

Song of Enlightenment

by Chan Master Yongjia Xuanjue (665 – 713 CE)

translated by Chan Master Sheng Yen and students

Have you not seen the idle man of Tao who has nothing to learn and nothing to do,
Who neither discards wandering thoughts nor seeks the truth?
The real nature of ignorance is Buddha-nature;
The illusory empty body is the Dharma body.
After realizing the Dharma body, there is not a thing;
Original self-nature is the innate Buddha.
The five skandhas — the empty comings and goings of floating clouds;
The three poisons — the vacant appearing and disappearing of water bubbles.
When the real is experienced, there is neither person nor dharma.
In an instant the avici karma is destroyed.
If I lie to deceive sentient beings,
May my tongue be ripped out for kalpas uncountable as dust and sand.
With sudden enlightenment to Tathagata Ch'an,
The six paramitas and myriad means are complete within that essence.
In dreams there are clearly six paths of sentient beings;
Upon awakening the great chiliocosm is completely empty.
There is no sin or merit, no loss or gain.
Do not look for anything in this Nirvanic nature;
Originally a dusty mirror which has never been polished,
Today it must be taken apart and analyzed.
Who has no thoughts? Who has no births?
If the unborn is real, there is nothing not born.
Ask the mechanical wooden puppet

When it will attain Buddhahood through practice.
Put down the four elements, do not cling to anything;
In this Nirvanic nature, feel free to eat and drink.
All phenomena are impermanent; all are empty.
This is the complete enlightenment of the Tathagata.
Surely this is the true vehicle.
One who disagrees is swayed by emotion.
Going directly to the root is the seal of the Buddha;
No point searching for branches or plucking leaves.
The mani pearl is unknown to people;
You can find it in the Tathagata-garbha.
The functions of the six senses are both empty and not empty,
One perfect light with form yet formless.
Purify the five eyes to achieve the five powers.
Only after realization can one comprehend.
To see the image in a mirror is not difficult.
How can one grasp the moon in the water?
Always acting alone, walking alone,
Together the enlightened travel the Nirvana road.
The tune is ancient, the spirit pure, the style poised,
The face drawn, the bones hardened; people take no notice.
The penniless Buddhist monks say they are destitute;
Though they have nothing, they are not poor in Tao.
Poverty shows in the ragged robes they always wear.
The priceless treasures of the Tao are stored in their minds.
These priceless treasures have endless functions;
There is no hesitation in helping others.
The three bodies and four wisdoms are complete in essence;
The eight liberations and six psychic powers are the mind-ground seal.
For the great ones, one breakthrough accomplishes all;
For the middling and inferior, the more they hear, the less they

believe.
You only have to discard the dirty garments within;
No need to flaunt your diligence to others.
When criticized by others, let them wrong you;
They will tire themselves trying to burn the sky with a torch.
When I hear abuse, it is like drinking ambrosia;
Melt it, and suddenly one enters the inconceivable.
If we regard criticism as merit,
The critics will become reliable friends.
Do not hate those who slander you;
How else can you manifest the unborn power of compassion?
Thoroughly understanding both basic principles and teaching,
Samadhi and wisdom are complete and clear without stagnating in
emptiness.
Not only do I accomplish this now;
The essence of uncountable Buddhas is just the same.
Speak without fear,
As the lion roars,
All animals hearing it cringe in fright.
Losing his composure, the fragrant elephant gallops;
With quiet joy, the heavenly dragon listens.
Travelling over rivers and oceans or crossing mountain stream,
Seeking teachers, asking the way to investigate Ch'an,
Since I recognize the path of Ts'ao Ch'i,
I realize all those do not relate to birth and death.
Walking is Ch'an; sitting is Ch'an;
Speaking or silent, moving or still, the essence is undisturbed.
Remain composed even if facing a sharp weapon,
Be at ease even if given poison.
My teacher only met Dipankara Buddha
After training in forbearance for many kalpas.

Continuing rounds of birth and death,
Samsara prolonged without interruption;
Since sudden enlightenment I understand the unborn,
Thus I have no concern for honor or shame.
Living in a hermitage deep in the mountains,
On a lonely peak under a thick pine tree.
I would meditate contentedly in a monk's hut,
At ease in this tranquil place.
After enlightenment no need for further effort;
All dharmas of activity are varied.
Giving alms with attachment bestows merit for heavenly birth,
Like shooting an arrow into space.
Once its power is expended, the arrow falls,
Bringing discontent in the next life.
How can this compare to the true door of non-action,
Through which one leaps straight into the Tathagata ground?
Once you get to the root, don't worry about the branches,
Like pure crystal containing a precious moon.
Since you have realized this all-giving pearl,
Benefit for yourself and others will never end.
The moon shines on the river, the breeze stirs the pine,
What is there to do on a long pleasant night?
Buddha-nature and the precepts jewel are sealed in the mind-ground.
Fog, dew, and rosy clouds are now my garments.
The dragon-subduing alms bowl and the staff that wards off tigers,
With the jangling of its two metal rings,
Are not outer forms of keeping the precepts,
But rather are holding the Tathagata's staff and treading his path.
Not seeking the true, not rejecting the false,
Realize that both are empty and formless.
There is no form, no emptiness and no non-emptiness;

This is the true mark of the Tathagata.
The mirror of mind reflects without interference;
Its vastness and clarity radiate through countless worlds.
Various phenomena all manifest themselves;
To a perfectly illumined one there is neither inside nor outside.
Attaching to emptiness, denying cause and effect,
Brings calamities beyond measure.
Rejecting existence and grasping emptiness is the same mistake,
Like jumping into a fire to avoid drowning.
If you discard the illusory mind and grasp the true principle,
This mind of grasping and discarding becomes clever.
Not understanding this, practitioners engage in cultivation,
Just as one mistakes a thief for his own son.
Loss of Dharma Wealth and the extinction of merits,
All are caused by the mind consciousness.
Through the Ch'an door, understand the cutting off of mind,
And suddenly enter the powerful view of the unborn.
The great hero uses the sword of wisdom;
This prajna blade blazes like a diamond.
It not only destroys the mind of the outer paths,
But long ago frightened away the heavenly demons.
Sound the Dharma thunder; beat the Dharma drum;
Spread the clouds of compassion and scatter ambrosia.
Where the elephant king treads the favors are boundless,
The three vehicles and five natures are awakened.
The pinodhi grass in the snow mountains is unmixed;
I often enjoy the pure ghee it produces.
One nature perfectly pervades all natures;
One Dharma includes all dharmas.
One moon appears in all waters;
The moons reflected in all waters are one.

The Dharma body of all Buddhas enters my nature;
Which is the same as the Tathagata's.
One stage encompasses all stages,
Not form nor mind nor karmic act.
Eighty thousand doors are completed in the snap of the fingers,
In a flash three kalpas are extinguished.
What do numbers, expressions, and their negations
Have to do with my spiritual awakening?
It is not perishable and cannot be praised,
Its substance is like limitless space.
Without leaving where it is, it is constantly clear.
When seeking, you know it cannot be found.
It cannot be grasped, nor can it be discarded;
It is obtained only in the unobtainable.
Speaking in silence, silent in speech,
The door of giving is wide open without obstruction.
If someone asks what basic principle I interpret,
I will say it is the power of Mahaprajna.
Others do not know whether I am right or wrong,
Even devas cannot fathom whether I oppose or agree.
I have practiced for many kalpas;
I am not deceiving you as some idlers are.
Setting up the Dharma banner, establishing the basic principle,
Ts'ao Ch'i clearly followed the Buddha's decree.
The first one to pass on the lamp was Mahakasyapa;
In India it was transmitted through twenty-eight generations.
The Dharma flowed east and entered this land
Where Bodhidharma was the First Patriarch.
Six generations transmitted the robe, as heard throughout the land,
And those who later attained the Tao cannot be counted.
The truth does not stand, the false is originally empty.

When both existence and non-existence are swept away, not empty is empty.

The twenty empty doors teach non-attachment.

The nature of all Tathagatas is one; their substance is the same.

The mind is a sense organ; dharmas are its object.

The two are like marks on a mirror.

Once the dust is rubbed off, the light begins to appear.

When both mind and dharmas are forgotten, this is true nature.

Oh, in this evil world in the Dharma-ending age,

Sentient beings have little fortune and are hard to discipline.

Far away from the time of the sages, perverted views run deep.

When demons are strong and Dharma is weak, fears and dangers abound.

When they hear the teaching of sudden enlightenment of the Tathagata,

They cannot but want to destroy it, to smash the tiles.

That which acts is the mind, that which receives retribution is the body;

No need to put the blame on others.

If you want to escape continuous karma,

Do not slander the Tathagata's wheel of right Dharma.

There are no other trees in a sandalwood forest.

The lion lives in luxuriant dense thickets.

He strolls along in the quiet woods,

All other animals and birds keep their distance.

A crowd of animals follows the lions,

Who can roar at the age of three.

If a wild fox challenges the Dharma King,

It is like a monster opening his mouth for a hundred years.

The teaching of complete sudden enlightenment is not to be used as a favor.

All unsettled doubts must be debated until clear.

Not that I, a mountain monk, want to be presumptuous,

But cultivation may make you fall into the pit of cessation and permanence.

Wrong is not wrong; right is not right;

The slightest deviation veers a thousand miles off course.

If right, the dragon maiden becomes Buddha at once;

If wrong, the monk Suraksatra falls alive into hell.

Since an early age I have accumulated knowledge,

Studying the sutras, shastras, and commentaries.

Discriminating between names and forms without rest,

I only troubled myself counting the sands in the sea.

I was severely reproached by the Tathagata:

What is the benefit of counting others' treasures?

I realized the futility of my dalliance;

For many years I busied myself in the world in vain.

With evil capacity and mistaken understanding,

One cannot penetrate the Tathagata's principle of complete sudden enlightenment.

Hinayana monks, though diligent, forget the mind of Tao.

Outer path practitioners may be clever, but they lack wisdom.

The ignorant and the foolish think

That the fist exists separately from the pointing finger.

Mistaking the finger for the moon, they practice uselessly;

They only fabricate strange illusions in the realms of sense and object.

Not perceiving a single dharma: this is Tathagata.

Only then can one be called the Supreme Observer.

With this realization karmic obstacles are innately empty.

Without realization, past debts must be paid off.

If one is unable to take the royal feast even when hungry,

How can he be healed even if he meets the king of doctors?

Practicing Ch'an in the desire realm manifests the power of
knowledge,
Indestructible as a lotus grown in a fire.
Though Pradhanasura broke the main precepts, he awakened to the
unborn;
He long ago reached the Buddha state and remains there still.
Even when one preaches fearlessly as the lion roars,
The minds of the perverse and obstinate only harden.
They continue to break the main precepts and obstruct Bodhi
And cannot see the secret the Tathagata reveals.
Two monks broke the precepts against licentiousness and killing.
With his shallow knowledge, Upali exaggerated the sin.
The great Vimalakirti instantly removed their doubts,
Like a hot sun that melts ice and snow.
The power of the liberated is inconceivable,
With wonderful functions more numerous than the Ganges sands.
They would not refuse to make the four offerings
To one who can accept ten thousand ounces of gold.
To have body broken and bones reduced to dust is not enough to
repay
The words that enlighten, transcending countless eons.
The king in Dharma is the most superior;
The realization that countless Tathagatas are all alike.
Now I show you this all-giving pearl;
Believers are all in accord (with Dharma).
They clearly see that there is not a thing,
Neither person nor Buddha.
The numerous worlds in the great chiliocosm are bubbles in the sea,
All sages and saints are like lightning flashes.
Even if an iron wheel whirls on your head
Perfectly clear samadhi and wisdom are never lost.

The sun may turn cold and the moon may turn hot,
But the demons cannot destroy the true teaching.
When an elephant marches gloriously forward,
How can a praying mantis bar its way?
The elephant does not follow the rabbit's path;
The enlightened are not bound by trivial restraints.
Do not slander heaven when you observe it through a reed,
For those who do not yet know, I am giving you the key.

永嘉證道歌

永嘉證道歌

唐慎水沙門玄覺撰

君不見。絕學無為閒道人。不除妄想不求真。
無明實性即佛性。幻化空身即法身。法身覺了無一物。
本源自性天真佛。五陰浮雲空去來。三毒水泡虛出沒。

證實相無人法。剎那滅却阿鼻業。若將妄語誑眾生。自招拔舌塵沙劫。
頓覺了如來禪。六度萬行體中圓。夢裏明明有六趣。覺後空空無大千。
無罪福無損益。寂滅性中莫問覓。比來塵鏡未曾磨。今日分明須剖析。

誰無念誰無生。若實無生無不生。喚取機關木人問。求佛施功早晚成。
放四大莫把捉。寂滅性中隨飲啄。諸行無常一切空。即是如來大圓覺。
決定說表真僧。有人不肯任情徵。直截根源佛所印。摘葉尋枝我不能。
摩尼珠人不識。如來藏裏親收得。六般神用空不空。一顆圓光色非色。
淨五眼得五力。唯證乃知難可測。鏡裏看形見不難。水中捉月爭拈得。

常獨行常獨步。達者同遊涅槃路。調古神清風自高。貌頰骨剛人不顧。
窮釋子口稱貧。實是身貧道不貧。貧則身常披縷褐。道則心藏無價珍。
無價珍用無盡。利物應機終不吝。三身四智體中圓。八解六通心地印。
上士一決一切了。中下多聞多不信。但自懷中解垢衣。誰能向外誇精進。

從他謗任他非。把火燒天徒自疲。我聞恰似飲甘露。銷融頓入不思議。
觀惡言是功德。此即成吾善知識。不因訕謗起冤親。何表無生慈忍力。
宗亦通說亦通。定慧圓明不滯空。非但我今獨達了。恒沙諸佛體皆同。
師子吼無畏說。百獸聞之皆腦裂。香象奔波失却威。天龍寂聽生欣悅。

遊江海涉山川。尋師訪道為參禪。自從認得曹谿路。了知生死不相關。
行亦禪坐亦禪。語默動靜體安然。縱遇鋒刀常坦坦。假饒毒藥也閒閒。

我師得見然燈佛。多劫曾為忍辱仙。

幾迴生幾迴死。生死悠悠無定止。自從頓悟了無生。於諸榮辱何憂喜。
入深山住蘭若。岑峯幽邃長松下。優游靜坐野僧家。闐寂安居實蕭灑。
覺即了不施功。一切有為法不同。住相布施生天福。猶如仰箭射虛空。
勢力盡箭還墜。招得來生不如意。爭似無為實相門。一超直入如來地。
但得本莫愁末。如淨瑠璃含寶月。既能解此如意珠。自利利他終不竭。

江月照松風吹。永夜清宵何所為。佛性戒珠心地印。霧露雲霞體上衣。
降龍鉢解虎錫。兩鈷金環鳴歷歷。不是標形虛事持。如來寶杖親蹤跡。
不求真不斷妄。了知二法空無相。無相無空無不空。即是如來真實相。
心鏡明鑒無礙。廓然瑩徹周沙界。萬象森羅影現中。一顆圓光非內外。
豁達空撥因果。莽莽蕩蕩招殃禍。棄有著空病亦然。還如避溺而投火。
捨妄心取真理。取捨之心成巧偽。學人不了用修行。深成認賊將為子。

損法財滅功德。莫不由斯心意識。是以禪門了却心。頓入無生知見力。
大丈夫秉慧劍。般若鋒兮金剛焰。非但空摧外道心。早曾落却天魔膽。
震法靄擊法鼓。布慈雲兮灑甘露。龍象蹴踏潤無邊。三乘五性皆醒悟。

雪山肥膩更無雜。純出醍醐我常納。一性圓通一切性。一法遍含一切法。
一月普現一切水。一切水月一月攝。諸佛法身入我性。我性同共如來合。
一地具足一切地。非色非心非行業。彈指圓成八萬門。剎那滅却三祇劫。

一切數句非數句。與吾靈覺何交涉。

不可毀不可讚。體若虛空勿涯岸。不離當處常湛然。覓即知君不可見。
取不得捨不得。不可得中只麼得。默時說說時默。大施門開無壅塞。

有人問我解何宗。報道摩訶般若力。或是或非人不識。逆行順行天莫測。
吾早曾經多劫修。不是等閒相誑惑。建法幢立宗旨。明明佛勅曹溪是。
第一迦葉首傳燈。二十八代西天記。

法東流入此土。菩提達磨為初祖。六代傳衣天下聞。後人得道何窮數。

真不立妄本空。有無俱遣不空空。二十空門元不著。一性如來體自同。
心是根法是塵。兩種猶如鏡上痕。痕垢盡除光始現。心法雙忘性即真。
嗟末法惡時世。眾生福薄難調制。去聖遠兮邪見深。魔強法弱多恐害。
聞說如來頓教門。恨不滅除令瓦碎。

作在心殃在身。不須冤訴更尤人。欲得不招無間業。莫謗如來正法輪。
旃檀林無雜樹。鬱密森沈師子住。境靜林間獨自遊。走獸飛禽皆遠去。
師子兒眾隨後。三歲便能大哮吼。若是野干逐法王。百年妖怪虛開口。

圓頓教勿人情。有疑不決直須爭。不是山僧逞人我。修行恐落斷常坑。
非不非是不是。差之毫釐失千里。是則龍女頓成佛。非則善星生陷墜。
吾早年來積學問。亦曾討疏尋經論。分別名相不知休。入海算沙徒自困。
却被如來苦訶責。數他珍寶有何益。從來蹭蹬覺虛行。多年枉作風塵客。

種性邪錯知解。不達如來圓頓制。二乘精進勿道心。外道聰明無智慧。
亦愚癡亦小駮。空拳指上生實解。執指為月枉施功。根境法中虛捏怪。
不見一法即如來。方得名為觀自在。了即業障本來空。未了應須還夙債。
饑逢王饍不能飡。病遇醫王爭得瘥。在欲行禪知見力。火中生蓮終不壞。
勇施犯重悟無生。早時成佛于今在。

師子吼無畏說。深嗟懵懂頑皮鞞。祇知犯重障菩提。不見如來開祕訣。
有二比丘犯姪殺。波離螢光增罪結。維摩大士頓除疑。猶如赫日銷霜雪。

不思議解脫力。妙用恒沙也無極。四事供養敢辭勞。萬兩黃金亦銷得。
粉骨碎身未足酬。一句了然超百億。

法中王最高勝。恒沙如來同共證。我今解此如意珠。信受之者皆相應。
了了見無一物。亦無人亦無佛。大千沙界海中漚。一切聖賢如電拂。
假使鐵輪頂上旋。定慧圓明終不失。

日可冷月可熱。眾魔不能壞真說。象駕崢嶸謾進途。誰見蟾蜍能拒轍。

大象不遊於兔徑。大悟不拘於小節。莫將管見謗蒼蒼。未了吾今為君訣。

永嘉證道歌(終)

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