

Five Translations of Shoshinge

Bibliography

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Verse 1.

Inagaki

I take refuge in the Tathagata of Infinite Life;
I take refuge in the Buddha of Inconceivable Light.
Bodhisattva Dharmakara, in his causal stage,
Was in the presence of Lokeshvararaja, the Enlightened One.

CWS

I take refuge in the Tathagata of Immeasurable Life!
I entrust myself to the Buddha of Inconceivable Light!
Bodhisattva Dharmakara, in his causal stage,
Under the guidance of Lokeshvararaja Buddha,

Ryukoku Translation Series

I rely upon the Tathāgata of Immeasurable Life;
I take refuge in the Inconceivable Light.
Dharmākara Bodhisattva, during His causal state,
Being in the presence of the Buddha Lokeśvararāja,

D.T. Suzuki

I take refuge in the Nyorai of Eternal Life,
I take refuge in the Light that surpasses all thought.
When Hōzō Bosatsu (Dharmākara Bodhisattva). still in his disciplinary stage,
Was under Se-Jizai-ō Buddha (Lokeśvarar-rāja Buddha),

Hiroshi Suzuki

I am allowed to surrender myself to the working of infinite life
And to abandon myself to inconceivable light.
A Bodhisattva named *Dharmakara*, during his seeking stage,
Was at the feet of an awakened one, *Lokeshvararaja*,

Verse 2.

Inagaki

He saw the pure lands of many Buddhas, observed how they had been established,
And examined everything, good and bad, about the humans and gods inhabiting them.
He then brought forth the unsurpassed and most excellent Vows,
The Great Vows, immeasurable in scope and depth, which the world had never known.

CWS

Searched into the origins of the Buddhas' pure lands,
And the qualities of those lands and their men and devas;
He then established the supreme, incomparable Vow;
He made the great Vow rare and all-encompassing.

Ryukoku Translation Series

And having examined the causes of Buddhas' Pure Lands
And the good and evil of those Buddha Lands and of the heavenly and human realms,
Established the highest, most excellent Vow
And brought forth the rare Great Universal Vow.

D.T. Suzuki

He considered the causes that lead all beings to the Buddhas' Pure Land,
And also observed how the Lands looked, who the inhabitants were, and what moral qualities they had.
He awoke the desire, incomparably excellent;
He raised the unsurpassably great Prayer of universal deliverance.

Hiroshi Suzuki

Looking into the core of all buddha pure lands
And the qualities of those lands and residents therein,
Dharmakara manifested the unsurpassed excellent aspiration
And intuitively awakened an extraordinary great universal vow;

Verse 3.

Inagaki

Dharmakara chose and cherished his Vows after contemplation for five kalpas.
He further vowed that his Name would be heard throughout the ten quarters.
Amida sends forth universally the immeasurable and boundless Light,
The unimpeded, incomparable and majestically flaming Light,

CWS

In five kalpas of profound thought, he embraced this Vow,
Then resolved again that his Name be heard throughout the ten quarters.
Everywhere he casts light immeasurable, boundless,
Unhindered, unequalled, light-lord of all brilliance,

Ryukoku Translation Series

After contemplating for five kalpas, He chose the best of them.
Again, He vowed that His Name would be heard in the ten quarters.
Everywhere He emits the Immeasurable, the Boundless Light,
The Unimpeded, the Incomparable, the Majestically Flaming Light,

D.T. Suzuki

He meditated on it for five kalpas and finally decided on it;
He reaffirmed his Prayer [declaring] that his Name should sound throughout the ten quarters.
He then radiated Light of all kinds: immeasurable, boundless,
Unimpeded, unparalleled, burning like the lord of flames,

Hiroshi Suzuki

Having meditated for five eons, he embodied them,
And furthermore vowed that his calling-name would resound throughout the universe.
Universally radiating immeasurable, boundless light,
Unhindered, unparalleled, majestically flaming light,

Verse 4.

Inagaki

The pure Light, the Light of joy, the Light of wisdom,
The unceasing, inconceivable and ineffable Light,
And the Light outshining the sun and the moon; with these Lights he illumines the innumerable worlds.
All sentient beings are shone upon by his Light.

CWS

Pure light, joyful light, the light of wisdom,
Light constant, inconceivable, light beyond speaking,
Light excelling sun and moon he sends forth, illumining countless worlds;
The multitudes of beings all receive the radiance.

Ryukoku Translation Series

The Pure, the Joyful, the Wise Light,
The Unceasing, the Inconceivable, the Ineffable Light,
And the Light Outshining the Sun and the Moon, illuminating worlds innumerable;
All the sentient beings benefit from the Light's brilliance.

D.T. Suzuki

Undefined, joyous, full of [transcendental] wisdom,
Uninterrupted, beyond thought, indescribable,
Altogether surpassing the sun and the moon, shining over all the worlds as many as the particles of dust,
Lavishing its rays upon all beings.

Hiroshi Suzuki

Pure, joyful, awakening light
Unceasing, inconceivable, ineffable light,
And light surpassing the sun and moon - he illuminates all the corners of the worlds,
Benefiting all beings.

Verse 5.

Inagaki

The Name promised in the Primal Vow is the Act of Right Assurance;
The Vow of Sincere Mind and Joyful Faith provides the cause of our Birth;
To attain the state next to the Buddha and realize Great Nirvana
Is due to the fulfillment of the Vow which assures our unfailing attainment of Nirvana.

CWS

The Name embodying the Primal Vow is the act of true settlement,
The Vow of entrusting with sincere mind is the cause of birth;
We realize the equal of enlightenment and supreme nirvana
Through the fulfillment of the Vow of attaining nirvana without fail.

Ryukoku Translation Series

The Name in the Original Vow is the Work of Right Assurance.
The Vow of the Sincere, Serene Faith is the cause for Birth.
To attain the Equal Bodhi and to be enlightened to the Great Nirvāṇa
Are due to the consummation of the Vow Assuring the Unfailing Attainment of Nirvāṇa.

D.T. Suzuki

The Name symbolized in the Original Prayer is the right practice which rightly assures [one to be born in the Pure Land].
The Prayer of sincerity and faith is its efficient cause.
That Enlightenment is attained, that great Nirvāṇa is realized -
This is due to the fulfillment of the Prayer which assures the devotee of his deliverance.

Hiroshi Suzuki

The calling-name of primal aspiration rightly directs us,
Due to the aspiration of sincere faith, given to us.
Our realization of enlightenment and great nirvana
Is to be fulfilled by the aspiration of unfailing attainment of nirvana.

Verse 6.

Inagaki

The reason for the Buddha's appearance in the world
Is, above all, to expound the Primal Vow of Amida, wide and deep as the ocean.
All beings in the evil age of the five defilements
Should believe in the truth of the Buddha's words.

CWS

Sakyamuni Tathagata appeared in this world
Solely to teach the ocean-like Primal Vow of Amida;
We, an ocean of beings in an evil age of five defilements,
Should entrust ourselves to the Tathagata's words of truth.

Ryukoku Translation Series

The reason for the Tathāgata's appearance in the world
Is solely to preach the ocean-like Original Vow of Amida.
The ocean of multitudinous beings in the evil age with five defilements
Should believe in the Tathāgata's true words.

D.T. Suzuki

The reason that Tathāgata [Śākyamuni] appeared in this world
Is just to teach us about Amida's Original Prayer which is like the Ocean.
Those of us in this evil world of five defilements -
Let us believe the Tathāgata's word of truth.

Hiroshi Suzuki

Tathagata Shakya appeared in this world
Solely to disclose Amida's boundless primal aspiration.
Throngs of beings in this defiled evil age,
Trust the true words of tathagata!

Verse 7.

Inagaki

If the single thought of Joy and Gratitude is awakened in us,

We shall realize Nirvana without severing our blind passions.

When ordinary people and sages as well as those who commit the gravest offenses and abusers of the Dharma are taken into the Vow,

They become one in spiritual attainment, just as many rivers become of one taste upon entering the sea.

CWS

When the one thought-moment of joy arises,

Nirvana is attained without severing blind passions;

When ignorant and wise, even grave offenders and slanders of the dharma, all alike turn and enter shinjin,

They are like waters that, on entering the ocean, become one in taste with it.

Ryukoku Translation Series

If the Single Thought of Joy is awakened in one's mind,

Though passions are not severed, he will attain Nirvāṇa.

When ordinary men, sages, grave sinners, and abusers of the Dharma are all converted,

They are like various waters turned into one in taste on entering the sea.

D.T. Suzuki

When one moment of thought filled with joy (and love) rises,

One attains Nirvāṇa even without destroying the evil passions.

Both the wise and the ordinary - even the grave offenders and the slanderers of the Dharma - are all equally converted,

Just as all the waters flow into the ocean and gain one [salty] taste.

Hiroshi Suzuki

If we are able to awaken a moment of joy,

We will realize nirvana without severing sensuous desires.

Ordinary men, sages, the atrocious and abusers are equally converted,

Just as streams become one upon entering the ocean.

Verse 8.

Inagaki

The Light of All-embracing Compassion always illumines and protects us;
The darkness of ignorance has already been destroyed by it,
But still the clouds and mists of greed, desire, anger and enmity
Continually cover the sky of True Faith;

CWS

The light of compassion that grasps us illumines and protects us always;
The darkness of our ignorance is already broken through;
Still the clouds and mists of greed and desire, anger and hatred,
Cover as always the sky of true and real shinjin.

Ryukoku Translation Series

The embracing Spiritual Light eternally shines upon us protectively;
Although the darkness of ignorance has already been rent,
The cloudy mists of greediness, desire, anger, and hate
Always blanket the heaven of True Faith.

D.T. Suzuki

The mind-light that takes all in, keeps them always illuminated and well protected.
Though the darkness of ignorance is already broken through,
The dense clouds of greed and infatuation, of anger and hate,
Keep on hovering over the sky of true faith.

Hiroshi Suzuki

All embracing spiritual light always protects us.
It has penetrated our darkness of ignorance.
Yet clouds of greed and mists of anger
Still cover the sky of true faith;

Verse 9.

Inagaki

Yet, just as the sunlight is obstructed by clouds or mists,
Below them it is light and there is no darkness.
When we receive Faith, regard and revere the Dharma, and attain Great Joy,
We immediately transcend the five evil realms.

CWS

But though light of the sun is veiled by clouds and mists,
Beneath the clouds and mists there is brightness, not dark.
When one realizes shinjin, seeing and revering and attaining great joy,
One immediately leaps crosswise, closing off the five evil courses.

Ryukoku Translation Series

It is as though the sun is obscured by misty clouds,
But below them it is light and there is no darkness.
When one receives Faith, sees and reverses the Vow and greatly rejoices,
He instantly transcends the Five Evil Realms crosswise.

D.T. Suzuki

It is like the sun-light veiled by clouds:
Behind the clouds, the brightness reigns and there is no darkness.
One who gains faith sees Buddha, respects him, and is filled with joy,
He leaps, crosswise, over the five evil forms of existence.

Hiroshi Suzuki

Although sunlight is covered by clouds and mists,
Below them there is no darkness.
When we realize this faith with insight, reverence, and great joy,
We at once transcend, cut across the five evil paths.

Verse 10.

Inagaki

If ordinary people, whether good or evil,
Hear the Dharma and trust Amida's Universal Vow,
Shakyamuni praises them as 'men of great and superior understanding';
Such people are called 'white lotus-flowers'.

CWS

All foolish beings, whether good or evil,
When they hear and entrust to Amida's universal Vow,
Are praised by the Buddha as people of vast and excellent understanding;
Such a person is called a pure white lotus.

Ryukoku Translation Series

All common men, whether they be good or evil,
If they hear and believe the Tathagata's Universal Vow,
The Buddha praises them as 'men of great and superior understanding';
They are also named 'Puṇḍarikas'.

D.T. Suzuki

All beings, both good and bad,
When they listen to and believe in [Amida] Nyorai's Prayer of universal deliverance,
Are called by the Buddha [Sakyamuni] those who are of great and excellent understanding,
These are known as the blooming [white] lotus.

Hiroshi Suzuki

When all ordinary beings, good or bad,
Hear and trust Tathagata Amida's universal vow,
They are called people of great understanding
And named white lotuses by buddhas.

Verse 11.

Inagaki

The Nembutsu promised in the Primal Vow of Amida Buddha
Is difficult for evil people who have wrong views and are arrogant
To receive and retain with Joyful Faith;
Of all difficulties nothing is more difficult than that.

CWS

For evil sentient beings of wrong views and arrogance,
The nembutsu that embodies Amida's Primal Vow
Is hard to accept in shinjin;
This most difficult of difficulties, nothing surpasses.

Ryukoku Translation Series

The Nembutsu of Amida Buddha's Original Vow,
For evil beings with perverted views and arrogance,
Is extremely difficult to believe and retain;
Of all difficulties nothing is more difficult than this.

D.T. Suzuki

The *nembutsu*, which is based on Amida's Original Prayer,
Is, for beings who are evil-minded, wrong thinking, and arrogant,
extremely difficult to believe with joy and hold on,
Indeed, no difficulty can ever exceed this.

Hiroshi Suzuki

For those evil beings of perverted views and arrogance,
The nembutsu of Amida's primal aspiration
Is extremely difficult to trust and retain;
Nothing exceeds this difficulty.

Verse 12.

Inagaki

The discourse-writers of India, the land in the west,
And noble masters of China and Japan
Revealed the true purpose of the Great Sage's appearance
And clarified that Amida's Primal Vow responds to our need.

CWS

The masters of India in the west, who explained the teaching in treatises,
And the eminent monks of China and Japan,
Clarified the Great Sage's true intent in appearing in the world,
And revealed that Amida's Primal Vow accords with the nature of beings.

Ryukoku Translation Series

Sāstra-writers of India, the Land in the West,
And noble Masters of the Middle Kingdom and the Land of the Rising Sun,
Revealed the true purpose of the Great Sage's appearance
And clarified that the Tathagata's Original Promise is befitting man's capacity.

D.T. Suzuki

The exegetes of India, and Western Asiatic countries,
And the wise masters of China and Japan -
All have elucidated the right motive that made the Great Sage appear among us,
And all have elucidated Nyorai's Original Prayer, which accords with beings of various endowments.

Hiroshi Suzuki

Bodhisattvas of India
And noble masters of China and Japan
Revealed the intention of Great Sage Shakyā's appearance,
And clarified that Tathagata Amida's primal vow suits our capacity.

Verse 13.

Inagaki

Shakyamuni, the Tathagata, while dwelling on Mount Lanka,
Prophesied to the assembly of monks that in Southern India
A Great Being named Nagarjuna would appear in the world
And destroy all the wrong views on 'existence' and 'non-existence'.

CWS

Sakyamuni Tathagata, on Mount Lanka,
Prophesied to the multitudes that in south India
The mahasattva Nagarjuna would appear in this world
To crush the views of being and non-being;

Ryukoku Translation Series

Śākya, the Tathāgata, on Mount Laṅkā,
Predicted to the multitudes that in Southern India
Nāgārjuna, the Mahāsattva, would appear in this world
And completely rend the views of 'being' and 'non-being';

D.T. Suzuki

Śākyamuni Tathāgata on Mount Laṅkā predicted that in Southern India
A great sage called Nāgārjuna would come into this world
To destroy utterly one-sided views of being and non-being;

Hiroshi Suzuki

On Mount Lanka, *Tathaga Shakya*
Predicted to the multitudes that in southern India
The Great-being **Nagarjuna** would appear,
Completely destroying the views of being and non-being,

Verse 14.

Inagaki

Proclaiming the unsurpassed teaching of Mahayana;
He would reach the Stage of Joy and attain birth in the Land of Peace and Bliss.
He taught that the difficult practices are toilsome like traveling by land,
And urged us to believe that the Easy Practice is pleasant like sailing on water.

CWS

Proclaiming the unexcelled Mahayana teaching,
He would attain the stage of joy and be born in the land of happiness.
Nagarjuna clarifies the hardship on the overland path of difficult practice,
And leads us to entrust to the pleasure on the waterway of easy practice.

Ryukoku Translation Series

He would expound the highest Dharma of Mahāyāna;
Attaining the Stage of Joy, he would be born in the Land of Peace and Bliss.
He disclosed that the difficult practices are toilsome, like walking on land,
And urged us to believe that the easy practice is pleasant, like sailing on water.

D.T. Suzuki

And that he would proclaim the unparalleled Mahāyāna teaching,
While himself realizing the stage of joy and being born in the Land of Peace and Happiness.
He would show us the difficulty of walking over the land by foot,
And the ease - and even the pleasantness and the confidence - with which the watery passage is made.

Hiroshi Suzuki

Expounding the unsurpassed dharma of Mahayana,
Realizing the stage of joy, and being reborn in the land of bliss.
Nagarjuna showed the difficult practice to be as laborious as journeying on foot,
And made us trust the simple practice as pleasant as sailing.

Verse 15.

Inagaki

When a thought of mindfulness of Amida's Primal Vow arises,
At that instant we spontaneously enter the Stage of Assurance.
Always reciting only the Name of the Tathagata,
We should seek to repay our indebtedness to his Great Compassion.

CWS

He teaches that the moment one thinks on Amida's Primal Vow,
One is naturally brought to enter the stage of the definitely settled;
Solely saying the Tathagata's Name constantly,
One should respond with gratitude to the universal Vow of great compassion.

Ryukoku Translation Series

When the continuant Faith in Amida Buddha's Original Vow is awakened,
In that very instant do we spontaneously enter the Certainly Assured State.
Uttering only the Tathāgata's Name always,
We should express our gratitude for the Great Compassionate Vow.
(Thus Nāgārjuna said.)

D.T. Suzuki

For when a man keeps Amida's Original Prayer well in his mind,
He, without exerting himself, instantly enters the state of [definite] assurance;
Only let him, always pronouncing the Name of [Amida] Nyorai,
Requite the favor of universal deliverance given by the great compassionate one.

Hiroshi Suzuki

Nagarjuna said:
When we meditate on Amida's primal aspiration,
We are assured of buddhahood naturally and instantly.
Just utter Tathagata Amida's name always
And acknowledge the benevolence of the great compassionate vow.

Verse 16.

Inagaki

The Bodhisattva Vasubandhu composed a discourse, in which he professed
That he took refuge in the Tathagata of Unhindered Light;
In accordance with the sutras he expounded the true merits,
And clarified that the Great Vow enables us to leap over[samsara] crosswise.

CWS

Bodhisattva Vasubandhu, composing a treatise, declares
That he takes refuge in the Tathagata of unhindered light,
And that relying on the sutras, he will reveal the true and real virtues,
And make widely known the great Vow by which we leap crosswise beyond birth-and-death.

Ryukoku Translation Series

Bodhisattva Vasubandhu, composing a discourse, professed
That he himself took refuge in the Tathāgata of Unimpeded Light;
In accordance with the Sutras he revealed the Truth,
And elucidated Great Vow for the ‘crosswise transcendence’.

D.T. Suzuki

It is Vasubandhu who wrote *The Treatise [on the Pure Land]*,
Taking his refuge in the Nyorai of Unimpeded Light.
He thus expounded the truth in accordance with *The [Larger] Sūtra*;
He threw an illuminating light on the great Prayer which tells about the crosswise leap.

Hiroshi Suzuki

Bodhisattva **Vasubandhu** disclosed in a treatise
His submission to the working of unhindered light.
Depending on the sutras, he revealed the truth
And illuminated the great vow of horizontal transcendence.

Verse 17.

Inagaki

He revealed One Mind in order to emancipate multitudes of beings
Through Amida's transference of merits by the Power of his Primal Vow.
Upon entering the Great Treasure-Ocean of Merits,
We will unfailingly join the Great Assemblage

CWS

He discloses the mind that is single so that all beings be saved
By Amida's directing of virtue through the power of the Primal Vow.
When a person turns and enters the great treasure ocean of virtue,
Necessarily he joins Amida's assembly;

Ryukoku Translation Series

In order to save universally the sentient beings, he manifested the One Mind,
Showing that it is an endowment by the Power of the Original Vow.
Upon entering with trust the Great Treasure-Ocean of Merits,
Unfailingly will one be numbered among the Great Assemblage.

D.T. Suzuki

Depending on the power of the Original Prayer that turns all its merits toward all beings,
And in order universally to deliver all beings to the other shore, he revealed the meaning of the one mind.
When the devotee returns to the great treasure-ocean of merits,
He is sure to join the great assembly group of the Nyorai.

Hiroshi Suzuki

Being inspired by the power of the primal aspiration,
He elucidated one-mindedness for the deliverance of all beings.
Vasubandhu said:
Upon entering the great treasure-ocean of virtues,
We will surely be numbered among the great assembly.

Verse 18.

Inagaki

Upon reaching the World of Lotus-store,
We will realize True Suchness and attain Dharma-body.
Then, playing in the forests of evil passions, we will display supernatural powers;
Entering samsaric states, we will manifest accommodative and transformed bodies to save beings.

CWS

And when he reaches that lotus-held world,
He immediately realizes the body of suchness or dharma-nature.
Then sporting in the forests of blind passions, he manifests transcendent powers;
Entering the garden of birth-and-death, he assumes various forms to guide others.

Ryukoku Translation Series

When one reaches the World of Lotus store,
Instantly will he be enlightened to Thusness, or the Dharmakāya.
Roaming in the forests of evil passions, he will wield the transcendental powers;
Entering the garden of Birth-and-Death, he will manifest himself responsively.
(Thus Vasubandu said.)

D.T. Suzuki

And by reaching the lotus world,
He realizes the Body of the Dharma-essence of Suchness.
He, now in the midst of the thicket of evil passions, manifests miraculous powers;
In the garden of birth-and-death he incarnates himself and, assuming various forms, executes various functions.

Hiroshi Suzuki

At the moment we reach the lotus world,
We will realize and embody thusness and dharma-essence.
Playing in the forests of sensuous desires, we will have penetrating spiritual realizations;
Entering the garden of birth-and-death, we will manifest transformations to benefit beings.

Verse 19.

Inagaki

Master T'an-luan was venerated by the King of Liang;
Facing toward his place, the king worshiped him as a Bodhisattva.
When Bodhiruci, the Tripitaka master, gave him a Pure Land scripture,
T'an-luan burned his Taoist texts and took refuge in the Land of Bliss.

CWS

Turning toward the dwelling of Master T'an-luan, the Emperor of Liang
Always paid homage to him as a bodhisattva.
Bodhiruci, master of the Tripitaka, gave T'an-luan the Pure Land teachings,
And T'an-luan, burning his Taoist scriptures, took refuge in the land of bliss.

Ryukoku Translation Series

Donran is a Master of this sect. The King of Ryō,
Always facing toward his place, venerated him as a Bodhisattva.
When Bodhiruci, Master of the Tripitaka, handed him a Pure Land Scripture,
He burned his Taoist text and took refuge in the Land of Bliss.

D.T. Suzuki

Donran, our predecessor, was the revered teacher to the emperor of Liang,
Who, when facing Donran, always assumed a respectful attitude as if toward a bodhisattva.
When Bodhiruci, the Master of the Tripitaka, taught Donran in the Pure Land doctrine,
Donran committed his Taoist books to flames and embraced the doctrine.

Hiroshi Suzuki

The Emperor of Liang, facing the residence of our master **T'an-luan**,
Always revered him as a bodhisattva.
When Master *Bodhiruci* gave him a pure land teaching,
T'an-luan burned his Taoist longevity texts, surrendered himself to the land of bliss.

Verse 20.

Inagaki

He wrote a commentary on the Bodhisattva Vasubandhu's discourse, explaining in it:
Both the cause and the effect of our birth in the Land of Recompense come from Amida's Vows;
The karmic energy for our birth and returning to this world originates from the Other-Power.
The cause of attaining the Stage of Right Assurance is Faith alone.

CWS

In his commentary on the treatise of Bodhisattva Vasubandhu,
He shows that the cause and attainment of birth in the fulfilled land lie in the Vow.
Our going and returning, directed to us by Amida, come about through Other Power;
The truly decisive cause is shinjin.

Ryukoku Translation Series

Commenting on the Bodhisattva Vasubandhu's discourse,
He revealed that the cause and effect of Birth in the Land of Recompense are due to the Vows.
Merit-Transferences for Going Forward and Returning originate in the Other-Power;
The cause which rightly assures Birth is solely Faith.

D.T. Suzuki

Writing a commentary on Vasubandhu's *Treatise [on the Pure Land]*,
He made clear the significance of Amida's Prayer as regards the cause-and-effect of the Land of Recompense.
He showed that the two kinds of the turning-over [*eko*] come from the other-power;
That the efficient cause of the assurance of rebirth is the faith solely,

Hiroshi Suzuki

Commenting on the Bodhisattva Vasubandhu's treatise,
T'an-luan revealed that the vow is the cause for birth in the pure land.
T'an-luan said:
Due to other-power we transcend and return;
We are rightly directed only through true faith.

Verse 21.

Inagaki

When Faith is awakened in the minds of deluded and defiled ordinary people,
They are made aware that birth-and-death is Nirvana.
After they unfailingly reach the Land of Infinite Light,
They will save sentient beings everywhere, so says T'an-luan.

CWS

When a foolish being of delusion and defilement awakens shinjin,
He realizes that birth-and-death is itself nirvana;
Without fail he reaches the land of immeasurable light
And universally guides sentient beings to enlightenment.

Ryukoku Translation Series

When Faith is raised in a deluded and defiled ordinary man,
He is made aware that Birth-and-Death is identical with Nirvāṇa.
After he unfailingly reaches the Land of Immeasurable Light,
He will save universally all sentient beings. (Thus Donran said).

D.T. Suzuki

That even when beings who are defiled and confused are awakened to the faith,
They will realize that birth-and-death is Nirvāṇa itself;
And the when they definitely reach the Land of Infinite Light,
They will universally teach all beings in various states of existence.

Hiroshi Suzuki

When we, confused and defiled beings, awaken true faith,
We will be made to realize that birth-and-death is nirvana itself,
Upon entering the land of immeasurable light,
We will save all beings universally.

Verse 22.

Inagaki

Master Tao-ch'o determined that by the Path of Sages Enlightenment is difficult to attain
And clearly presented the Pure Land Path as the only way of salvation.
He disparaged practicing thousands of acts of merits with self-power
And urged us to recite exclusively the Name of perfect virtues.

CWS

Tao-ch'o determined how difficult it is to fulfill the Path of Sages,
And reveals that only passage through the Pure Land gate is possible for us.
He criticizes self-power endeavor in the myriad good practices,
And encourages us solely to say the fulfilled Name embodying true virtue.

Ryukoku Translation Series

Dōshaku ascertained that Bodhi is difficult to attain by the Path of Sages
Clarifying that the Pure Land Path alone is passable for us.
He disparaged the practicing of thousands of good deeds with self-power,
And encouraged the exclusive utterance of the Name consummated with perfect virtues.

D.T. Suzuki

It was Dōshaku who decisively told us about the difficulty of the "path for holy men" in attaining [the final goal].
He then made it clear that the Pure Land is by far easier to enter.
He referred slightly to the practice by self-power of all kinds of good;
And persuaded us to resort exclusively to pronouncing the Name, which is perfect and full of merit.

Hiroshi Suzuki

Tao-ch'o ascertained that the path of sages is difficult to realize
And revealed that only the pure land is possible to enter.
Disqualifying the self-power practices of various goodness,
He recommended sole utterance of the perfectly virtuous name.

Verse 23.

Inagaki

He kindly taught the three aspects of imperfect faith and those of right faith
He compassionately guided those of the ages of Semblance Dharma, Decadent Dharma and Extinct Dharma alike.
Whatever evils we may commit throughout our lives, if we encounter the Universal Vow,
We shall reach the Land of Peace and Provision and realize the Supreme Fruition.

CWS

With kind concern he teaches the three characteristics of entrusting and non-entrusting,
Compassionately guiding all identically, whether they live when the dharma survives as but form, when in its last stage, or when
it has become extinct.
Though a person has committed evil all his life, when he encounters the Primal Vow,
He will reach the world of peace and realize the perfect fruit of enlightenment.

Ryukoku Translation Series

He thoughtfully cautioned against the Three Aspects of Impure Faith and urged us to maintain the Three Aspects of Pure Faith.
He compassionately led the men in the Ages of the Semblance Dharma, the Decadent Dharma, and the Extinct Dharma as well.
If we, though sinning all through life, meet the Universal Vow,
We shall reach the Land of Serene Sustenance and realize the Supreme Fruition.
(Thus Doshaku said.)

D.T. Suzuki

He was extremely kind-hearted to tell us about belief and disbelief, each of three sorts.
He taught us that irrespective of the increasingly declining phases of the Dharma-teaching, the [Prayer] of compassion remains
unchanged, forever drawing us to it.
Further, he told us that even if a man addicted to doing evils all his life should encounter the gospel of universal deliverance,
He would surely come to the realization of the wonderful result by reaching the World of Rest and Happiness.

Hiroshi Suzuki

Thoughtfully teaching the three aspects of the pure and impure faith,
He equally and compassionately leads beings even in this age of dharma-extinction.
Tao-ch'o said:
Even though we commit evil all our lives, upon meeting the universal vow,
We will realize wondrous nirvana in the land of bliss.

Verse 24.

Inagaki

Shan-tao alone clarified the true intent of the Buddha Shakyamuni.

Out of compassion for those who practice meditative or non-meditative good as well as those who commit the five gravest offenses and the ten evil acts,

He clarified that the Light and the Name are the cause and condition for birth in the Pure Land.

When aspirants are led into the Sea of Great Wisdom of the Primal Vow,

CWS

Shan-tao alone in his time clarified the Buddha's true intent;

Sorrowing at the plight of meditative and non-meditative practitioners and people of grave evil,

He reveals that Amida's light and Name are the causes of birth.

When the practitioner enters the great ocean of wisdom, the Primal Vow,

Ryukoku Translation Series

Zendo was the only one who clarified the Buddha's real intent.

Pitying those who practice the meditative and non-meditative practices and those with deadly sins and evils,

He revealed that the Light and Name are the cause and condition (for Birth),

And led them into the Great Wisdom Ocean of the Original Vow; and then

D.T. Suzuki

It was by Zendo alone that the proper understanding of the Buddha's thought was presented.

Out of his sorrowful heart, he revealed for [those who belong to the two kinds of] good as well as for the wicked,

That [Amida's] illuminating Light and Name are the efficient cause [which enables us to be born in the Pure Land].

He further told them that when the devotees are introduced by virtue of the Original Prayer to the ocean of great transcendental knowledge,

Hiroshi Suzuki

Shan-tao alone clarified the Shakyamuni Buddha's true intention.

Empathizing with the meditative, the distracted, the atrocious and the vicious,

He revealed that being touched by the light, we hear the calling-name.

Shan-tao said:

Upon entering the boundless wisdom-ocean of the primal aspiration,

Verse 25.

Inagaki

They are endowed with Faith, indestructible as diamond;
After attaining a single thought of Joy of oneness with Amida,
They obtain the three insights, as did Vaidehi,
And will realize the Eternal Bliss of Dharma-nature.

CWS

He receives the diamondlike mind
And accords with the one thought-moment of joy; whereupon,
Equally with Vaidehi, he acquires the threefold wisdom
And is immediately brought to attain the eternal bliss of dharma-nature.

Ryukoku Translation Series

When the aspirant receives the Diamond Mind,
In harmonizing with His Mind through the Single Thought of Joy,
He shall obtain the Three Insights, as did Vaidehi,
And realize the Eternal Bliss of Dhamata. (Thus Zendo said.)

D.T. Suzuki

They will rightly come to the state of mind as solid as a vajra,
And, by attaining to the "one thought" moment which evokes the feeling of joy and gladness,
Like Vaidehi they will uniformly acquire the three kinds of cognition
And then realize the Dharma itself, which is eternal and full of bliss.

Hiroshi Suzuki

Devotees will rightly receive the diamond-like mind.
After the moment of rejoicing in accord with the aspiration,
They will gain the threefold insight of faith, joy, and wisdom, like Queen Vaidehi,
And realize the eternal bliss of dharma-essence.

Verse 26.

Inagaki

Genshin widely expounded the Buddha's lifetime teachings;

While he devoutly sought refuge in the Land of Peace and Provision, he urged all to follow him.

He distinguished between deep faith in practicing the Nembutsu exclusively and shallow faith in doing miscellaneous acts of merits,

And so clarified the different states of attainment: birth in the Land of Recompense and birth in the Transformed Land.

CWS

Genshin, having broadly elucidated the teachings of Sakyamuni's lifetime,

Wholeheartedly took refuge in the land of peace and urges all to do so;

Ascertaining that minds devoted to single practice are profound, to sundry practice, shallow,

He sets forth truly the difference between the fulfilled land and the transformed land.

Ryukoku Translation Series

Genshin widely expounded on the Buddha's life-time Teachings,

But he took refuge exclusively in the Land of Serene Sustenance and recommended it to all.

Discerning that the Faith of Exclusive Practice is deep and the Faith of Sundry Practices shallow,

He distinctly showed the difference between the Recompensed Land and the Transformed Land.

D.T. Suzuki

Genshin, thoroughly going over all the teachings given by Śākyamuni during his life-time,

Specifically chose the doctrine of the Pure Land and advised us all to take to it.

Discriminating the exclusively devoted ones from those whose minds are variously distracted,

He gave his judgment as to which of the two went deeper into the truth.

He made clear the difference between the Land of Recompense from the Land of Transformation.

Hiroshi Suzuki

Genshin thoroughly studied all buddhist teachings,

And surrendered himself solely to the pure land, recommending it to all.

Discerning the deepness and shallowness of faith between the sole and the mixed practices,

He distinguished the pure land from the temporary land.

Verse 27.

Inagaki

Those with extremely heavy evil karma should only recite the Buddha's Name.
Although I, too, am in Amida's embracing Light,
My evil passions hinder me from perceiving it,
But his Light of Great Compassion never ceases to shine on me untiringly.

CWS

The person burdened with extreme evil should simply say the Name:
Although I too am within Amida's grasp,
Passions obstruct my eyes and I cannot see him;
Nevertheless, great compassion is untiring and illumines me always.

Ryukoku Translation Series

Men with extremely heavy sins should only utter the Buddha's Name.
I, too, am in His embracement;
Though I cannot see (His Light), my eye being obstructed by evil passions,
The Great mercy always shines upon me untiringly. (Thus Genshin said.)

D.T. Suzuki

[Said he:] Let even the vilest criminal pronounce the Buddha's Name,
And be convinced for himself: "I too am under Nyorai's protection;
Though I am not able to see him because of my eyes being obscured by the evil passions,
The great compassionate one is, all the time, untiringly shining upon me."

Hiroshi Suzuki

Genshin said:
Most evil ones, just utter Amida's name!
I, too, am in his embracing light.
Although I cannot see it, being blinded by sensuous desires,
The great compassion is untiring and always shines upon me.

Verse 28.

Inagaki

Genku, the master of our school, was well-versed in Buddhism;
He was compassionately mindful of both good and wicked ordinary people.
Disseminating the teaching of the True Way throughout Japan,
He spread the selected Primal Vow in this evil world.

CWS

Master Genku, well-versed in the Buddha's teaching,
Turned compassionately to foolish people, both good and evil;
Establishing in this remote land the teaching and realization that are the true essence of the Pure Land way,
He transmits the selected Primal Vow to us of the defiled world:

Ryukoku Translation Series

Genku, Master of this sect, well-versed in Buddhism,
Pitied ordinary men, whether good or evil.
Spreading the Teaching of Shinshu in the Far-off Islands,
He propagated the Selected Original Vow in this evil world.

D.T. Suzuki

Genkū (Hōnen), our teacher, was well versed in all the teachings of Buddha.
Pitying all of us ordinary beings, both good and evil,
In this lonely land of ours [Japan], he promoted the true teaching and its realization.
He was the propagator, in this evil world, of the Original Prayer as specifically chosen by Amida.

Hiroshi Suzuki

Our Master **Genku** was well versed in all buddhist teachings
And had compassion for ordinary beings, good and bad.
Promoting the true teaching and its realization in Japan,
He propagated the selected primal aspiration in this evil world.

Verse 29.

Inagaki

Transmigration in the house of samsara
Is definitely caused by the fault of doubt;
Quick entry into the Capital of Tranquility and No-action
Is necessarily realized by Faith.

CWS

Return to this house of transmigration, of birth-and death,
Is decidedly caused by doubt.
Swift entrance into the city of tranquillity, the uncreated,
Is necessarily brought about by shinjin.

Ryukoku Translation Series

One's coming back to the house of cyclic Birth-and-Death
Is decisively due to the doubt which binds him to it;
One's entering promptly the Capital of Tranquility and the Unconditioned,
Is necessarily caused by Faith which makes him enter there. (Thus Genku said.)

D.T. Suzuki

That we are doomed to come repeatedly back to the house of birth-and-death,
Is decidedly due to the doubt we cherish dearly as the base;
That we get instantly into the city of quietude and non-doing,
Assuredly comes from the believing mind [which serves us as an usher].

Hiroshi Suzuki

Genku said:
We revert to this house of delusion and transmigration,
Imprisoned invariably by doubt.
We quickly enter the bliss of nirvana,
Certainly enabled by true faith.

Verse 30.

Inagaki

The bodhisattvas and masters of this school who spread the teaching of the Pure Land sutras
Have saved innumerable beings, totally defiled and evil.
People of the present age, both priests and laymen, should with one accord
Only accept in faith the teachings of those virtuous masters.

CWS

The mahasattvas and masters who spread the sutras
Save the countless beings of utter defilement and evil.
With the same mind, all people of the present, whether monk or lay,
Should rely wholly on the teachings of these venerable masters.

Ryukoku Translation Series

Mahasattvas and Masters who promulgated the Sutras
Have saved innumerable men, extremely corrupted and evil.
Men in this present age, both priests and laymen, should with one mind
Believe only in what these noble Masters taught.

D.T. Suzuki

All the great masters and leaders who have introduced us to the Sutras
Are trying to save us from the evils infinitely contaminating this world.
Let us all conjointly and with one heart - whether we be priests or layman -
Only believe in what these wise men have taught us.

Hiroshi Suzuki

These great teachers, who have promoted the sutras,
Deliver innumerable extremely defiled and evil beings.
Clergy and laity of the present, with one heart,
Simply trust the disclosures of these noble masters!