

*Compassionate  
Samadhi  
Water  
Repentance  
Sutra  
Volume 1*

# COMPASSIONATE SAMADHI WATER REPENTANCE SUTRA

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SUTRA TRANSLATION FROM CHINESE TO ENGLISH WITH COMMENTARY

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## PREAMBLE

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### NOTES ON THE TRANSLATION

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This translation is written with personal practice in mind, so the reader will often find words like ‘I’ and ‘me’ in the actual translation of the Sutra. However, traditionally, members of the Sangha will often perform this practice upon request on behalf of others, often the recently deceased. When practitioners wish to practice on behalf of others, then instead of ‘I’, the other’s name(s) is (are) used.

This translation is based chiefly on three texts: Mr Bai Jinxian’s annotated Compassionate Water Repentance Method (慈悲水忏法译注, 白金铎), published in Taiwan; Venerable Shi Zheng Yan’s ‘Dharma as Water—Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Teaching Notes’ (法譬如水——慈悲三昧水忏讲记, 释证严) and Venerable Yan Pei’s booklet on the Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance practice, based on his lecture

in Singapore. ‘A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms’ by William Edward Soothill and Lewis Hodous has also been consulted together with other Buddhist dictionaries. Where there are clearly differing definitions or diverging interpretations, both are listed in the footnotes, with recommendations.

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## PREFACE

A NOTE OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Amongst the multitudes of sentient beings, only Man has the awareness to repent and self-reflect, and through this, make amends for their mistakes to avoid future missteps. The Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra Practice is one of the earliest and one of the most widespread confessions practiced by lay practitioners, and is being practiced till today by Buddhists all across the world. Through the solemn ritual, practitioners are given the opportunity to immerse themselves in reflection amidst the scents of incense and sounds of recitation, purifying their body, speech and mind. If you, the practitioner, can develop some understanding of this important practice, and take to heart the deep meaning and compassion of Buddha’s words in this text, then the effects of cleansing oneself spiritually would certainly be multiplied. Inspiring heartfelt reflection, the practice of repentance would then achieve its true objectives and not be reduced to simple ritualisation.

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## INTRODUCTION

BRIEF BACKGROUND OF THE SUTRA AND ITS ACCOMPANYING PRACTICE

This Sutra is part of the expedient teachings in Chinese Mahayana Buddhism. Its foundations are in the Chinese Buddhist Canon, also known as the Chinese Buddhist Tripitaka, consisting of the three collections of the teachings of Buddha Shakyamuni: Vinaya, Sutra and Abhidharma. According to Buddhist scholars, the exact contents of the confession text was formed over the late Tang Dynasty, stretching into the Five Dynasties, and it

was during the early Ming dynasty that it was incorporated into the Tripitaka. Today, we can find it under the Taisho Tripitaka book 45, Volume no. 1910, from the bottom of page 967 to the middle of page 978. According to the Sutra's preface, Tang Dynasty's Dharma Master Wuda (811-883AD), whose Buddhist name was then Venerable Zhixuan, met with the holy Kanakavatsa. As a result, Venerable Zhixuan realised that in one of his previous lives during the early Western Han dynasty (about 250BCE), he was a general by the name of Yuan'ang whose wrongdoings caused General Chaocuo to be killed. The Arhat bestowed Venerable Zhixuan the Samadhi Buddha- truth water able to wash away the stains of delusion, and purified the negative karma he incurred numerous lifetimes ago.

The story goes as follows. During the chaos amongst the seven kingdoms, due to General Yuan'ang's treachery, General Chaocuo was sentenced by Emperor Han Wen Di and beheaded. Chaocuo's consciousness did not disappear together with the execution, but sought Yuan'ang life after life for an opportunity to take revenge. However, in every succeeding reincarnation, Yuan'ang became a Buddhist monk with great morality and purity, so no matter how strong Chaocuo's determination, there was no chance for revenge.

It was not until the Tang Dynasty, when Yuan'ang's reincarnation Venerable Zhixuan, due to the great patronage lavished upon him by the Tang Emperor, started developing covetous thoughts for fame and recognition. His practice became impure and unbalanced, and he lost sight of the pure Middle Path. Chaocuo's reincarnation, in the form of the "Human-faced ulcer", finally had the chance to enter Venerable Zhixuan's body, feeding upon his blood and flesh, and debilitating his mind and consciousness to cause unmentionable suffering.

Fortunately, the great Kanakavatsa comprehended the karma accumulated between the both of them in their past lives. The holy one cleansed Venerable Zhixuan's

ulcer with the Samadhi Buddha-truth water from the foot of Mt Chalong in Jiulong County in western Shu state, finally eradicating the intertwining debts of karma between Chaocuo and Yuan'ang. When Venerable Zhixuan learnt about the karma of his past lives, he cast aside all worldly pursuits of fame and glory, and went into a retreat in those very mountains to study and write confession texts, spending day and night performing confession pujas. These confession texts written by Venerable Zhixuan were thus the three books of the Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra. In time to come, Sangha in monasteries and temples often performed the water repentance for various purposes. These include i) as confessional practice for harmful deeds they did in their past lives, ii) for pacifying obstacles and praying for beneficial conditions, iii) to dedicate merits to all sentient beings, iv) when loved ones pass away, v) for the benefit of one's ancestors, or vi) for dedicating merits to one's karmic debtors. Typically for a water repentance practice, the lay practitioner would follow the lead of the Sangha in accordance with an elaborate Buddhist ceremony comprising prostration, prayer, recitation and repentance. However, such a ceremony is only a matter of following a set of formalities; the difference in effectiveness is stark when compared to Venerable Xuanzhi's personal heartwrenching experience. Moreover, if the practitioner merely participates as a follower in the ceremony, can he/she contemplate on the deepest contents of the repentance text in the sutra? Does the practitioner carefully digest the Dharma and nuances? Is such contemplation able to foster the development of the Four Immeasurables, Bodhicitta, one's sense of regret, and one's conscience? And then, is one able to utilise the buoyant motivational energy that is released through that to work at purifying one's karma? There is reason to feel doubtful.

Through better understanding of the background behind the Sutra and by thinking about the relevance of this

Sutra to modern people, you as the practitioner can avoid being entrapped by an overly ritualistic perspective. You can then lessen distractions from self-reflection, and be empowered to face our problems in life positively. Through this, you may naturally become one with the compassion, joyful giving, Bodhicitta and humility of the Buddhas. With these blessings, you can achieve the true objectives of practicing Buddhism and doing this repentance practice.

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#### DETAILED UNDERSTANDING OF THE SUTRA

QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE COMPASSIONATE SAMADHI WATER REPENTANCE SUTRA

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We shall be exploring such areas as: the current version of the sutra; the authorship; its evolution; the Sutra's references to the Buddhist canonical scriptures; the structure; the content; its position in the development of Buddhist confessional practices; the philosophy; and its relevance today. These would help prevent us from blindly following the ceremony as it is performed. This is because around the world, high monks and scholars alike may have elaborated on the Sutra, but many have based their words entirely on the "preface" section of the Sutra. We need more than that to know how to make our repentance practice powerful and effective.

### HOW DID THE SUTRA BECOME WHAT IT IS TODAY?

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COMPASSIONATE SAMADHI WATER REPENTANCE SUTRA'S CURRENT VERSION, THE AUTHORSHIP, ITS FORMATION, AND ITS CANONICAL REFERENCES

#### *1. The current version*

Based on the works of various Buddhist scholars, it is concluded that the earliest known version of the three-volume Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra should be the Ming Dynasty royal edition of the Southern-Hongwu Tripitaka. Since the Sutra's compilation into the Southern-Hongwu Tripitaka, it has subsequently been brought into the Nan Tripitaka, the Bei Tripitaka, the Jiaying Tripitaka, the Long Tripitaka,

the Suoke (缩刻) Tripitaka, the Manji Zo (卍藏), the Pinjia Tripitaka, and the Taisho Tripitaka, etc.

In recent years, this three-volume Sutra has been published and is being circulated in Taiwan, Hong Kong, China, Japan, Singapore, the UK, the US, and Canada etc., in all major temples and Buddhist centres.

Respected members of the Sangha discuss and comment on this Sutra, and people actively carry out the confession practice. We can truly say that the Sutra is a confession practice that has spread across the world-wide Sinosphere.

## *2. Authorship: Who created the Sutra?*

Based on a thorough study, there have been 5 different perspectives on the composer of the Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra. These can be listed as:

- i) Author unknown;
- ii) The Song dynasty theory, that it was created by Tang dynasty's Venerable Zhixuan;
- iii) The Yuan dynasty theory by Ma Duan Lin, that it was created by later persons who were inspired by the "the Emperor Liang Repentance" (梁皇宝忏);
- iiii) The Ming dynasty Shih Ch'an's theory on Southern Song dynasty's Venerable Ruo Na (若讷); and
- v) The Qing dynasty theory, from the Long Tripitaka's notes on the Sutra, that the Sutra was an extraction from Venerable Tsung-mi done by Tang dynasty's Venerable Zhixuan.

After objective examination, the Taisho Tripitaka volume 45's "author unknown" explanation is still more appropriate than any other explanation. While there is some logic to the latter four theories (theories ii) to v)), after comparison with various related historical literature, we cannot be certain any of the four theories.

For theory iii), the two sutras indeed have some points of similarity in terms of their overall structure. However, the similarity might also be attributed to the close proximity of the period when they were created, or a

similarity in the method of creation. It can be seen, though, that the two differ significantly in the layout of the section where the names of Buddhas are being recited, and in the main purpose of the repentance (忏悔主旨). In addition, Ma Duan Lin's vague mention of 'later persons' cannot provide us with the clarity we are seeking.

For theory iv), according to the sources which are: Zhi Pan's "Overview on the Buddhas", as well as Ru Xing's "Biographies of Respected Ming Dynasty Sangha", it is stated that Ruo Na was a highly accomplished monk during the Southern Song dynasty, during Emperor Gaozong's period and listed his various accomplishments. However, the Sutra only states that he practiced the Golden Light Country Protecting Dharma (金光明护国法), but did not mention that he created the three-Volume Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra.

For theory v), since the Water Repentance Sutra has its roots in the 20-volume "Sutra of Buddhas' Names", the creator of the Water Repentance Sutra should not have any need to extract from Venerable Tsung-mi's "Manual of Procedures for the Cultivation of Realization of Ritual Practice According to the Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment" (圆觉修证仪). One could even conversely propose that the Venerable Tsung-Mi's manual was formed by rearrangement purely extracted from the "Concise Repentance to the Great Buddhas".

Last but not least, for ii), according to the "Preface to the Repentance Sutra" which itself claims to be written in 995-997AD (Song Dynasty), the Sutra was written by the Tang Dynasty Dharma Master Wuda (also known as Venerable Zhixuan, 811-883AD). The preface relates the origin of the sutra through the familiar story: The Tang Dynasty Dharma Master Wuda met the holy Kanakavatsa who used the Samadhi Buddha-truth Water to cure the Dharma Master Wuda of his illness and cleanse him of his karma debt accumulated from past lives. Wuda was struck with realization and wrote the three-volume

Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra. Later scholars and experts mostly follow this explanation and take these events literally.

However, according to “the Biographies of Respected Song Dynasty Sangha”, it is written that Venerable Zhixuan created a 6-volume “Repentance Text”, whereas theory ii) states that he created the 3-volume Sutra.

Moreover, looking at the Dunhuang Buddhist texts, and with reference to the “the Respected Song Dynasty Sangha”, in the late Tang dynasty during the Five Dynasties period (circa 988AD), a Water Repentance Sutra was indeed in circulation in China. The period of circa 988AD had quite a significant time gap with Dharma Master Wuda’s time (811 to 883AD), which makes one start to wonder whether the Sutra was indeed Master Wuda’s work as postulated.

The thing is, the “Repentance text for the three obstacles” within the Water Repentance Sutra is essentially the same as the ‘Concise Repentance to the Great Buddhas’ found amongst the Dunhuang Buddhist manuscripts, which circulated during the late Tang dynasty. The differing styles of calligraphy also showed that the ‘Concise Repentance to the Great Buddhas’ themselves were transposed from the “Repentance Text for the Three Obstacles” in the 20-volume ‘Buddha’s Names Sutra’ also found in the Dunhuang texts.

The question remains, who was/were the accomplished Sangha who created these texts? It is more prudent to give the Water Repentance Sutra’s preface some poetic license while still acknowledging its metaphorical significance.

### *3. Formation: How did the Sutra become its current form?*

Based on work done by Buddhist scholars, the sources of the Sutra and the chain of conditions leading to its current form are listed in the following timeline:

India: Shakyamuni Buddha’s teachings (circa 500BCE) – “Way of Repentance and Purification”

à North-south dynasties (420-589CE): Translations of

the “Buddhas’ Names’ Sutra”

→ Liang dynasty (517CE): Bao Chang’s three-volume

“Way of Repentance and Purification for all Sutras”

→ Northern Wei dynasty (524CE): Bodhi Liu Zhi’s (菩提流支) translation, the twelve-volume “Buddhas’ Names’ Sutra”

→ Intermediate period: Insertion of sections on Buddhas’ Titles, “Sutra on Buddha’s Teachings to the Hell Realms on Retribution from Negative Karma” etc.

→ Early Tang dynasty (Before 730 CE): Dunhuang 16-volume “Buddhas’ Names’ Sutra”

→ Intermediate period: Extraction and editing of various sections

→ Early Tang dynasty to late Tang dynasty, including the five dynasties’ era (tenth century CE): “Concise Repentance to the Great Buddhas”

→ Intermediate period: Copied and edited out “Mahayana Lianhua Baoda Answering Queries on Karmic Retribution Sutra” and “Sutra on Buddha’s Teachings to the Hell Realms on Retribution from Negative Karma”

→ Late Tang dynasty, during five dynasties period (tenth century CE): Text purely on the repentance for the three obstacles

→ Intermediate period: Addition of sections on the eight Buddhas of the three times, the sixteen Buddhas’ and Bodhisattvas, and minor editing

→ Song dynasty (before 988 CE): “Water Repentance Sutra” already spread throughout the Jiangnan region

→ Song dynasty (995-997CE): “Preface to the Water Repentance Sutra” composed, and the final form of the three-volume “Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra” manifested.

→ Song dynasty (1068-1077CE): Three-volume “Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra” prevalently practiced among both the lay and the ordained.

→ Intermediate period: Influence on Chinese society and

thinking of both lay and ordained practitioners grows progressively deeper

à Ming dynasty, 25<sup>th</sup> year of Hongwu reign (1392 CE): the three-volume “Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra” formally included into the Southern Tripitaka

#### *4. Canonical references: How the Sutra has its fundamentals in the Buddhist Tripitaka*

On the subject of the Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra’s canonical references, we can approach the Preface section and the Sutra separately. For the Preface section, the canonical references may have come from three locations: first, the stories on cleansing ulcers with water from the two Indian sources, “The Sutra of the Wise and the Foolish Volume 4, Mahasena Upasika Article Number 22” and the “the Great Nirvana Volume 16, Pure Living Article Number 8 part 2”; second is from volume 21 of the Biographies of Respected Song Dynasty Monks, the biography on Venerable Luoseng, the story in which he met with an unusual monk from the Western Shu region; third is from volume 6 of the Song Dynasty, the biography of Tang Dynasty’s Venerable Zhixuan, on Venerable Zhixuan’s karmic story with Chaocuo and Yuan’ang.

As for the canonical sources for the text on the repentance for the three obstacles in the Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra, aside from the Buddhas’ Names’ Sutras’ “Concise Repentance to the Great Buddhas”, in reality its contents must have come from quite many sutras, some of which include the Dirgha Agama Sutra, Ekottara Agama Sutra, Lotus Sutra, Ksitigarbha Sutra etc. The portions on repentance from these Buddhist commentaries and texts, in their Chinese translations, then contributed to the original Water Repentance Sutra.

**WHAT DOES THE SUTRA CONSIST OF?**

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### *1. Structure: Layout of the Sutra*

We can divide the Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra into the preface and the main texts. The preface consists of two parts: the ‘Imperial Water Repentance Preface’ and the ‘Water Repentance Preface’. While both are later works, they form the starting point of thought behind the Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra.

The main text includes the six sections of:

- i) ‘Prostrations to the Eight Buddhas of the Three Times’,
- ii) ‘Repentance Overview’,
- iii) ‘Prostrations to the 16 Buddhas and Bodhisattvas’,
- iiii) ‘Skilful Method Prior to Repentance’,
- v) ‘Confession and Repentance’, and
- vi) ‘Vows and Dedications’.

Functionally, we can group the ‘Prostrations to the Eight Buddhas of the Three Times’ and ‘Prostrations to the 16 Buddhas and Bodhisattvas’ together under ‘Prostrations to Buddhas and Bodhisattvas’. On the whole, including the ‘Preface’ section, the Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra consists of six types of steps.

These six steps form the building blocks of the eight cycles of repentance. These eight repentance cycles each progress gradually in a logical sequence, and all contain the same three basic steps, which are: ‘Prostrations to the 16 Buddhas and Bodhisattvas’, then ‘Confession and Repentance’, and then ‘Vows’. These three sequential steps progress in a gradual and smooth manner for all eight cycles without any exception.

Before the actual confession and repentance of each of the Three Obstacles, the practice cites Buddhist scriptures to explain the sources of the obstacle, the reasons for purifying the obstacle, and the logic surrounding it all. Of course, the content of the ‘Confessions and Repentance’ activity for different cycles differ depending on which one of the Three

Obstacles is the focus.

In particular, for the purification of the Obstacle of Afflictions, the steps of 'Repentance Overview' and

'Skilful Methods Before Repentance' are added before the 'Confessions and Repentance' step. The 'Skilful Methods Before Repentance' step makes the practice much more effective by setting the mind in the right state. We achieve this by following the sutra in 'arousing the seven states of mind', 'invoking the two states of mind', and 'raising the four views'.

Additionally, for the Obstacle of Afflictions, the practice repents the obstacle of afflictions arisen from causes and conditions, the obstacle of afflictions arisen from afflictive nature, and the obstacle of affliction that is not being able to sustain Buddhist practice. It is a highly beneficial detailed and deep repentance, and also fulfills the original intention of completely purifying and cutting off negative karma.

Whereas, in purifying the Obstacle of Past Karma Hindrances, first purified is the three kinds of past karmic hindrances of the body, then is followed by the four past karmic hindrances of speech, the past karmic hindrances of the six senses, the past karmic hindrances of the harm against the triple gems, as well as the remainder of the past karmic hindrances. This repentance is extensive, orderly and thorough.

As for purifying the Obstacle of Retribution, first is the retribution of the hell realm, and then separately includes the retribution of the animal realm, the retribution of the hungry ghost realm, the retribution of the asuras realm, and the retribution of the god realm. It is likewise orderly, dynamic and detailed.

*2. Content: How does the Sutra 'work'?*

The content of the Water Repentance, in essence, refers to the text on the repentance of the three obstacles. The discipline of Repentance is one of the skilful means taught by the compassionate Buddha to help the world. This is why, through interdependent arising, the Water Repentance Sutra is a text that has potential to be easily

accessible and highly effective for many. The repentance thought is simply and clearly illustrated through the anecdote related in the preface, and the order of the

contents fits into our human psyche. Every stanza of the contents is meaningful.

The story on the causes and conditions and the reasoning around repentance is clearly illustrated in the preface right at the beginning of the Water Repentance. This sets the crucial foundation for the text that follows.

Following this, practitioners recite the section on ‘the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the three times’ to invoke the objects of refuge, thus generating faith. The intention to repent and purify is then gradually conveyed, which leads on to the Sutra’s exposition on the various reasons for repentance, inspiring the practitioner to respect and to practice this method of purification. Having explained the rationale for repentance, the Sutra then reminds us of the sixteen Buddhas and Bodhisattvas with their primary acts and vows, serving as role models for us. When the role model standards are set through these skilful means, the mind is then ripe to commence preparations for the repentance. Only after these preparations are complete, can the typical practitioner then powerfully purify all obstacles with confessions and repentance. Finally, after concluding confessions and repentance, we then align ourselves with the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas’ volitions and make great vows and dedications.

In all these, every item has its effect and meaning. Every item fits in synergistically with its context; the final goal being to develop the powerful concept of the Samadhi Buddha-truth Water that is embedded in the Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra. This cleanses and eradicates the age-old ‘poisonous ulcers’ in our hearts and nature, allowing the Buddha-dharma to continue flourishing with the discipline of repentance. This arrangement creates the condition where both the practical and theoretical aspects of repentance are being taken care of. It enables us to prostrate to the Buddhas of the three times with a settled mind while easily and

clearly understanding the theory behind repentance. We can connect with the ageless and eternal wills and thoughts of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas to completely

purify our own endless and immeasurable negative karma. In our free, natural and clean states, we can make vows and continue our life journey towards full enlightenment.

This content has the six excellent qualities of:

- i) Facilitating sincere repentance, and facilitating repentance like flowing water;
- ii) Appropriate and logical contents, yet with beautiful and graceful text;
- iii) Concurrently touching on the theory and the act of repentance;
- iiii) Incorporating vows in the repentance process;
- v) Accommodating both the advanced and the beginner practitioner, and applicable for both the lay and the ordained;
- vi) With the three obstacles as the main content, encompassing all forms of negative karma.

It is a marvelous piece of composition that merges the method of eradicating negative karma through repentance as taught by the Buddha from India, and the Chinese Buddhist approach.

## POSITION WITHIN BUDDHIST REPENTANCE THOUGHT

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WHERE DOES THE SUTRA FIGURE IN BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY?

The Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra is a set of confession texts derived from the Sayings of the Buddha, and naturally follows its lines of reasoning. Shakyamuni Buddha founded Buddhism and widely taught the Dharma. Undoubtedly, it was in order to let people recognize the three great Dharma truths of impermanence, emptiness, and enlightenment. And the spirit behind the Buddha spreading these three great Dharma truths was not only to let the people understand ideas from the middle path such as right wisdom, right

view, and right effort, etc thus allowing people in the world to greatly benefit from true liberation—in actual fact it was also aimed at criticizing and reforming the delusions and superstitions prevalent in Indian society

during Shakyamuni Buddha's lifetime. The Samadhi Buddha-truth Water in the Sutra was also conceived of with that as the basis.

However, according to India's Humayun Kabir's 'India's Heritage', the early Indian Aryan people's religious beliefs were originally rarely focused on formalities and was not ritualistic. The people of those times deeply believed and craved for their own consciousness to be able to connect with the powers of nature. This power of nature was recognized as the expression of having control of all of nature.

Things changed when, at the time of the Rig Vedas' composition, the caste system gradually emerged, and not only did religious worshipping and offering festivals take on a more material dimension, they became more elaborately ritualistic. The dividing of the Rig Vedas into four sections reveals some traces of this trend. Due to the segregation of work, religion degenerated, and unfortunately consolidated itself into the caste system. For practical reasons, religious worship became the sole occupation of one special caste, and they also view it as a type of career, or as a skill to make a living with.

The Buddha Shakyamuni founded Buddhism precisely to teach people to completely discard this kind of empty worshipping ritual and ceremony. Instead, with the right view of the three universal truths, we should place all our attention on its meaning and on mental training.

However, to realize Buddhist thought, a high level of intelligence is required, so that is often not something normal people can achieve. As such, not long later, Buddhism itself once again developed a new form of ritual, and this new form of prayer ritual was even more material-oriented than the rituals that Shakyamuni Buddha wanted to eliminate.

The Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra's

preface might have derived some of its meaning from two spots from the Sutra of the Wise and the Foolish and the Sutra of Great Nirvana, with stories about washing an ulcer with water. Upon merging the confession and

repentance in the Water Repentance Sutra's text on the repentance of the three obstacles together with a metaphorical story like this, we should be vigilant against being ritualistic and to take this too literally. Instead, use this practice wisely to merge yourself with blessings of the Buddhas' heart, will and powers. And then, through your own human freedom, progressively purify the three obstacles from the obstacle of the afflictions, to the obstacle of the karma hindrances from past lives, to the obstacle of retribution. This kind of repentance implies that when we are reciting the contents to the Water Repentance Sutra, our hearts, with the blessings of the Buddhas, should face up to our ocean of negative karma while doing the repentance, and we should tirelessly continue purification.

Being able to look negative karma in the eye is how we can gain complete liberation. Taking this meaning of liberation further, we can then progress from the 'change of eradicating negative karma to become a 'new' person', to the 'new form of purifying in a highly rigorous manner to gain enlightenment'. Also, the water of the heart which is eternal and always flowing, to make the Samadhi Buddha-truth water everlasting new life. This gives four layers of subtle and deep meanings.

The Water Repentance enters deeper and deeper into layers of meaning, and the layers enter deep into the space within our heart, to cause the ignorance, delusions, and attachments and such poisons to terminate and perish, and cause the lively original nature of the space of our heart to reveal itself. By doing this, the Sutra becomes eternally beneficial to oneself and beneficial to all sentient beings of the six realms, and so we can say it has taken the essence in the repentance thought in the teachings of the Buddha Shakyamuni and improved it in a revolutionary way, to attain an undoubtedly unique

position within China's repentance thought.

## SAMADHI BUDDHA-TRUTH WATER: THE TIMELESS 'ENGINE' OF PURIFICATION

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THE TRANSFORMATION, RE-INVENTION, AND ENDURING EXISTENCE OF THE [SAMADHI  
BUDDHA-TRUTH WATER]

### *1. What Samadhi Buddha-Truth Water is*

The main principle behind the Water Repentance is titled the Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance lies in the term [Samadhi Buddha-truth Water].

The term [Samadhi Buddha-truth Water] originally appeared in Vol. 2 of the Dharma Dharani Sutra, “the Samadhi Buddha-truth Water, not still even for the timespan of one thought; like the heavenly vessel of virtue, protects indestructibly; always generating treasures, endlessly to one's desire.” This Samadhi Buddha-truth Water, ‘not still even for the timespan of one thought’, while said to be ‘always generating treasures, endlessly to one's desire’, in actual fact is simply a Label, a type of Metaphor.

After Buddhism spread into China, it needed to Sinicize. The way ‘Chan’, the word for repentance/confession became Sinicized was through blending the meanings from the Chinese oracle bone character ‘Chan’ (𠄎) with the Indian original meanings, as well as the meanings from the Chinese character ‘Hui’ (悔). The meaning of the character ‘Chan’ was that of terminating, finely detailed, and completely eradicating. The Indian original meaning was that of confessing, and the meaning of the character ‘Hui’ was: to not repeat again. The combining of the meanings gave rise to the new term ‘Chanhui’—‘Repentance’, as used in this article. Thus, the further combined meaning of Chinese Mahayana's ‘Repentance’, blended with Water Repentance Sutra's [Samadhi Buddha-truth Water], must then again be closely bonded with the emphasized Chinese ‘Heart’, ‘Human’ and ‘Way’. Through the complex combination of the ‘Water Repentance Sutra Preface’ and the ‘Water Repentance Text’, the repentance text for the three obstacles repented all past karmic hindrances from head to tail, upheld the effort to maintain disciplined vows,

inspired new shoots of the ten virtuous deeds, allowed ourselves to stabilize and enrich the merging with our original Buddha-nature, and then through our never ceasing, never-ending practice, finally achieve the

incredible exalted state of Man, Repentance, and Buddha being one.

The Water Repentance Sutra divides the Buddha's teachings on the method of repentance and eradicating negative karma into three sections, to neatly and orderly list, with the 'Teachings of the Buddha from the Sutras' and the long repentance text as two key components; through the effect produced by the prostrations to the three jewels, to distill pure heartfelt confessions and repentance; from the practical acts of repentance, to enter the depths until the proofs and explanations for understanding repentance; from the skilful means of repenting for the negative karma of the body and heart, to produce the compassion, sense of conscience, bodhicitta and wisdom blended together; this thus, is the transformation of the [Samadhi Buddha-truth Water].

Through the ingenious re-organisations by the composer in the Water Repentance Preface, after the dual parallels between the relationship between the Dharma Master Wuda with the human-faced ulcer, and the ten lifetimes of karmic relationship between Yuan'ang vs Zhao Cuo, and then with the anecdote of 'using water to cleanse an ulcer' as the connection, to cause India's indigenous ideas of purification, the Buddha's ideas of repentance, the spread of Buddhism in China, and the historical figures in Chinese history, to reinvent repentance practice. The repentance practice penetrates and links through time, combines space, and integrates repentance thought. This kind of reinvented Sinicized repentance thought encompasses the four-levels of subtle Samadhi meanings: We, as people, should i) face up to the power of karma and practice unceasing repentance; ii) have the right view of cause and effect and be able to liberate yourself from suffering; iii) as the continuation of the meaning of liberation, from eradicating negative karma

to truly become a 'new' person, to continuous repetition to actually become enlightened; and iv) the continuously make the waters of the heart flow to cause the Samadhi Buddha-truth water to forever exist and be reborn. Each

layer follows each layer, and the layers penetrate until the root of the space of emptiness within the heart, to cause the emptiness space of the heart to become lively and reveal itself, to allow us to once again create, and benefit the six realms of sentient beings. Thus, the holy Kanakavatsa's [Samadhi Buddha-truth Water], at this time properly becomes the symbol for the Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra, and has its significant status within the realm of Chinese Repentance thought.

Therefore, the Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra is a repentance method that activates our persons, our lives, the Buddha's teachings, the Dharma as well as the heart. It also makes the person, the life, the living, interpersonal relationships, the Buddha, the Dharma and the heart, to mutually achieve breakthrough in the three times to be empty of obstacles, to achieve flexibility and versatility to exchange between the different areas, mutually influence and blend to be realized in the world, the activating repentance method which circulates in eternity, whose source is from the heart, whose existence is dependent on Man, which has the essence of the Buddha nature, is a stream of bubbly and lively cuddles [Samadhi-Buddha Nature Water].

## *2. Contemporary Significance of the idea of the [Samadhi Buddha-truth Water]*

As a form of thought within the world, if it cannot become one with the current life and living, then it is childish, easily aged, a mere formality and finally falls into the rigid and closed state of being passive, negative and unforward, not open. After Buddhism sinicised, the kind of repentance thought that Shakyamuni Buddha taught, with the unique features of including cause and condition, karmic energy, retribution, etc., gradually assimilated and mutually influenced with Chinese society

and Chinese thinking. Repentance thought then became a more participatory, worldly, certain way of thinking engaged with one's life.

Grand Master T'ai Hsü said, "the good human realm is the pure land of the Buddha", and "the developed human body is to have realized the Buddha's body". The Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra, made by Chinese people, raised up the repentance thought of Samadhi Buddha-truth Water. It exactly leveraged on the volitions and dharma power of all the Buddhas to target all the three obstacles, from the obstacle of the afflictions, to the obstacle of the past karmic hindrances, to the obstacle of retribution, generated by the sources of ignorance in Man himself. These sources of ignorance include all the three times and three spaces in Man's world, from the body, actions, six senses, consciousness, heart, heart within the heart, heart within the heart within the heart et cetera. The progressively deeper levels of layer-by-layer, continuous, detailed and fine confession and repentance have both an active forward route of upward improvement as well as an active reverse flow of mitigating damage. The forward route consists of Man's own non-stop purification to lead to liberation from suffering, of which the reinforcement of the repentance leads to enlightenment, which results in eternal existence and regeneration. The reverse flow refers to Man's own eternal existence and regeneration, which leads to reinforcement to become enlightened, thus leading to liberation from suffering, which leads to non-stop repentance. The forward route is the unceasing, ever increasing exquisite virtue, while the reverse flow refers to purification of negative past karma. When the true nature is released, the four layers of Samadhi mutually connect, and become full of energy. This kind of subtle Buddha-truth water truly exists and permanently resides in people's hearts. It does not have form, and has the emptiness condition of Nirvana. It is new and renews itself, and it flows continuously. It comes from Shakyamuni Buddha's spirit of humanity and yet has to

also be feasible in our contemporary living situation. It is not something that can be gotten from a standard repentance procedure, nor can it be encompassed by the repentance texts in the Compassionate Samadhi Water

Repentance Sutra, much less a state which can be described by a simple definition of this four-level Samadhi.

Shakyamuni Buddha once said, “ We should be determined to break all negative causes and hold our bodies accountable for the right actions, perform virtuous actions that benefit all and cultivate ourselves to have a pure body. We should cleanse the impurities in our hearts. We should act as we talk, and talk as we act, with full concordance of our speech and action, and to have integrity without deception. The person, who has cleansed his impurities and has concordance of speech and action, is able to liberate himself, and from that vantage be able to help others. With the great vow of whole-heartedly striving to go to the Western pure land in our afterlife, we should recite the names of the Buddhas, meditate upon the Buddha and accumulate merits. Although it is tough to practice diligently for a lifetime, compared to one’s many lifetimes prior to this, it is just like a brief moment. The hard work in this life allows you to attain the land of everlasting life, enjoy boundless bliss, clear the negative karmic causes that keep us bounded within the cycle of samsara, be liberated from mental imbalances, live for as long as a hundred million eons, be at ease, be aware and fulfill whatever our heart wishes.” This ‘determination to break all negative causes and cleanse the impurities in our hearts’, ‘ability to liberate ourselves’, ‘cultivation of ourselves to achieve a pure body’, ‘cleansing the impurities in our hearts’, is the Samadhi Buddha-truth water continuously cleansing the heart and generating repentance. When one can ‘perform virtuous actions to benefit all’ and ‘accumulate merits’, he/she is able to unite as one with the Buddhas and be highly connected. All the Buddhas’ infinite and boundless great wishes may

be hard to believe; after all it is an external volitional energy to repent. If we cannot even face our current living situation, no matter how strong the Buddha's power may be, no matter how boundless the powers may

be, we shall still not be saved. The Samadhi Buddha-truth water's continually unceasing effectiveness comes from the source of power to do virtuous actions within our own pure and clear heart. With this source of power, we 'face the three precious jewels in all the ten directions, and in front of all the sentient beings, generate great compassion for all sentient beings with their afflictions and delusions from time immemorial until this time of sincere confession, then without regard for one's life repent on the three obstacles, confess all negative actions committed, and vow not to commit negative actions that have yet to been done'. Therefore, the Zen sixth Patriarch Hui-Neng said, "the superstitious person prays to the Buddha and seeks to be saved by another, while the realized person cleanses his own heart." This is also a form of versatile and lively repentance thought that reflects the following: to 'avoid all negative actions and perform all virtuous actions, purify all delusions and cultivate wisdom, are what all the Buddhas teach.'

The reason why Buddhadharma is so meaningful is because it has a philosophy that has the five attributes of being immediate, human, applicable to our lives, applicable to our living, and harmoniously complete without delusions. As such, the Samadhi Buddha-truth Water that is created from the combination of the Water Repentance Preface and the Main Text exactly has the previous five attributes and is thus an aspect of repentance thought that continues to exist and remain relevant in human society. It not only was applicable during Shakyamuni Buddha's lifetime, but was also applicable in ancient China, and not to mention in contemporary society and in our lives. It is something that allows us to spiritually take a breather from worldly concerns, yet is being applied with versatility and liveliness within the world.

The original meaning of ‘Ch’an Hui’, came from the Buddhadharma in the human world. The deep layers of meaning and nuances in repentance, are ‘rooted in the Buddha Shakyamuni, yet expressed in the world; not just

Buddha’s teachings, but also the disciples’ purification of the three obstacles. Buddhadharma has substance and is active amongst humans. ‘ Shakyamuni Buddha’s teachings on repentance and eradication of negative karma is akin to an active study of humans. Tang Jun Yi said, “Shakyamuni Buddha saw wisdom on emptiness as the starting point, and compassion as the ending point, which means to use wisdom to perceive, and to use the meaning to streamline our own actions and thoughts, and to end with the person.” This could be the best endnote for the Samadhi Buddha-truth water thinking from the Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance Sutra.

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## COMPASSIONATE WATER REPENTANCE PRACTICE SUTRA

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### PREFACE TEXT

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#### **Imperial Preface to the Water Repentance Sutra**

With regards to the Samadhi Water Repentance practice, Tang dynasty’s Venerable Zhixuan, conferred as Dharma Master Wuda, encountered the holy Kanakavatsa. Using Samadhi water, Karnakavatsa rinsed off the vengeance accumulated by Wuda from lives past. Venerable Zhixuan compiled his experience of awakening into confession texts, to bring pervasive future benefit to the minds of many. This brings such boundless merit and virtue.

The word Samadhi means right meditative concentration. Being free of all mental suffering is being in right meditative concentration. With true emptiness and single-pointed concentration, the mind is calmed. It is something that one needs only to rely on the self for. All people born into this world, unless born with qualities of superior wisdom, have most certainly erred by mistake, or are encumbered by past enemies and

conflict. The Tathagatha, motivated by great compassion, opened the door to confession. As long as one can wholeheartedly confess with utmost honesty, accumulated negative karma can melt away like defrosting ice, just like all water would. The afflictions of the body are bathed away, the stains from clothing are washed clean, the dirt on the vessel is rinsed clear -- and all these within just an instant. Thus it is said, the mind has mastery of the physical experience (心者身之神明). Goodness begets good returns; evil begets evil returns. And like the way a shadow follows the figure as does an echo the source, its effect is imperceptibly swift. This is the way the Samadhi Water Repentance works, and so is how it benefits people, with such widespread power indeed.

Even Zhixuan, with his ten lifetimes as a high monk, received karmic retribution. What more so, then, for the common man? In days of yore, Sun Hao desecrated a gold Buddha rupa, and was punished for it in the underworld. Through confession and repentance for the past misdeed, his karma was purified and he was released. In another legend, Fazuo insolently criticised his master, who punished Fazuo, yet later pardoned Fazuo because of his repentance.

Such examples abound, and all people should take this lesson to heart. How can one be blameless? So it is better we confess and repent. Only through cleansing can we move towards doing good, and grow not one iota of evil thought. Then will misfortune diminish, and fortune and merit grow.

The rain nourishes blossoms to grow abundant and flourish. It is phenomena not directly visible to the eye, but subtly, so many benefit. It is in the same way that Samadhi works when it enters in one's mindstream, with no need to rely on others.

So I have selected this scroll, composed this preface, and commissioned its publication, to bring about convenience and benefit. It is to harness oceans of Samadhi to spread all over Samsara and to purify for all

eternity. With this motivation, this publication is commissioned.

Yongle, 14<sup>th</sup> Year of reign, first day of seventh lunar month

## **Compassionate Bodhimanda Water Repentance Preface**

Part of the sacred teachings in the Tripitaka beyond what has been translated, this confession text is the creation of later venerated ones. But what is the point if one has no sense of what it is? Just as a piece of antique has to have its uniqueness explained, it is not easy to tell that the Water Repentance is such a sacred text. So here we share its origination.

Long ago during Tang dynasty Emperor Yizong's reign, lived Venerable Zhi Xuan, conferred the title Dharma Master Wuda. Before he was famous and honoured, he chanced upon a monk in the capital who could not remember where his abode was. The monk was delirious with festering sores, but while all others were repulsed by it, Zhixuan stayed close to him and took care of him tirelessly all the time. As such, the monk got well and at their parting, in gratefulness he said, 'In future should you encounter difficulties, you can look for me at Mt Jiulong in Sichuan. Look out for a landmark of two pine trees.'

Later on in life, the Dharma Master Wuda was honoured with residence in the imperial temple, and he was widely known for his virtue. Emperor Yizong himself attended the Dharma Master's teachings and offered a Dharma throne made of exquisite Agarwood, showing his great respect for Wuda.

Thereafter all of a sudden a human-faced boil grew on Wuda's knee, complete with brows, eyes, a mouth and teeth. It ate and drank, and it opened its mouth to swallow and spit, just like any other person. Doctors summoned from all over the land were speechless on

how to treat it. It was then Wuda recalled the words of the monk from before, and headed for the mountains to search for him. A whole day passed by, and by nighttime Wuda was frantically looking around. It was then that Wuda spotted two pines amidst the mist, and with faith in

the monk's words, headed straight towards them. A resplendently ornate temple loomed there, and the monk he nursed was standing right at its front entrance.

Joyfully greeting each other, the monk bid Wuda to stay there for the night. Wuda shared his suffering with the monk, and the monk replied, 'There is no need to worry; underneath the boulders is a spring, tomorrow morning, we will heal you by washing your boil with its water.'

At dawn a youth brought Wuda to the spring, and as just as he was scooping the water, the human-faced boil cried out, 'Don't wash just yet. You are known for your deep thirst for knowledge; have you read of the legend of Yuan'ang and Zhaocuo from the West Han era?'

Wuda replied, 'Yes, I have read it before.'

'Since you have read it before, then you'd know that Yuan'ang killed Zhaocuo. You were Yuan'ang in your past life, and I was Zhaocuo. Zhaocuo was slashed to death at the execution grounds. It was such an injustice! For succeeding lifetimes I have sought revenge on you. And yet for ten lifetimes you became a high monk. You kept your vows and discipline so well that I could not get any chance. Now, you are favoured and pampered by the Emperor, and his patronage aroused your desire for fame and gains. The virtue you accumulated has been dented and so I found my chance to harm you. But now, having met the holy Kanakavatsa, I will be cleansed using the Samadhi Dharma water, from that point on my karmic debt with you will no longer be.'

Upon hearing this, the shivering Wuda, who was scared out of his mind, hurriedly scooped water and washed the boil. At this, pain wracked throughout his body to the extent that he blacked out and came to again. When he awoke, the boil was gone.

At this point, he came to the realisation that he had

crossed paths with a saint, and that what just happened was not phenomena of mere mortals. Yet when he turned around with the grateful intention to give thanks, the temple was nowhere to be found. As such, he built an abode in its place and it became set up as a monastery. In

time to come, during the years when the Song Dynasty was in the midst of being established, it was named Dechan Si. (Literally: Virtuous Meditation Temple) By then, it had a high monks presiding there, and held ancient records detailing this incident, how at the time Wuda went through this incredible experiences and reflected deeply on the karma accumulated from past lives, which he could not have been free of without having met the holy saint. Wuda, leveraging on his experience, composed a confession practice, and practiced it day and night. This practice eventually spread over our realm. Today, it takes the form of a three-scroll confession text, which is this following confession text. It incorporates the essence of washing past karma using Samadhi Water, and so was named Water Repentance.

This story of Wuda's incredible experience with Karnakavatsa, and how karma was repaid, needs to be told. (此悟达。感迦诺迦之异。应正名立义报本而为之云耳。) Now, this story has been related here, so as to reveal the thinking of our forbearers, and so that when the reader commences reading, and participates in this confession practice, will know of the background story, and not be ignorant about the inter-twined karma that is experienced by sentient beings in the world.

Song Dynasty

### **Three offerings**

Incense burns above, auspicious rosy clouds billow from the golden incense burner. Within the clouds, are wisps of azure smoke. King Yaso makes offerings to the Tathagatha, the Buddha, the Honoured Perfection of Merit and Wisdom.

Namo Bodhisattva Samantabhadra Mahasattva (x3)

Flowers arranged in vases, blooming in four directions.  
Amidst them are fragrant blossoms. King Wondrous  
Sound makes offerings to the Tathagatha, the Dharma,  
the Honoured Way to Eliminate Craving.

Namo Bodhisattva Samantabhadra Mahasattva (x3)

Lamp light glittering, beacons of wisdom. Within the  
beams, a spectrum of emptiness. King Flaming Wisdom  
makes offerings to the Tathagatha, the Sangha, the  
Honoured Noblest Amongst Mankind.

Namo Bodhisattva Samantabhadra Mahasattva (x3)

Samadhi/Liang Emperor\* (\*Either one) Meritorious  
Precious Confession Practice, endowed with  
unsurpassable wondrous reasoning and wondrous power,  
able to save the minds of sentient beings who have  
passed on from the river of craving, to be brought up to  
the heavenly realm. Up there gold dust covers the  
ground, nettings of jewels criss-cross, songbirds sing,  
breezes rustle, echoing teachings of the Great Wisdom.  
Sentient beings who have passed on, take refuge. Namó.  
Prostrate to the ground. Mita.

### **Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance**

#### **Morality and Serenity Incense Praise**

The true incense of disciplined morality and serenity  
Burns and rushes up into the heavens  
We, the devout gather here,  
Offer incense that smoulders on a golden incense burner.  
Instantly, incense smoke billows  
And spreads in the ten directions  
Like Yashodara of yore,  
Escaping harm and pacifying calamities and obstacles.  
Blessed be the Bodhisattvas Mahasattvas under incense-  
cloud canopies.

Reverently we learned about the rare occasion of the Buddha's birth. He taught 84,000 teachings that lead to wisdom. Within a short time, He broke the great shroud of darkness. He outlined a vehicle that provided us with a wondrous way to repent for all mistakes. Offering respect to the seven Buddhas and the ten compassionate fathers, with light in our faces, and hearts of sincerity, we (insert name) now request for repentance, and come respectfully before the golden lotus throne. We intend to practice the water repentance method, and are now proceeding with part one. As conditions arise for us to enter the grounds, we within these grounds, purify our karma with single-minded focus. Offering burning incense and strewn flowers, we kneel with our palms together and prostrate to the Three Jewels of the ten directions. We take refuge in the Buddha, the Great Awakened Golden Deity. With all sincerity, we confess and repent. We reflect that immersed within samsara, we indulge in our delusions, and cycle within the six realms of being. We let our body speech and mind run wild with greed, anger, and ignorance. With so many deluded acts we created boundless karmic obstacles, descending into a vicious spiral. Many transgressions have arisen. It is because of this that the Tathagatha opened the door to this skillful means to allow us to wholeheartedly practice repentance, bravely confess, recite the profound text to cleanse the past transgressions and then proceed onwards to reclaim morality. We wish to bring this to fruition. Imploring the Buddha to be compassionate and bestow blessings, we commence our repentance.

In all the heavens and the earth the Buddha is unequalled  
In the worlds of the ten directions as well there is none  
In all of existence that we can observe  
Nothing is comparable to the Buddha

I commence the compassionate repentance practice.  
I wholeheartedly take refuge with the Buddhas of the three times—past, present and future.  
I seek refuge in the Buddha of the previous Adornment kalpa, Buddha Vipasyin.  
I seek refuge in the Buddha of the previous Adornment kalpa, Buddha Sikhin.  
I seek refuge in the Buddha of the previous Adornment kalpa, Buddha Visabhu.  
I seek refuge in the Buddha of the previous Adornment kalpa, Buddha Visabhu.  
I seek refuge in the Buddha of the present Bhadra kalpa, Buddha Kanakamuni.  
I seek refuge in the Buddha of the present Bhadra kalpa, Buddha Kasyapa.  
I seek refuge in the Buddha of the present Bhadra kalpa, the root teacher Buddha Shakyamuni.  
I seek refuge in the future Buddha, the Buddha Maitreya.

All Buddhas have compassion for all suffering sentient beings. That is why they share the way of the water repentance ceremony. The Buddha said:  
“All sentient beings are steeped in defilement; who is without transgression? Who is without fault?”  
The worldling acts in unwise ways, and the obstacle of ignorance has obscured his true nature. He is drawn to non-virtuous friends, causing afflictions to arise and cloud the clarity and peace of his mind. Without proper judgement, he is ignorant about his original nature, and lets his ego run loose, thinking too highly of himself. He does not wish to accept that there are fully realised Buddhas in the ten directions, and neither does he wish to accept the Dharma and the Sangha. He is not a respectful, dutiful and loving child to his parents, relatives, and immediate family. When he is young and healthy, he spends it idly and full of pride. He is greedy for wealth and treasures, and craves song and dance, and

sexual allures. Attachments and desires like greed, fixations, obsessions, and infatuations arise in his mind, creating afflictions for him.

In terms of his outward behaviour, he befriends deviant people who only eat, drink and play, not knowing that as a person we have to practice repentance. Sometimes he even kills sentient beings; sometimes he is drinking himself senseless—he has lost his clear light mind of wisdom.

Today, we shall honestly admit (our transgressions), each one in turn, in order to practice repentance. Today we are going to voice out with utmost sincerity all the negative karma we created in our past lives, as well as all the negative karma we have created in this life.

We shall repent for and purify all our past negative karma. As for negative karma we have not yet committed, we shall never dare to commit them in future.

Today, I, disciple (*your name*), whole-heartedly seek refuge, across the entire span of the ten directions of space, in all the fully-enlightened Buddhas who have set great vows, the great Bodhisattvas, Pratyekabuddhas, Arhats, the Four Phala, Brahma, Indra, devas, nāgas, yaksas, gandharvas, asuras, garudas, kinnaras, mahoragas, all you realised beings, I humbly request for you to bear witness!

I take refuge in the Buddha Vairocana

I take refuge in the Buddha Shakyamuni

I take refuge in the Buddha Amitabha

I take refuge in the Buddha Maitreya

I take refuge in the Buddha Longzhongshangzunwang  
(龍種上尊王佛)

I take refuge in the Buddha Longzizaiwang (龍自在王佛)

I take refuge in the Buddha Precious Victory

I take refuge in the Buddha Enlightenment-flower

Samadhi Lord King

I take refuge in the Buddha Kasaya

I take refuge in the Buddha Simhananda

I take refuge in the Bodhisattva Manjushri

I take refuge in the Bodhisattva Ksitigarbha  
I take refuge in the Bodhisattva Great Adornment  
I take refuge in the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara

After paying respects to all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, we proceed on to the repentance. If we wish to practice repentance, we have to first respect the Triple Gem—the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. Why do we do this? This is because the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha are all sentient beings' virtuous friend and merit field. If we can sincerely seek refuge in the Triple

Gem, that is enough to purify immeasurable negative karma, increase your merits by immeasurable amounts. It enables a practitioner to escape from the sea of samsara and attain the blissful state of liberation.

Thus, I, disciple (*your name*), and  
(*persons/organisation*),

seek refuge in all the Buddhas in the ten directions of space;

seek refuge in all the Dharma in the ten directions of space;

seek refuge in all the Sangha in the ten directions of space.

As your disciples, we wish to practice repentance because since time immemorial, we have been living under worldly circumstances, be it rich or poor naturally we have created unimaginable negative karma by our body, speech and mind and some have been created through our six aggregates.

Some have been created through our deviant thoughts, while some have been created due to being lured by external temptations, causing a disturbed state of mind. These situations include even the **Ten Unskillful States**, which are killing, stealing, adultery, lying, using immoral language, slandering, equivocating, covetousness, anger and perverted views. These give rise to numberless (here referred to as 84,000) afflictions and obstacles, obscuring the true enlightened nature of the mind.

However, though the negativities created by afflictions

may be immeasurable, from a broad perspective they fall into three categories:

1) The obstacle of afflictions, 2) The obstacle of karma, and 3) The obstacle of retribution.

These three types of obstructing negativities can hinder great teachings such as the Four Noble Truths, the Twelve-Linked Chain of Causation and the Six Perfections. It will also prevent wonderful beneficial activities such as the Ten Good Deeds and the Five Precepts.

So, in Buddhist sutras, it is termed the Three

Obstructions, and that is why the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas teach us the skilful means of the repentance practice. By eradicating the Three Obstacles through this practice, we eradicate the six aggregates' Ten Unskilful States. Even the countless (84,000) afflictions and deviant phenomena can all be purified.

Therefore I, disciple (*your name*), today from my heart silently generate virtuous thoughts of beneficial improvement, to practice repentance of the Three Obstacles which I have accumulated from countless eons ago. If we wish to eradicate these Three Obstacles, what sort of state of mind should we generate? Firstly, we should generate the Seven States of Mind, as a skilful means of repentance so that these negativities can truly be purified.

What are the **Seven States of Mind**? 1) Sense of remorse, 2) Sense of fear, 3) Renunciation, 4) Developing Bodhicitta, 5) Equanimity toward all beings, 6) Repaying the Buddha's Grace, and 7) Realise that Unskilful States have no inherent nature.

1) The sense of remorse:

Contemplate and reflect upon ourselves as thus: I and the Tathagatha Shakyamuni are both born of the world, yet the Buddha has already attained Full Enlightenment for kalpas as countless as sand on the Ganges River. While we are still wallowing in the six realms with its sights,

sounds, smells, tastes, touches, and thoughts. We keep circling within the cycle of birth and death with no end. This is truly something to feel remorse about.

## 2) Sense of Fear:

Since we are worldlings, the karma created through our body, speech and mind will often be virtually the same as transgressions. Due to cause and condition after our current life ends, chances are that we fall into the hell realm, animal realm or hungry ghost realm. Here, we would suffer unimaginable bitter fruits of our karma; this kind of situation really deserves to be feared and to be afraid of.

## 3) Renunciation:

Using our wisdom to reflect and perceive we can see that worldly life and death is merely impermanent, an inherently empty form of suffering, empty of an inherent nature, not pure, and an illusion. It is like bubbles on the water surface, arising and disappearing quickly. Like a wheel of a vehicle, it turns and moves unceasingly back and forth.

In the process of our lives, the eight types of suffering –a) suffering of birth, b) suffering of old age, c) suffering of sickness, d) suffering of death, e) suffering of not getting our wishes, f) suffering of separation from loved ones, g) suffering of enemies meeting, and h) suffering of the five aggregates causing greed, anger and ignorance, keep recurring and intermingling, not allowing us one moment of rest.

As we live in the world with others, we need only carefully observe our own bodies from head to toes and see that all that it merely comprises of 36 components. These are: hair on our heads, bodily hair, nails, teeth, eye secretions, tears, mucus, saliva, dirt, sweat, urination and faeces, skin, hypodermis, blood, flesh, ligament, pulse, bones, marrow, fat, grease, brain, membranes, spleen, kidneys, heart, lungs, liver, gall bladder, intestines, stomach, red phlegm, white phlegm, disease of the heart

廕, small intestines and large intestines. There is on the 9 orifices on the surface of our body; 2 eyes, 2 ears, 2 nostrils, mouth, urinary tract and anus, from which secretions and excretions keep flowing.

Thus, as said in the Mahaparinirvana Sutra:

“All the sufferings of this body in totality, all are impure!”

Which wise person would see these 36 items as something to be happy about? Since life and death is filled with so many defilements and deviations, they are something we certainly should be wary about and

something we should certainly renounce.

#### 4) Bodhicitta:

The Sutra says: “We should rejoice in the Buddha’s body.” Buddha’s body refers to the Dharmakaya, which arises from immeasurable merits and wisdom. These include the **6 Perfections** of Generosity, Morality, Patience, Effort, Concentration and Wisdom.

It also includes the **4 Immeasurable Thoughts** of Loving-Kindness, Compassion, Rejoicing and Equanimity, as well as the **37 Aids to Enlightenment** comprising of **The 4 Foundations of Mindfulness, The 4 Right Exertions, The 4 Bases of Power, The 5 Faculties, The 5 Powers, The 7 Factors of Enlightenment, and The Noble Eightfold path.**

From these merits and wisdom, we attain the Buddha’s form. A person who wishes to attain the Dharmakaya should generate Bodhicitta, the motivation to attain anuttarā-samyak-saṃbodhi and resolve to attain all Wisdom like the Buddha.

The **4 Characteristics of Nirvana**: Permanence, Bliss, Self, and Purity. With all the results of having all wisdom, we have cleansed the Buddha’s Pure Land, which are actually our own minds. We are able to serve and help other sentient beings towards enlightenment, being able to give with perfect generosity.

### 5) Equanimity, or seeing friend and foe as equal:

We should have compassion for all sentient beings, without the false division of self and other. Why is it important to have this sense of equanimity? If a dispute or grievance arises between relatives or friends, we would develop judgmental discrimination.

Due to discrimination, we would have various mistaken views, and as a result, all sorts of mental afflictions would form. With these afflictions, we would then perform all sorts of unskillful actions and in turn manifest all sorts of undesirable consequences.

### 6) Being grateful for Buddha's Grace:

The Tathagata, innumerable kalpas ago, was able to renounce his skull, eyes, spine, cerebral fluid, hands, feet, limbs and all parts of his body. He was able to renounce his own country, city wall and moat, wife, children, elephants, precious horses, as well as his seven precious materials of gold, silver, lapis lazuli, tridacna, agate, pearls and coral. He did these, and for our sake, he practiced all manners of austerities. It is so difficult to repay such grace from him.

It says thus on the Lotus Sutra: "Even if one carries upon one's head and two shoulders, for kalpas as many as the grains of sand in the Ganges, one is not able to repay it." If we wish to repay such grace, we should right now in this life, bravely endeavor with great enthusiasm, work hard with fortitude amidst suffering. Without regard for one's worldly body, to develop the Triple Gems--the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, and let Mahayana Buddhism flourish. That way we can definitely benefit all sentient beings to allow all sentient beings to attain enlightenment.

7) To see that Unskilful States are empty of inherent nature:

Unskilful actions do not exist on their own side; they arise due to causes supported by conditions, and exist when our mental states are askew. Since they arise from causes and conditions, we can eradicate them through these causes and conditions. Unskilful actions arise through causes and conditions when we associate with deviant friends, and as a result we create endless amounts of Unskilful actions. Unskilful actions are eradicated through causes and conditions when we are practicing repentance.

The sutra says: “The Unskilful States does not exist within us, does not exist outside us, and does not exist in an intermediate state either.” Therefore, we know that these Unskilful actions’ do not exist inherently on their own!

Having generated these 7 states of Mind within ourselves, and with the thought arising from the environment of all the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Holy Beings in the ten directions, reverently I join my palms together. Sincerely, I admit all and with a sense of remorse I turn over a new leaf. I thoroughly and completely purify all my past experiences.

With such repentance, what kind of Unskilful action can’t be purified and eradicated? What kind of merits can’t be created? If, on the other hand, we practice repentance without such a mindset, and continue letting ourselves run loose, being indolent, and scattered in our thoughts, this is merely exercising our bodies. What benefit would it have towards true repentance?

Besides, a person’s life is by nature impermanent, like a spinning candle. Once extinguished, there is no turning back, and it becomes like dust and dirt. Without a choice, we take on the sufferings in the retribution of the three lower realms, where no amount of wealth can help us escape! The three lower realms are vast and wide, where there is no such thing as making an exception, and we

have to go through the pain ourselves. No one can replace us to take on the suffering.

Do not say: “In this life, I have never committed such Unskilful actions”, and think, therefore, that there is no need to make repentances. The Sutras state that: “The worldling, as much as taking a step, is creating Unskilful actions.” Furthermore in past lives, it is certain that we have created immeasurable Unskilful actions, whose repercussions have followed us into our current lives, like a shadow attached to its form.

If we do not practice repentance, our Unskilful States

will be worsen. Knowing that the Buddha does not condone of hiding one’s faults, mistakes, and Unskilful actions. Confessing the Unskilful acts from our past lives is valued in the Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sūtra. So if we are often immersed in suffering, in fact it is due to hiding and hiding from our Unskilful States.

Therefore I, disciple (*your name*), sincerely confess today, not to conceal and evade anymore. The Three Obstacles as mentioned before are: 1) The Obstacle of Affliction; 2) The Obstacle of Karma; and 3) The Obstacle of Retribution. These 3 phenomena are inter-dependent. It is due to our afflictions that we create negative karma and it is due to the causes and conditions from this karma that retribution arises. Therefore I, (*your name*), sincerely practice repentance today.

**First**, we should confess, reflect and make amends for the Obstacle of Afflictions. All afflictions arise from the mind! Why is this so? This is because the thought arises in the mind which leads the body to carry out the action or the mouth to execute the speech. There are three types of such Unskilful thoughts: First is greed, second is anger, and the third is ignorance. Due to our ignorance we develop all sorts of imbalanced thoughts, creating all our Unskilful actions.

As such it says in the Lotus Sutra: “Karma from greed, anger and ignorance can send sentient beings to the hell realms, hungry ghost realm, and animal realms, which are full of suffering. If reborn as a human, it would be a

life of poverty, loneliness, homelessness, vileness, viciousness, stubbornness, stupidity, deludedness, and without knowledge.” Since all the afflictions arising from Unskilful thoughts bring on such negative consequences, I, (*your name*), whole-heartedly seek refuge in the Buddha and the field of merit, and humbly request for your compassion and to sincerely repent.

All Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, should these mental afflictions enter the minds of a sage, would have been rebuked and viewed as enemies! Why is this so? This is because these afflictions will destroy sentient beings’

wisdom and even the bases for their existence! They also see these afflictions as thieves, because these can steal all the merits they had away from them! They also see these afflictions as raging torrential rivers, because these afflictions can wash sentient beings into the ocean of life and death! They also see these afflictions as shackles, because these afflictions can chain sentient beings in the hell of life and death for eternity, never to escape!

This way, the beings in the 6 realms of samsara intermingle and keep each other in samsara, the catur-yoni will never extinguish, Unskilful actions abound endlessly, painful retribution bring suffering unceasingly! We should realise that all these are disasters brought on by afflictions! Therefore, today we invoke the good and true nature of our mind that wishes to better itself, and humbly ask for compassion and sincerely practice repentance.

I, (*your name*), from time immemorial until today, in the human realm, the god realm, or in any of the six realms, have suffered retribution and have had mental afflictions from that, often feeling frustrated and confused.

Sometimes, it was because of the **3 Poisons**—Greed, Anger and Ignorance, all manner of Unskilful actions arose. Sometimes it was because of the **3**

**Contaminations**—a) Desire, b) Existence, and c) Ignorance, that all manner of Unskilful actions arose.

Sometimes, it was because of the **3 kinds of Suffering** – a) direct suffering, b) loss or destruction, and c)

impermanence, that all manner of Unskilful actions arose. Sometimes, it was because of the **3 Subversions** — evils thoughts, false views, and a deluded mind, that all manner of Unskilful actions arose.

Sometimes it was because of greed for the **3 kinds of Existence**—the Desire Realm, the Form Realm and the Formless Realm, that all manner of Unskilful actions arose.

Unskilful actions such as these are too many to count; the afflictions disturb all sentient beings in all of samsara.

Today, with the realisation to feel remorse, all generate repentance in their hearts.

In addition, (**your name**), from time immemorial until today, have due to the **4 Bases of Consciousness**—material form, feeling, perception, and volitional formations, caused all manner of Unskilful actions to arise.

Sometimes, it was due to the **4 Currents** (that carry the unthinking along)—a) the illusions of seeing things as they seem, not as they are; b) desires; c) existence or life; and d) ignorance, or an unenlightened condition, that all manner of Unskilful actions arose.

Sometimes it was due to the **4 Kinds of Clinging to**: a) desire; b) mistaken views; c) mistaken understanding of the precepts; and d) to ideas that arise from a notion of self, that all manner of Unskilful actions arose.

Sometimes it was due to the **4 Attachments** of a) coming into existence; b) ceasing to exist; c) impermanence; and d) permanence, that all manner of Unskilful actions arose.

Sometimes it was due to the **4 Conditions**—a) direct internal cause that produces a result; b) prior instant of mind/mental functioning that gives rise directly to the succeeding instant of mind; object as condition; and causes beyond direct empowerment, that all manner of Unskilful actions arose.

Sometimes, it was due to the 4 great Elements—earth; water; fire; and wind, that all manner of Unskilful actions arose. Sometimes, it was due to the 4 Bonds—greed;

ignorance; deviant morality; and unenlightened views, that all manner of unskilful actions arose. Sometimes it was due to the 4 Cravings—emotions; senses; food; and sex, that all manner of unskilful actions arose.

Unskilful actions such as these are too many to count; the afflictions disturb all sentient beings in all of samsara.

Today, with the realisation to feel guilt, all generate repentance in their hearts.

In addition, I, (***your name***), from time immemorial until today, due to the 5 Pillars of Affliction, has : a) acquiring the desired; b) the attachment to desires; c) the

attachment to senses; d) the attachment to existence; and e) of ignorance, caused all manner of Unskilful actions to arise.

Sometimes, it was due to the 5 Covers of Moral and Mental Hindrances that are: a) desire; b) anger; c) drowsiness; d) excitability; and e) doubt, that all manner of Unskilful actions arose. Sometimes, it was due to the 5 kinds of Selfishness monopolizing the following: a) an abode; b) an almsgiving household; c) alms received; d) praise; and e) knowledge of the truth, that all manner of Unskilful actions arose.

Sometimes, it was due to the 5 Views—a) self view; b) extreme view; c) perverse view; d) view of attachment to views; and e) view of rigid attachment to precepts, that all manner of Unskilful actions arose.

Sometimes it was due to the 5 Conditions of Minds—a) immediate; b) inquiry; c) decision; d) the effect; and e) production from other causations, that all manner of Unskilful actions arose.

Unskilful actions such as these are too many to count; the afflictions disturb all sentient beings in all of samsara.

Today, with the realisation to feel guilt, all generate repentance in their hearts.

In addition, (***your name***), from time immemorial until today, has due to the 6 Sense Organs—a) eyes; b) ears; c) nose; d) tongue; e) body; and f) mind, caused all manner of Unskilful actions to arise.

Sometimes, it was due to the Consciousnesses of the 6

Senses: a) eye consciousness; b) ear consciousness; c) nose consciousness; d) tongue consciousness; e) body consciousness; and f) mind consciousness, that all manner of Unskilful actions arose.

Sometimes, it was due to the 6 Aggregates of Perceptions—our perceptions of the external states via the six senses, that all manner of Unskilful actions arose.

Sometimes, it was due to the 6 Aggregates of Sensations—the emotions that arise from the perceptions arising from the Six Senses, that all manner of Unskilful actions arose. Sometimes, it was due to the 6 practices of the

Buddha, that all manner of Unskilful actions arose.

Sometimes, it was due to the 6 Cravings for: a) sights; b) sounds; c) smells; d) tastes; e) touches; and f) thoughts, that all manner of Unskilful actions arose. Sometimes, it was due to the 6 Doubts, that all manner of Unskilful actions arose.

Unskilful actions such as these are too many to count; the afflictions disturb all sentient beings in all of samsara.

Today, with the realisation to feel guilt, all generate repentance in their hearts.

In addition, I, (***your name***), from time immemorial until today, has created all manner of Unskilful actions caused by The 7 Leaks, The 7 Agents, The 8 Inverted Thoughts, The 8 Defilements, and The 8 Sufferings.

Unskilful actions such as these are too many to count; the afflictions disturb all sentient beings in all of samsara.

Today, with the realisation to feel guilt, all generate repentance in their hearts.

In addition, I, (***your name***), from time immemorial until today, has created all manner of Unskilful actions caused by The 9 Ordeals, The 9 Bonds, The 9 Conditions, The 10 Afflictions, The 10 Entanglements, The 11 Universal Agents, The 12 Entrances, The 16 Conceptions, The 18 Realms, The 25 Egocentricities, The 62 Perceptions, The 98 Messengers, The 108 Afflictions. Afflictions such as these are boundlessly immeasurable; afflictions affect even saints and virtuous people, much less ordinary people; it pervades samsara and extends throughout the

six realms; there is nowhere to escape from it! Today, with utmost sincerity I pray, to all the Buddhas in the ten directions, the Dharma and the Sangha, to generate the greatest guilt and regret, and confess my defilements. Without concealing, I repent everything.

With the all the meritorious virtue generated from practicing repentance for the three poisons and all afflictions, may I in every lifetime gain the 3 Wisdoms, attain the 3 Clarities, end the 3 Sufferings, and fulfill the 3 Wishes.

With all the meritorious virtue generated from practicing repentance for the 4 Bases of Consciousness and all afflictions, may I in every lifetime spread the 4 Immeasurables, develop the 4 Faiths, eradicate the 4 Harmful Destinations, and possess the 4 Fearlessnesses.

With all the meritorious virtue generated from practicing repentance for the five covers and all afflictions, may I in every lifetime benefit the five realms, establish the five foundations, obtain the five pure visions, and attain the five attributes of the dharmakaya.

With all the meritorious virtue generated from practicing repentance for the 6 Aggregates of Perceptions and all afflictions, may I in every lifetime be equipped with the 6 Supernatural Powers, fulfill the 6 Perfections, overcome the delusions of the 6 Dusts, and constantly perform the 6 Great Actions.

Also, with all the meritorious virtue generated from practicing repentance for the 7 Leaks, the 8 Defilements, 9 Knots, 10 Entanglements, and all other afflictions, may I in every lifetime maintain the 7 Purities, rinse with the water of the 8 Liberations, possess the 9 Wisdoms that stop the afflictions of samsara, and attain the 10 levels of a Bodhisattva.

With all the meritorious virtue generated from practicing

repentance for the eleven universal agents, as well as the twelve entrances, eighteen realms and all afflictions, may I in every lifetime be able to understand and apply the eleven emptinesses to feel at ease and attain self-mastery, turn the wheel of dharma in the twelve ways, and possess the eighteen distinctive Dharma.

May the immeasurable meritorious virtue all be realised. Having made the wishes, I now take refuge and prostrate to all the Buddhas.

I take refuge in the Buddha Vairocana

I take refuge in the Buddha Shakyamuni

I take refuge in the Buddha Amitabha

I take refuge in the Buddha Maitreya

I take refuge in the Buddha Longzhongshangzunwang  
(龍種上尊王佛)

I take refuge in the Buddha Longzizaiwang (龍自在王佛)

I take refuge in the Buddha Precious Victory

I take refuge in the Buddha Enlightenment-flower  
Samadhi Lord King

I take refuge in the Buddha Kasaya

I take refuge in the Buddha Simhananda

I take refuge in the Bodhisattva Manjushri

I take refuge in the Bodhisattva Ksitigarbha

I take refuge in the Bodhisattva Great Adornment

I take refuge in the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara

After paying respects to all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, I once again return to practice of repentance. The purpose of practicing repentance is to make reparations for my past Unskillful actions so as to cultivate myself for the future to eradicate harmful actions and heighten virtue. Amongst all who dwell in the world, who has not transgressed before?

Accomplished Buddhist practitioners have lost their meditative state, causing afflictions to arise. Even holy arhats have certain remnant habits that lead to slight negative karma. How so more, that the ordinary person should have certainly transgressed before. However,

wiser persons are promptly aware of the transgressions, and can then feel regret and change for the better. The foolish repeatedly conceal their transgressions and cause it to fester and spread. As a result, over long periods of accumulating Unskilful actions, the foolish will not know a time where they find awareness and realisation. If the practitioner can truly practice repentance, to express their feelings of guilt and regret, not only does it heal our past transgression, it also creates immeasurable merit, even establishing the fruits of attaining true enlightenment. One who wishes to practice this repentance, should first

dress solemnly, respectfully gaze upon Buddha's rupa, generate feelings of respect, generate thoughts of the Dharma, and in this way sincerely and earnestly pray. Generate the two states of mind. What are the two states of mind?

The first is to think in my mind that my life and my form are impermanent. One day this body will disintegrate, and no one knows when I can get such a human form again. If I am not able to meet with the Triple Jewels again, but instead by chance befriend unvirtuous friends and create negative karma, I shall fall into the pit of suffering.

The second state of mind is thus. Since I have met with the Buddha and Dharma in this life, what a waste it would be to not learn the Dharma, flourish the Triple Jewels, cultivate Bodhicitta, and develop the Sangha! I shall purify my body, speech and mind, and cultivate my mind with the virtuous Dharma.

However now instead of doing so, I have repeatedly done negative deeds privately, thinking others would not know, saying to myself that no one has seen this. Hiding the truth in my heart, I pridefully have no remorse. This is truly an utterly foolish and deluded thing to do. Since right now there are Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and holy sages in the ten directions, by all means they would witness the deeds I have done. Moreover, spirits and deities abound who record down my good and bad deeds, large or small, without fail. For the person who has

remorselessly accumulated negative deeds, after his life ends, his consciousness shall be fetched by bull-headed hell soldiers, and his deeds shall be judged by the completely fair Lord of Hell. At that point in time, all his foes who he had harmed before shall come forth and present their evidence. They may say: “It was you who murdered and butchered my body, you who blasted and boiled my flesh and blood, you who cooked my joints, you who steamed, fried and roasted my body. Or they may say: “It was you who took all my treasures and possessions and you who caused my family to separate.

Now that I have got you here and have presented my case and evidence, I dare you not obey. You have no choice but to willingly reap the fruits of your actions and accept the fate that you created.”

As stated in the Sutras, there is no unfair judgement in hell. If in his lifetime, a person forgets the negative deeds he did earlier, when he is nearing death, images of all the beings he harmed will appear and say to him: “In past, you did this to me! Now, how can you avoid this!” At that point the person would have nowhere to hide, and with that the Lord of Hell would sternly rebuke the person and commit the person to hell. For an entire eon, he is unable to leave hell. This reality is not far, and is not for others’ concern. One reaps what one sows. Even for a relationship as close as father to son, there is no one who can take another’s place. I, having received this precious human rebirth with a healthy body, will strive on my own, and fight with my life in fear that when the time comes I would regret not having made it in time.

With this, I sincerely pray and practice repentance.

I have, from time immemorial up to today, accumulated ignorance and obscured the Buddha-nature in my heart. Succumbing to the nature of afflictions, I commit Unskilful actions across the three times. Or, having been stained with desire, afflictions of greed and attachment arises. Or, having anger which gives rise to thoughts of inflicting harm. Or, due to ignorance of not being able to differentiate between values such as virtue and non-

virtue, Unskilful actions committed out of ignorance arises. Or, due to narcissism and selfishness, the affliction of pride arises. Or, due to skepticism of the right path, the affliction of doubt arises. Or, due to dismissing the existence of karma, the affliction of deluded thinking arises. Or, not understanding the inherent emptiness and interdependence of all existence, the affliction of attachment to an inherently existing self arises. Or, confused about the nature of the three times, the afflictions of not thinking a future life exists or thinking that the human rebirth is guaranteed arise. Or,

befriending people with deviant beliefs, the affliction of perverse view arises. Or, following deviant teachers, the affliction of taking up perverse vows arises. As with all the factors like attachments that result in all the afflictions, today, with all sincerity I repent for all of them.

In addition, from time immemorial until today, having strong attachment, the affliction of miserliness arises. Indulging in the senses, the affliction of extravagance and decadence arises. Being mean-spirited and short-tempered, the affliction of impatience arises. Behaving lazily and slowly, the affliction of being unindustrious arises. Having a scattered, active mind that is skeptical and neurotic, the affliction of restlessness arises. Having a mistaken view of the perceived world, the affliction of misconception arises. Being moved by the eight worldly winds, the affliction of gossiping arises. Flattering and falsely praising others, the affliction of duplicity arises. Having an aggressively abrasive personality, the affliction of disharmony arises. Being quick to anger and slow to please, the affliction of hatefulness arises. Often attacked by bouts of jealousy and envy, the affliction of spitefulness arises. Being devious, malicious, violent and cruel, the affliction of being poisonous arises. Defying the Dharma truth, the affliction of attachment to inherent existence. Lingering amidst the Four Noble Truths, the affliction of inverted thinking arises. Following the flow of the twelve causes and conditions of life and death, the

affliction of reincarnation continues. All the ignorance accumulated from infinite lifetimes, gives rise to afflictions like the grains of sand in the Ganges river. The four grounding states, or all the cravings and desires, cause all afflictions to arise, leading to suffering across all three times. The afflictions are boundless; they affect even sages and saints, not to mention all other sentient beings in Samsara. Today, in front of the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha, I confess and practice repentance for all.

I pray that through the merit of sincerely repenting for my negative karma including greed, anger and ignorance and all other afflictions, may I in every lifetime chop off the tree of self-centred egotism, dry up the seas of desire, extinguish the flames of anger, destroy the darkness of ignorance, extricate the roots of doubtfulness, break out from the net of perverse views and beliefs, to truly realise samsara as a prison, to see the four factors that compose our bodies as four poisonous snakes, to see the five factors that compose our life as five foes and thieves, to see our six senses as six empty villages, to see desire as a deceptive friend, to practice the noble eightfold path and cut off the source of ignorance, to progress towards enlightenment without break, to continuously practice the thirty-seven bodhisattva practices, and to always manifest the ten perfections. The practice of repentance is now complete, and I now wholeheartedly place my faith in and give my respect to the always-present Triple Gem.

The Compassionate Water Repentance Practice Book  
One ends here.

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ENDING PRACTICE FOR BOOK ONE

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**Sapta Jina Bhasitam Papa Vinas ana Dharani**  
**(Literally translated as: Words of truth eradicating**  
**Unskilful Actions by the Seven Buddhas)**

lipalipate kuhakuhate taralite niharate wimalite swaha  
(three times)

(Hanyu pinyin: li po li po di. qiu he qiu he di. tuo luo ni

di. ni he luo di. pi li ni di. mo he qie di. zhen ling qian di suo po he.)

### **Praise**

A boil like a human's face

So much accumulated regret;

Yet cleansed off by a scoop of clear spring water.

Worry for the self became empathy for others

Compiling a repentance liturgy

Repaying the gratitude for cleansing.

Namo Wonderful Enlightenment Bodhisattva Mahasattva

(3 times)

### **Ending repentance for book one**

Reverently we learned about the stately appearance of Buddha, as if his aura pervaded like rain. His kindness is like the full moon, gently shining on all sentient beings through the clouds.

Sitting on the lion throne, with hi wondrous speech, fulfilling wishes like a thousand light rays. I was moved to make a dedication and pray for (person's name) and all those who are assembled here to recite the compassionate Samadhi water repentance.

May we complete the recitation of Book 1 successfully. Together we assemble in a place of practice, offering incense and flowers, kneeling with our palms together, repenting while reciting the sutra and circumambulating the great compassionate one.

Together we recite with thunderous voice. May all merits accumulated be dedicated to the Great Compassionate One, the three jewels, dharma protectors, gods of the three realms and spirits near and far. May the merits bring about joy following through heaven and earth, flourishing in this and other realms.

May the place of practice be auspicious and bear good results for the benefit of purifying (person's name)'s negative sins and for the accumulations of merits to be reborn in pure land.

May the negative karma that one is carrying be purified like melting ice, thus cleansing once karma and

awakening to the truth.

With arising bodhicitta, we embark onto an amazing path to transform all unfavorable conditions to joyous ones and to purify all obscurations, also to benefit once ancestors so they too can be reborn in pure land. May all living ones live a ripe old age. May all karmic creditors receive such kindness and enter the pure land of the Great Compassionate One.

Today we shall repent according to the Sutra. To purify all negativities further, we sincerely request all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas to look upon us with compassion.

Namo Requesting Confession Bodhisattva Mahasattva  
**Dedication of merits**

Having practiced this virtuous and sublime repentance liturgy

Its unsurpassable merits I completely dedicate:

May all sentient beings, who are drowning in samsara

Be swiftly delivered to Buddha's Pure Land of  
immeasurable light

With all the Buddhas of the ten directions and three times

And all the Bodhisattvas Mahasattvas

Mahaprajnaparamita (Great perfection of wisdom)

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ENTERING PRACTICE FOR BOOK TWO

---

Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance.

**Praise**

I offer flowers to Manjushri and Samantabhadra. I offer peonies, medicines, and make offerings of hundreds of blossoms in a golden hall, flowers both blooming and budding, and golden lotuses. Blue robed youths assist to make the offerings to the compassionate ones.

Namo Samantabhadra Bodhisattva Mahasattva (3 times)

**Entering Book Two**

Reverently. Pure and free of dust, divine nectar trickles from compassionate clouds. Enlightened from the two classes of conduct, with golden complexion and urna.

Manifesting the thirty two kinds of responses, emanating into millions of forms, seated on a precious lotus throne,

demonstrating merits and virtue. Now I, (insert name), am conscientiously practicing the compassionate Samadhi repentance liturgy, and am creating the conditions to commence the practice of Book Two. I (and all Bikshus/devotees here), devoutly request, to be able to practice in accordance with Dharma. I burn Turuska incense, scatter white lotuses, to offer to the Triple Gem in the ten directions. Praising the great names of all the Buddhas, I eagerly pay respects, and confess my defilements. Sincerely I (insert name) have since many distant aeons ago until in this life, have been plagued by the two hindrances, and have given rise to the two inversions. Confused about the truth, I gradually get more deluded. I turned my back to enlightenment to join with the mundane. In front of the Triple Gem I felt no respect; towards elders in my family I had no filial piety; out of greed and anger from my body speech and mind, I kill sentient beings to eat them. Thousands of Unskilful Actions I committed, and tens of thousands of negative karma I created. Without devoutly practicing this repentance method, how can I be free of these transgressions? As such I take refuge in the great enlightened ones, confess and repent. I wish to do as thus; the Buddha has compassion for us. Paying respects to the great compassion, they give their guidance imperceptibly.

(commence chanting)

Wondrous appearance adorned with the four times eight marks

Cultivated from thress asankhyeya aeons ago

With a face like the full moon and eyes like lotus

In the heavens and on earth, all give respect.

Compassionate Water Repentance Liturgy Book Two.  
All  
Compassionate Water Repentance Liturgy Book Two.

ENDING PRACTICE FOR BOOK TWO

**Sapta Jina Bhasitam Papa Vinas ana Dharani**  
**(Literally translated as: Words of truth eradicating**  
**Unskilful Actions by the Seven Buddhas)**

lipalipate kuhakuhate taralite niharate wimalite swaha  
(three times)

(Hanyu pinyin: li po li po di. qiu he qiu he di. tuo luo ni  
di. ni he luo di. pi li ni di. mo he qie di. zhen ling qian di  
suo po he.)

**Praise**

In Western Shu Jiulong was hidden a spring that is  
known for cleansing defilements using Samadhi.  
Karnakavatsa created the real source, with its ability to  
cleanse arising from the divine. Its powers have spread  
far and wide.

Namo Wonderful Enlightenment Bodhisattva Mahasattva  
(3 times)

**Ending repentance for Book Two**

恭闻尘消境寂。菩提香散于人天。罪灭性空。般若光辉于法界。仰启千花台上。万叶莲中。大  
圆觉海。婆伽至尊。愿赐威光。证明丹恳。上来奉为求忏某甲等。熏修慈悲道场忏法。今当第  
二卷功果周隆。众等虔诚。心生渴仰。出忏入忏。称唱洪名。所集功因。专伸回向。真如界  
内。福慧两足之尊。华藏海中。悲智二严之主。十方菩萨。四果声闻。护法诸天。冥阳贤哲。  
平等资陪。普皆饶益。伏愿心月娟娟。到波罗之彼岸。性天朗朗。入圆觉之玄门。常为佛法栋  
梁。普利十方含识。倾心悔过。情恐未除。仰劳尊众。求哀忏悔。

Namo Requesting Confession Bodhisattva Mahasattva  
**Dedication of merits**

Having practiced this virtuous and sublime repentance  
liturgy

Its unsurpassable merits I completely dedicate:

May all sentient beings, who are drowning in samsara

Be swiftly delivered to Buddha's Pure Land of  
immeasurable light

With all the Buddhas of the ten directions and three times

And all the Bodhisattvas Mahasattvas

Mahaprajnaparamita (Great perfection of wisdom)

举赞

灯晃耀。盈煌列宝台。光明遍照周沙界。昏衢朗耀俱无碍。阎魔瞻礼紫金台。然灯佛成道。曾受人天拜。

普贤王菩萨 (三称) 或 南无妙觉地菩萨摩訶萨 (三称)

恭闻三祇炼行。三觉功圆。三乘得道之圣贤。三界分司之灵哲。愿赴三熏三沐。恭临三请三皈。翘勤三业之道场。敷露三时之佛事。奉为求忏。

某等。入此道场。熏修三昧忏法。兹当第三卷入坛缘起。我诸行人。端恪一心。肃恭三业。切念求忏。

某等。一迷真性。直至如今。三心障蔽。恣烦恼之贪瞋。三业荒唐。起无明之邪见。造八万尘劳之业海。作百千盖障之深愆。罪积丘山。业如沧海。况以毁佛谤僧。拔无因果。不觉不知。故作误为。如山过咎。未遂披陈。仗三宝之祥光。洁一心而忏悔。我愿如斯。佛必哀怜。仰叩洪慈。俯垂加被。

起忏

大慈大悲愍众生 大喜大舍济含识

相好光明以自严 众等志心皈命礼

慈悲水忏法卷下

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BOOK THREE

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Compassionate Water Repentance Liturgy Book Three.  
Compassionate Water Repentance Liturgy Book Three.

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ENDING PRACTICE FOR BOOK TWO

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**Sapta Jina Bhasitam Papa Vinas ana Dharani**  
**(Literally translated as: Words of truth eradicating**  
**Unskilful Actions by the Seven Buddhas)**

lipalipate kuhakuhate taralite niharate wimalite swaha  
(three times)

(Hanyu pinyin: li po li po di. qiu he qiu he di. tuo luo ni di. ni he luo di. pi li ni di. mo he qie di. zhen ling qian di suo po he.)

**Praise**

忏如浣涤。以水为名。至心顶礼罪根清。罪灭福由生。慧日普明。觉海性圆澄。

**Namo Wonderful Enlightenment Bodhisattva Mahasattva**  
**(3 times)**

**Ending repentance for Book Three**

恭闻。香云结界。如来放五色之光明。宝烛吐花。菩萨现优昙之瑞相。三转法轮于座上。三身圆满于光中。圆满胜因。证明功德。上来奉为求忏。

某等恭对觉皇座下。熏修三昧玄文。今当第三卷。功德周隆。我诸行人。于其坛内。从始至终谨依科范。行道绕旋。奉经持咒。宣忏顶礼。唱佛皈依。献心花于诸佛像前。雪罪愆于众真座下。所集殊勋。先伸回向。乐邦无量寿。华藏释迦尊。冥阳两界之威灵。远近无边之真宰。以此殊胜善因敬为求忏。

某等洗空微细罪愆。成就无边福利。伏愿。百花化佛。共兴一子之悲心。三世如来。禀受七支之具戒。三无漏学宣明。三会龙华授记。一心不乱。业识顿空。四恩普报。三有均资。法界冤亲。咸利乐。虽则依文忏悔。犹恐发露未诚。再劳尊众。重求忏悔。

**Namo Requesting Confession Bodhisattva Mahasattva**  
**Thus the Compassionate Samadhi Water Repentance**

comes to completion.

### **Dedication of merits**

Having practiced this virtuous and sublime repentance liturgy

Its unsurpassable merits I completely dedicate:

May all sentient beings, who are drowning in samsara

Be swiftly delivered to Buddha's Pure Land of immeasurable light

With all the Buddhas of the ten directions and three times

And all the Bodhisattvas Mahasattvas

Mahaprajnaparamita (Great perfection of wisdom)

### **Three Refuges**

I take refuge in the Buddha, and may all sentient beings do the same. Realising the Great Way, setting the unsurpassable motivation.

I take refuge in the Dharma, and may all sentient beings do the same. Entering deep into the Tripitaka canons, wisdom as the ocean.

I take refuge in the Sangha, and may all sentient beings do the same. Taking care of all sentient beings, without obstructions and exceptions. I pay respects to the Triple

Gem.