

Great Ancestor Eihei Dogen's  
Words For Arousing The Vow  
*(Eihe Koso Hotsugan Mon)*

We vow together with all beings, from this life on throughout numerous lifetimes, not to fail to hear the true dharma. Hearing this we will not be skeptical and will not be without faith. Directly upon encountering the true dharma, we will abandon the law of the world and uphold and maintain the buddha dharma. In time, together with the great earth and all animate beings, we will accomplish the Way.

Although our previous evil karma has greatly accumulated, producing causes and conditions that obstruct the Way, may the buddhas and ancestors who have attained the buddha way be compassionate to us and liberate us from our karmic entanglements, allowing us to practice the Way without hindrance. May they share with us their compassion, which fills the boundless universe with the virtue of their enlightenment and teachings.

Buddhas and ancestors of old were as we; we shall come to be buddhas and ancestors. Venerating buddhas and ancestors, we are one with buddhas and ancestors; contemplating awakening mind, we are one with awakened mind. Because their compassion reaches everywhere, we will attain buddhahood and let go of the attainment.

Accordingly, Longya said:

What in past lives was not yet complete, must now be complete,  
In this life save the body coming from the accumulated lives.  
Before enlightenment ancient buddhas were the same as we.  
After enlightenment we will be exactly as those ancient ones.

Quietly explore the depths of this karmic connection, as these are the exact words of a verified buddha. If we repent in this way, we cannot fail to receive the inconceivable help of buddhas and ancestors. Confessing to buddha with mindful heart and dignified body, the power of this confession will eradicate the roots of wrongdoing. This is the one color of true practice, of the true mind of faith, of the true body of faith.

## Hakuin Zenji's Song of Zazen

All beings by nature are Buddha  
As ice by nature is water  
Apart from water, there is no ice  
Apart from beings, no Buddha.

How sad that people ignore the near  
And search for Truth afar  
Like those in the midst of water  
Crying out for thirst  
Like a child of a wealthy home  
Wandering among the poor.

The karma of our transmigration  
Is our dark path of ignorance  
From dark path to dark path we wander  
When shall we be cut from  
birth and death?

Oh, the Zenjo of the Mahayana!  
To this, the highest praise!  
Nembutsu, confession, discipline  
The many virtues all rise within Zenjo.

Those who try zazen but once  
Sweep all their ancient vice away  
Where can evil intentions be  
The Pure Land itself is right here.

Those who hear this Truth but once  
And listen to It with a grateful heart  
Exalting It, revering It;  
Gain blessings without end.

Still more, those who turn within  
And prove their own self-nature  
Self-nature that is no nature  
Go far beyond mere cleverness.

They know effect and cause are one  
Not two, not three, the path runs straight.  
With form that is no form  
Going and coming, never astray  
With thought that is no thought  
Their song and dance are the voice of the  
Law.

Broad is the sky of Samadhi set free  
Transparent the moonlight of wisdom  
And what more indeed can we seek?  
Here is Nirvana itself revealed  
This very place is the Lotus Land  
This very body, the Buddha.

## The Four Great Vows

*Jikijitsu:* And now, let us recite the Four Great Aspirations.

*All:* Creations are innumerable, I resolve to free them all.  
Delusions are inexhaustible, I resolve to extinguish them all.  
The aspects of truth are countless, I resolve to learn and master them all.  
The way of enlightenment is peerless, I resolve to accomplish it.