the gap between heaven and earth. If the least like or dislike arises the mind is lost in confusion. Suppose you are confident in your understanding and rich in enlightenment, gaining the wisdom that knows at a glance, attaining the Way and clarifying the mind, arousing an aspiration to reach for the heavens. You are playing in the entranceway but you still are short of the vital path of emancipation.

Consider the Buddha: although he was wise at birth the traces of his six years of upright sitting can yet be seen. As for Bodhidharma, although he had received the mind-seal his nine years of facing a wall is celebrated still. If even the ancient sages were like this how can we today dispense with wholehearted practice?

Therefore, put aside the intellectual practice of investigating words and chasing phrases and learn to take the backward step that turns the light and shines it inward. Body and mind of themselves will drop away and your original face will manifest. If you want to realize such, get to work on such right now.

For practicing Zen, a quiet room is suitable. Eat and drink moderately. Put aside all involvements and suspend all affairs. Do not think "good" or "bad." Do not judge true or false. Give up the operations of mind, intellect, and consciousness; stop measuring with thoughts, ideas, and views. Have no designs on becoming a buddha. How could that be limited to sitting or lying down?

At your sitting place spread out a thick mat and put a cushion on it. Sit either in the full-lotus or half-lotus position. In the full-lotus position first place your right foot on your left thigh, then your left foot on your right thigh. In the half-lotus, simply place your left foot on your right thigh. Tie your robes loosely

and arrange them neatly. Then place your right hand on your left leg and your left hand on your right palm, thumb-tips lightly touching. Straighten your body and sit upright, leaning neither left nor right, neither forward nor backward. Align your ears with your shoulders and your nose with your navel. Rest the tip of your tongue against the front of the roof of your mouth with teeth together and lips shut. Always keep your eyes open and breathe softly through your nose.

Once you have adjusted your posture, take a breath and exhale fully, rock your body right and left, and settle into steady, immovable sitting. Think of not thinking. Not thinking – what kind of thinking is that? Nonthinking. This is the essential art of zazen.

The zazen I speak of is not meditation practice. It is simply the dharma gate of joyful ease, the practice-realization of totally culminated enlightenment. It is the koan realized; traps and snares can never reach it. If you grasp the point, you are like a dragon gaining the water, like a tiger taking to the mountains. For you must know that the true Dharma appears of itself so that from the start 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 mundane and sacred, and dying while either sitting or standing, have all depended entirely on the power of zazen.

In addition, triggering awakening with a finger, a banner, a needle, or a mallet, and effecting realization with a whisk, a fist, a staff, or a shout – these cannot be understood by discriminative thinking; much less can they be known through the practice of supernatural power.

They must represent conduct beyond seeing and hearing. Are they not a standard prior to knowledge and views?

This being the case, intelligence or lack of it is not an issue; make no distinction between the dull and the sharp-witted. If you concentrate your effort single-mindedly, that in itself is wholeheartedly engaging the way. Practice-realization is naturally undefiled. Going forward is, after all, an everyday affair.

In general, in our world and others, in both India and China, all equally hold the buddha-seal. While each lineage expresses its own style, they are all simply devoted to sitting, totally engaged in resolute stability. Although they

say that there are ten thousand distinctions and a thousand variations, they just wholeheartedly engage the way in zazen. Why leave behind the seat in your own home to wander in vain through the dusty realms of other lands? If you make one misstep you stumble past what is directly in front of you. You have gained the pivotal opportunity of human form. Do not pass your days and nights in vain. You are taking care of the essential activity of the buddha way. Who would take wasteful delight in the spark from a flintstone? Besides, form and substance are like the dew on the grass, the fortunes of life like a 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 doubt the true dragon. Devote your energies to the way that points directly to reality. Revere the one who has gone beyond learning and is free from effort. Accord with the enlightenment of all the buddhas; succeed to the samadhi of all the ancestors. Continue to live in such a way and you will be such a person. The treasure store will open of itself and you may enjoy it freely.

### **Sutra Opening Verse**

The unsurpassed, profound, and wondrous dharma  
 Is rarely met with, even in a hundred thousand million kalpas.  
 Now we can see and hear it, accept and maintain it,  
 may we unfold the meaning of the Tathagata's truth.

### **Sutra Closing Verse**

May this merit extend universally to all,  
 so that we together with all beings  
 realize the buddha way.

### **The Four Vows**

Beings are numberless; I vow to free them.  
 Delusions are inexhaustible; I vow to end them.  
 Dharma gates are boundless; I vow to enter them  
 The buddha way is unsurpassable; I vow to realize it

## Short Meal Verses

### *Before eating*

AS WE TAKE FOOD AND DRINK  
I VOW WITH ALL BEINGS  
TO REJOICE IN ZAZEN  
BEING FILLED WITH DELIGHT IN THE DHARMA

### *After eating*

AS WE HAVE TAKEN FOOD AND DRINK  
I VOW WITH ALL BEINGS  
TO BE FILLED WITH VIRTUOUS PRACTICE  
COMPLETING THE TEN POWERS

## Meal Chants

Gyohatsu Nenju and Gokan no Ge

### Before Meals ( Verse for Setting Out Bowls )

*all:* Buddha was born in Kapilavastu,  
enlightened in Magadha,  
taught in Varanasi,  
entered nirvana in Kushinagara.

Now we set out Buddha's bowls  
may we, with all beings  
realize the emptiness of the three wheels:  
giver, receiver, and gift.

*Lay out bowls*

*leader:* In the midst of the three treasures  
which verify our understanding,  
entrusting ourselves to the sangha,  
we recall:

### Before Serving ( Invitation/Reflection )

*all:* Vairochana Buddha, pure Dharmakaya;  
Lochana Buddha, complete Sambhogakaya;  
Shakyamuni Buddha, myriad Nirmanakaya;  
Maitreya Buddha, of future birth;  
all buddhas throughout space and time;  
Lotus of the Wondrous Dharma, Mahayana Sutra.  
Manjushri Bodhisattva, great wisdom;  
Samantabhadra Bodhisattva, great activity;  
Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva, great compassion;  
all honored ones, bodhisattvas, mahasattvas;  
wisdom beyond wisdom, maha prajna paramita.

*Leader at breakfast:*

This morning meal of ten benefits  
nourishes us in our practice.  
Its rewards are boundless,  
filling us with ease and joy.

*Leader at lunch:*

The three virtues and six tastes of this meal  
are offered to buddha and sangha.  
May all sentient beings in the universe  
be equally nourished.

*Serve food***After Serving, Before Eating** ( Five Contemplations )

*all:* We reflect on the effort that brought us this food  
and consider how it comes to us.

We reflect on our virtue and practice,  
and whether we are worthy of this offering.

We regard greed as the obstacle to freedom of mind.

We regard this meal as good medicine to sustain our life.

For the sake of enlightenment we now receive this food.

*lunch only:* Spirits, we offer this food  
to all of you in the ten directions.

First, this is for the three treasures;  
next, for all who help us;  
finally, for the beings in the six realms,  
may all be equally nourished.

The first portion is to end all evil  
The second is to cultivate all good;  
The third is to free all beings;  
May everyone realize the buddha way.

## Bowl Cleaning

*all:* The water with which we wash our bowls  
tastes like ambrosia.  
We offer it to the many spirits;  
may they be satisfied  
Om mahakushalaya svaha.

## After Meals

*leader:* Abiding in this ephemeral world  
Like a lotus in muddy water,  
The mind is pure and goes beyond.  
Thus we bow to buddha

*gassho bow on "buddha"  
put up bowls or wash dishes*