

Part One

Texts For Sutra-Chanting Services

Verse of the “Universal Gateway” Chapter (*Fumonbon ge* 普門品偈)

Full title: *Verse of the “Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva Universal Gateway” Chapter of the Lotus Sutra (Myōhōrengekyō kanzeon bosatsu fumonbon ge*
妙法蓮華經觀世音菩薩普門品偈)

Bodhisattva Akshayamati
asked a question in verse :

◎ “Oh World-honored One, of wondrous form,
I inquire again of that buddha-child:
what are the causes of his name,
‘Regarding the Cries of the World’?”

The Honored One, of wondrous form,
replied in verse to Akshayamati :
“Listen to the deeds of Avalokiteshvara,
who aptly responds in every quarter.

With vast pledge as deep as oceans,
throughout kalpas beyond reckoning,
he served many thousands of millions of buddhas,
◎ bringing forth this great pure vow.

For you I explain it briefly :
hearing the name or seeing the form of
Avalokiteshvara with mindful remembrance is not in vain,
for the woes of existence can thus be relieved.

Even if someone with harmful intent
should push you into a fiery pit,
by mindfully invoking Avalokiteshvara's power
the pit of fire will turn into a pool.

If floating on a vast sea,
menaced by dragons, fish, or demons,
by mindfully invoking Avalokiteshvara's power
the billowing waves cannot drown you.

If from Mount Sumeru's lofty peak,
someone were to throw you down,
by mindfully invoking Avalokiteshvara's power
like the sun you would stand firm in the sky.

If pursued by wicked men,
down from Diamond Mountain,
by mindfully invoking Avalokiteshvara's power
they could not harm a single hair.

If surrounded by vicious bandits,
each with a sword drawn to strike,
by mindfully invoking Avalokiteshvara's power
at once their hearts will turn to compassion.

If persecuted by rulers,
you face torture and execution,
by mindfully invoking Avalokiteshvara's power
their weapons will thereby shatter to pieces.

If imprisoned in shackles and chains,
hands and feet bound in restraints,
by mindfully invoking Avalokiteshvara's power
suddenly you shall be released.

If by curses or poisonous herbs
someone wishes to hurt your body,
by mindfully invoking Avalokiteshvara's power
the harmful intent will return to its source.

If you meet evil creatures,
poison dragons, or various demons,
by mindfully invoking Avalokiteshvara's power
none will dare to harm you.

If surrounded by raging beasts
with sharp fangs and dreadful claws,
by mindfully invoking Avalokiteshvara's power
they will quickly scatter in all directions.

If venomous snakes or scorpions
threaten with deadly breath of fire,
by mindfully invoking Avalokiteshvara's power
at the sound of your voice they will turn and depart.

If clouds thunder and lightning strikes,
hailstones fall, and it rains in torrents,
by mindfully invoking Avalokiteshvara's power
instantly they will dissipate.

When living beings suffer hardships,
burdened by immeasurable woes,
the power of Avalokiteshvara's wondrous wisdom
can relieve the suffering of the world.

Fully endowed with miraculous powers,
widely practicing wisdom and skillful means,
in every land in all directions,
in no realm does Avalokiteshvara not appear.

In all the various evil destinies
of hell beings, hungry ghosts, and animals,
the sufferings of birth, old age, sickness, and death
are gradually relieved by Avalokiteshvara.

Oh you of the true gaze, of the pure gaze,
of the gaze of broad and great wisdom,
of the compassionate gaze and the gaze of good will,
ever longed for, ever revered.

Unblemished, serene radiance,
benevolent sun, dispelling all gloom,
Avalokiteshvara can subdue the wind and fire of woes,
clearly illuminating all the world.

The precepts of compassion roar like thunder,
the kind heart is wondrous as great clouds,
pouring dharma rain of sweet dew,
quenching all flames of troubling passion.

In disputes before judges,
or fearful in the midst of battle,
by mindfully invoking Avalokiteshvara's power
◎ all hostilities will be dispersed.

The wondrous voice of Avalokiteshvara,
Brahma-voice, voice of the rolling tides,
surpasses all sounds within the world;
therefore ever keep it in mind.

In each thought, with never a doubt,
Avalokiteshvara, the pure sage,
in pain, agony, or death's distress,
can provide a sure support.

Fully endowed with all virtues,
his eyes of compassion behold all beings,
assembling a boundless ocean of happiness;
thus, with reverence, you should make prostrations."

◎ Then Bodhisattva Dharanimdhara arose from his seat, went before the Buddha and said:

"Oh World-honored One, if there are living beings who hear this chapter of Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva, the benefits will not be slight for those people who come to know his deeds, his manifestation of a universal gateway, and his supernatural powers."

When the Buddha had preached this "Universal Gateway" chapter, ●the eighty-four thousand beings in the assembly all aroused the thought of unsurpassed, ●complete, perfect enlightenment.