

**DEVOTING TO THE LIGHTS  
OF  
AMIDA BUDDA**



**by  
Saint Bennei Yamasaki**

**DEVOTING TO THE LIGHTS  
OF  
AMIDA BUDDHA**

**Amida Buddha's Lights illuminate all ten directions  
of the world (whole universe).**

**Śākyamuni Buddha appeared in this world to  
teach the truth of the universe.**

**Kannon Bosatsu (Buddha-to-be: attendant of  
Amida Buddha) and Seishi Bosatsu (Buddha-to-be:  
attendant of Amida Buddha) protect those who  
recite O-Nenbutsu as their superb friends.**

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by  
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in Hawaii**

**Translated  
by  
Rev. Kenjo S. Urakami**

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## HOMAGE TO GREAT PARENTAL SOURCE

Amida Buddha is holy and exclusive our Great Parental Source. However, Amida Buddha bestowed upon the blessings using the Three Aspects of Himself.

Dharma Body of Amida Buddha is the Great Source of the creation of all beings.

Rewarding Body of Amida Buddha is the representation of the whole universe and bestows upon the humans the eternal life who are created from the Dharma Body and who have faith and recite O-Nenbutsu guided by Amida Buddha's blessing Light.

Responding Body of Amida Buddha is represented in Śākyamuni Buddha who is the Great Parental Source of Teachings.

Amida Buddha is our Great Parental Source manifested by the Three Bodies inclusively.

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## FORWARD

**Who is Saint Bennei Yamasaki? He was an eminent scholar and a religious leader of Jōdō Shū history. He was a founder of Kōmyōkai or a group of religious movement advocating the Lights of Amida Buddha and to lead the life of O-Nenbutsu recitation to receive the Light of the Most Wise and the Most Compassionate Amida Buddha.**

**He chose the twelve Lights of Amida Buddha stated in the Sūtra of the Buddha of Infinite Life which is one of the fundamental sūtra of Jōdō Shū. He also emphasized about the Merit-Transference which is taught in Ōjōron or One Treaty of the Jōdō Shū which is one of the canonical books of the Jōdō Shū.**

**He emphasized that Amida Buddha is our Great Parental Source: we are children of Amida Buddha. This is very unique viewpoint. Jesus Christ is a son of God. Then, what is the difference between Amida Buddha's children and son of God? For the Christianity there is only one son, Jesus Christ. However, Amida Buddha has many children, namely, all beings are Amida Buddha's children.**

**We sing "Hotoke no Kodomo or We are children of Buddha."**



**Now Kōmyōkai is led by Rev. Dr. Akira Kawanami. He is also a distinguished scholar who wrote many books and a pious religious leader.**

**The translator of this book is Rev. Kenjo S. Urakami. He spent twenty-two years translating a book titled Amida Buddha and His Pure Land: Three Sūtras and One Treatise. This book is canon of the Jōdō Shū translated from classic Chinese into English. This is the first complete translation into English in the world. Most of his books are bilingual: English and Japanese, including a brail edition.**

**He received two Master's degrees from the University of Hawaii. He taught at many educational institutions such as PACE (Program for Afloat College Education) of US Navy.**

**His translation springs out from his long accumulated experiences. I extend mahalo to Urakami Sensei.**

**Bishop Dwight Ryōkan Nakamura  
Hawaii Council of Jodo Mission**

## DEVOTING TO THE LIGHTS OF AMIDA BUDDHA

### ○ MORNING DEVOTION:



◎ **Namu Amida Butsu, Namu Amida Butsu, Namu Amida Butsu.**

**(Reciting and Bowing Three Times)**

(There are three ways of bowing: gasshō and bow; gasshō and touch one's knees to the ground and bow; touch knees, arms and forehead to the ground and place palms open so that Amida Buddha places his feet on the palm which is the highest posture to worship Buddha. You may choose one of the postures according to your surrounding situation.)

### ○ WE DEVOTE OURSELVES WHOLE-HEARTEDLY:

◎ **We whole-heartedly devote ourselves to Amida Buddha who is entitled to be called as a Buddha of Three Bodies who represents the Dharma, the truth of the universe, who represents the highest achievement of his vow and represents who is always there responding to the people's needs.**

◎ Oh, Amida Buddha, you are the most honorable and only exclusive Buddha who has Three Bodies of Buddha. We devote ourselves entrust to you. You are always with us whenever and wherever we are. We devote whole-heartedly and serve Amida Buddha since you have bestowed upon a vivid life with your wondrous power and blessing. Please give us your compassion to manifest your glorious lights.

○ VERSE OF PRAISING AMIDA BUDDHA'S  
LIGHTS:

◎ Śākyamuni Buddha told disciple Ānanda: Majestically divine lights of the Buddha of Infinite Life (Amida Buddha), that being the most august and the best is far beyond the lights of all the Buddhas.

○ Because of this, the Buddha of Infinite Life is called:

◎ The Buddha of Infinite Light,  
The Buddha of Boundless Light,  
The Buddha of Unrestricted Light,  
The Buddha of Incomparable Light,  
The Buddha of Flaming Light,  
The Buddha of Immaculate Light,  
The Buddha of Joyous Light,  
The Buddha of the Light of Wisdom,  
The Buddha of Unceasing Light,  
The Buddha of Inconceivable Light,  
The Buddha of Indescribable Light,  
The Buddha of Light Surpassing the Sun and Moon.

For the beings who encounter this light, their three defilements of greed, hatred, and ignorance will vanish. They shall become gentle in mind and body. They shall rejoice and jump for joy, and a heart of goodness shall be born. If those who are in the three most painful places of rebirth see this light, they will have rest and there will be no more pain.

◎ After their life ends, they will be completely free from suffering.

The light of the Buddha of Infinite Life is brilliant and illuminates all the Buddha lands in every direction so that there are none who do not perceive it. I am not the only one who now praises his light. All the Buddhas, Śrāvakas, Pryteyakabuddha and Bodhisattvas together unanimously praise his light as I do. If there are people who perceive the majestic divinity and merits of his light, and praise his light day and night unceasingly, from the bottom of their hearts, they shall be born into the land [of the Buddha of Infinite Life] according to their wish. Their merits shall then be praised by the great congregation of all Bodhisattvas and Śrāvakas in a joint celebration

Then, later, when the time comes to attain the Way of Buddhahood, they will be praised by all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in all directions for their light, just as now [I praise the light of the Buddha of Infinite Life.]

◎ Śākyamuni Buddha told Ānanda: I will not be able to exhaustively teach you how the majestic divine light of the Buddha of Infinite Life is great and lofty, unique and wondrous even if I explain it day and night for a infinite time.

○ SINCERE ENTREATMENT:

◎ Oh Amida Buddha! Your Responding Body is replete in this universe, therefore, I believe my body is a place to enshrine your power of spiritual correspondence.

Please stay in our hearts just as you have stayed in the hearts of many saints. We sincerely entreat devoting our body to be bestowed upon your power of spiritual correspondence.

Please always stay your spiritual correspondence in our hearts and give us your highest guidance.

○ **WHOLE-HEARTEDLY PRAISE AND  
WORSHIP:**

○ **We devote the Buddha of Infinite Life:**

◎ **Real nature of Dharma Body Amida Buddha.**

We devote Amida Buddha of Infinite Life who is endowed with non-other spiritual body of Dharma and Responding and bestowed his responding virtues to infinite duration of time.

○ **We devote the Buddha of Infinite Light:**

◎ **We devote the Infinite Light of Amida Buddha with the utmost respect who is our last resort as the real manifestation of Dharma, Responding and Rewarding Body throughout the ten directions of the whole universe in the time of the past, present and future.**

○ **We devote the Buddha of Boundless Light:**

◎ **Amida Buddha's Boundless Light is the aspect of the wisdom of earth, water, fire, and space; the four great elements of the universe shining the entire universe of Dharma world and reveal the aspect of the wise eyes of the people.**

○ We devote the Buddha of Unrestricted Light:

◎ Amida Buddha's Unrestricted Light relieves and freed the people from the three defilements of hatred, ignorance and greed by the wondrous spiritually virtuous power which is endowed with the divine holiness, righteousness and blessing.

○ We devote the Buddha of Incomparable Light:

◎ Enveloped and guided by the Light of absolutely unlimited, we receive the stage equal to all the Buddhas and we experience finally the great enlightenment, the highest stage of human being.

○ We devote the Buddha of Great Flaming Light:

◎ By the Great Flaming Light of Amida Buddha, all the hindrances of extreme suffering by human beings blinding from the endless past in the darkness are dissipated.



○ We devote Immaculate Light of Amida Buddha:

◎ By the Immaculate Light of Amida Buddha, our filthy mind is cleansed and our mind and body are always purified and our outcome is spontaneously smoothed.

○ We devote Joyous Light of Amida Buddha:

◎ By the Joyous Light of Amida Buddha, our agonies are eased and we feel utmost joy of wondrous and tranquil true pleasure.

○ We devote the Light of Wisdom of Amida Buddha:

◎ Our blind sufferings in the darkness are cleared and we understand the truth of Amida Buddha revealed by the Wisdom of Amida Buddha.

○ We devote the Unceasing Light of Amida Buddha:

◎ By the Unceasing eternal Light of Amida Buddha, our mind is spiritually converted and manifests the wish of Amida Buddha hoping to become Buddha and guide the people.

○ We devote the Inconceivable Light of Amida Buddha:

◎ By concentrating on the profound and inconceivable Light of Amida Buddha without ceasing from the bottom of heart, the time to arouse our faith and our mind is awakened.

○ We devote the Indescribable Light of Amida Buddha:

◎ By receiving the Compassionate Light of Amida Buddha, the seven ways leading to enlightenment will be blooming and marvelous and mysterious spiritual emotion will be revived in the holy mind.

○ We devote the Light Surpassing Sun and Moon:

◎ We are living amidst of the Light under the sun and moon of Wisdom. We endeavor for the three actions of body, mouth, and thoughts and the four acts of walking, standing, sitting, and lying by following the holy wish of Amida Buddha in our mind.

○ SENTENCE OF EMBRACING LIGHT

◎ Amida Buddha's light illuminates the worlds of ten directions of the universe. Amida Buddha embraces and never leaves behind those who recite O-Nenbutsu.

○ CONCENTRATION OF THE RECITATION OF O-NENBUTSU

(for couple of minutes)

○ Namu Amida ○ Bu, Namu Amida ○ Bu,  
Namu Amida ○ Bu,

◎ Na ○ mu A ○ mida ○ Bu, Na ○ mu A  
○ mida ○ Bu, . . . . .  
Na ○ mu A ○ mida ○ Bu.

○ VERSE OF INCLUSIVE MERIT-  
TRANSFERENCE:

◎ We wish to transfer the merits of reading this ritual and reciting O-Nenbutsu to all beings equally. We wish to arouse a mind to attain Buddhahood with everyone and to be born into the Land of Peace and Happiness, Amida Buddha's Pure Land.

○ WE WHOLE-HEARTEDLY AROUSE OUR  
WISH:

◎ Oh, the most wise and the most compassionate Amida Buddha. The brilliant face of Master teacher Śākyamuni Buddha is forever elegant because he is replete with inner spiritual correspondence. We vow not to change our outlook regardless our encountered circumstance by following the role model of the perfect virtues of Sakyanuni Buddha. We wish always to have virtues of compassion, joy, righteousness, ease, braveness, virtue, modesty, and truth. Also we will be able to gain great compassion towards others equally without any hatred. Please bestow upon you blessings for our wish.

○ THREE TIMES WORSHIPPING:

◎ Namu Amida Butsu, Namu Amida Butsu, Namu Amida Butsu.

(Reciting and Bowing Three Times)



○ EVENING DEVOTION:



◎ **Namu Amida Butsu, Namu Amida Butsu, Namu Amida Butsu.**

**(Reciting and Bowing Three Times)**

○ **WE EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE  
WHOLE-HEARTEDLY:**

◎ **Oh, great compassionate Amida Buddha. We express our gratitude of finishing today's duties by the bright Light, pure spirit and new nourishment given by Amida Buddha and His blessings. Also we express our appreciation for the deep blessings by abiding the divine wish receiving the Light of the holiness, righteousness, and blessings caused by Amida Buddha.**

○ **VERSE OF PRAISING AMIDA BUDDHA'S  
LIGHTS:**

◎ **Śākyamuni Buddha told disciple Ānanda: Majestically divine lights of the Buddha of Infinite Life (Amida Buddha), that being the most august and the best is far beyond the lights of all the Buddhas.**

○ Because of this, the Buddha of Infinite Life is called:

◎ The Buddha of Infinite Light,  
The Buddha of Boundless Light,  
The Buddha of Unrestricted Light,  
The Buddha of Incomparable Light,  
The Buddha of Flaming Light,  
The Buddha of Immaculate Light,  
The Buddha of Joyous Light,  
The Buddha of the Light of Wisdom,  
The Buddha of Unceasing Light,  
The Buddha of Inconceivable Light,  
The Buddha of Indescribable Light,  
The Buddha of Light Surpassing the Sun and Moon.

For the beings who encounter this light, their three defilements of greed, hatred, and ignorance will vanish. They shall become gentle in mind and body. They shall rejoice and jump for joy, and a heart of goodness shall be born. If those who are in the three most painful places of rebirth see this light, they will have rest and there will be no more pain.

◎ After their life ends, they will be completely free from suffering.

The light of the Buddha of Infinite Life is brilliant and illuminates all the Buddha lands in every direction so that there are none who do not perceive it. I am not the only one who now praises his light. All the Buddhas, Śrāvakas, Pryteyakabuddha and Bodhisattvas together unanimously praise his light as I do. If there are people who perceive the majestic divinity and merits of his light, and praise his light day and night unceasingly, from the bottom of their hearts, they shall be born into the land [of the Buddha of Infinite Life] according to their wish. Their merits shall then be praised by the great congregation of all Bodhisattvas and Śrāvakas in a joint celebration

Then, later, when the time comes to attain the Way of Buddhahood, they will be praised by all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in all directions for their light, just as now [I praise the light of the Buddha of Infinite Life.]



◎ Śākyamuni Buddha told Ānanda: I will not be able to exhaustively teach you how the majestic divine light of the Buddha of Infinite Life is great and lofty, unique and wondrous even if I explain it day and night for an infinite time.

○ WE WHOLE-HEARTEDLY REFLECT  
UPON OURSELVES

◎ May we state to Amida Buddha who is endowed with three virtues of Dharma Body, Wisdom and freed from three illusions of ignorance, hatred, and greed.

We are now wicked ordinary people. We commit wrong doings because we do not have much good consideration. We are lazy to do things which we should do. All these things are our fault. We feel that these are our big mistakes and we reflect upon ourselves whole-heartedly.

From now on, we vow to do good and righteous things discarding wrong doings and reflect upon ourselves. Please let us with your blessings guide to become a good people without repeating wrong doing.

○ **WHOLE-HEARTEDLY PRAISE AND  
WORSHIP:**

○ **We devote the Buddha of Infinite Life:**

◎ **Real nature of Dharma Body Amida Buddha.**

**We devote Amida Buddha of Infinite Life who is endowed with non-other spiritual body of Dharma and Responding and bestowed his responding virtues to infinite duration of time.**

○ **We devote the Buddha of Infinite Light:**

◎ **We devote the Infinite Light of Amida Buddha with the utmost respect who is our last resort as the real manifestation of Dharma, Responding and Rewarding Body throughout the ten directions of the whole universe in the time of the past, present and future.**

○ **We devote the Buddha of Boundless Light:**

◎ **Amida Buddha's Boundless Light is the aspect of the wisdom of earth, water, fire, and space; the four great elements of the universe shining the entire universe of Dharma world and reveal the aspect of the wise eyes of the people.**

○ We devote the Buddha of Unrestricted Light:

◎ Amida Buddha's Unrestricted Light relieves and freed the people from the three defilements of hatred, ignorance and greed by the wondrous spiritually virtuous power which is endowed with the divine holiness, righteousness and blessing.

○ We devote the Buddha of Incomparable Light:

◎ Enveloped and guided by the Light of absolutely unlimited, we receive the stage equal to all the Buddhas and we experience finally the great enlightenment, the highest stage of being.

○ We devote the Buddha of Great Flaming Light:

◎ By the Great Flaming Light of Amida Buddha, all the hindrances of extreme suffering by human beings blinding from the endless past in the darkness are dissipated.

○ We devote Immaculate Light of Amida Buddha:

◎ By the Immaculate Light of Amida Buddha, our filthy mind is cleansed and our mind and body are always purified and our outcome is spontaneously smoothed.

○ We devote Joyous Light of Amida Buddha:

◎ By the Joyous Light of Amida Buddha, our agonies are eased and we feel utmost joy of wondrous and tranquil true pleasure.

○ We devote the Light of Wisdom of Amida Buddha:

◎ Our blind sufferings in the darkness are cleared and we understand the truth of Amida Buddha revealed by the Wisdom of Amida Buddha.

○ We devote the Unceasing Light of Amida Buddha:

◎ By the Unceasing eternal Light of Amida Buddha, our mind is spiritually converted and manifests the wish of Amida Buddha hoping to become Buddha and guide the people.

○ We devote the Inconceivable Light of Amida Buddha:

◎ By concentrating on the profound and inconceivable Light of Amida Buddha without ceasing from the bottom of heart, the time to arouse our faith and our mind is awakened.

○ We devote the Indescribable Light of Amida Buddha:

◎ By receiving the Compassionate Light of Amida Buddha, the seven ways leading to enlightenment will be blooming and marvelous and mysterious spiritual emotion will be revived in the holy mind.

○ We devote the Light Surpassing Sun and Moon:

◎ We are living amidst of the Light under the sun and moon of Wisdom. We endeavor for the three actions of body, mouth, and thoughts and the four acts of walking, standing, sitting, and lying by following the holy wish of Amida Buddha in our mind.

○ SENTENCE OF EMBRACING LIGHT

◎ Amida Buddha's light illuminates the worlds of ten directions of the universe. Amida Buddha embraces and never leaves behind those who recite O-Nenbutsu.

○ CONCENTRATION OF THE RECITATION  
OF O-NENBUTSU

(for couple of minutes)

○ Namu Amida ○ Bu, Namu Amida ○ Bu,  
Namu Amida ○ Bu,

◎ Na ○ mu A ○ mida ○ Bu, Na ○ mu A  
○ mida ○ Bu, . . . . .  
Na ○ mu A ○ mida ○ Bu.

○ VERSE OF INCLUSIVE MERIT-  
TRANSFERENCE:

◎ We wish to transfer the merits of reading this ritual and reciting O-Nenbutsu to all beings equally. We wish to arouse a mind to attain Buddhahood with everyone and to be born into the Land of Peace and Happiness, Amida Buddha's Pure Land.

○ WHOLE-HEARTEDLY WE TRANSFER  
OUR DEVOTION:

◎ We did not realize the existence of Amida Buddha because of our ignorance. However, surprisingly we are awakened by your voice of the most compassionate calling and we have decided to devote ourselves to Amida Buddha.

We implore to receive the eternal life in the midst of your Infinite Light.

We implore to receive your blessings and to be able to share your blessings with the people.

We implore your guidance to avoid the temptation of evil and to advance to the holy Way.

◎ We implore to let the people of the world know about your holy wish and to receive the tranquility of heart receiving your holy Light.

Namu Amida Butsu (reverently bow)

Namu Amida Butsu (reverently bow)

Namu Amida Butsu (reverently bow)





## How to Use This Book

- Read or recite by Reverend or leader.
- ◎ Read or recite by congregation.
- When we recite O-Nenbutsu, often we use *mokugyo* to keep rhythm. The method is called syncopation, that is, *mokugyo* is hit in between the voice.

The voice of recitation and the sound of *mokugyo* do not interfere with each other. I call this way of O-Nenbutsu recitation an "active meditation." You are not only sitting down for meditation but you also recite O-Nenbutsu harmoniously with the sound of *mokugyo*. This action creates a quiet yet very heart-warming feeling because of the blessing of O-Nenbutsu.

It is hard at the beginning to recite between the sound of *mokugyo*, please practice with your Sensei. It is spiritually quite rewarding to practice.

At home, you just recite without *mokugyo*.

## NOTES

**Ānanda** – He was the cousin of Śākyamuni Buddha and always attended him. He was one of ten great disciples of Śākyamuni Buddha.

**Bodhisattva** – Bodhisattva is a future Buddha (Buddha-to-be), who endeavors to attain the highest enlightenment, Buddhahood, not only for self-benefit but for the benefit of all beings and who compassionately practices in every possible way for that purpose. Bosatsu in Japanese.

**Pratyekabuddha** – Pratyekabuddha is a self-enlightened Buddha. Engaku in Japanese.

**Śākyamuni Buddha** – Śākyamuni Buddha was a historical Buddha who appeared in this earthly world to teach the Dharma, the truth of the universe, and to guide people according to their natures and capacities. The word Buddha literally means the enlightened one. Buddha is not a proper noun for Śākyamuni Buddha, but in an honorific term which means that one has reached the ultimate and ideal stage of human beings.

**Seven Ways – Seven Ways leading to enlightenment:**

1. distinguishing between true and false teaching;
2. making efforts to learn the Dharma;
3. experiencing the joy of Dharma;
4. eradicating sluggishness having ease of mind and body.
5. being mindful;
6. having mental concentration;
7. having tranquilly of mind through abandoning attachments.

**Śrāvakas – Śrāvakas** is a disciple who attains enlightenment by listening to the words of Buddha. Shōmon in Japanese.

**Three Bodies of Buddha** are as follows:

**Dharma Body** – One of the three aspects of Amida: aspect of the manifestation of the Truth or universe

**Responding Body** – Śākyamuni Buddha is Responding Body since he appeared in this earthly world responding to the needs of guiding the people.

**Rewarding Body – One of the three aspects of Amida Buddha: Hōzō Bodhisattva received reward for the achievement of 48 Vows and became Amida Buddha.**

**The Jōdo Shū's understanding is that Amida Buddha is the manifestation of inclusive Three Bodies.**