

AMIDA ORDER PRECEPTS

(Revised December 2021)

FROM THE PREFACE TO THE ESSENTIALS OF THE VINAYA TRADITION **by Gyo'onen**

The great Vinaya Pitaka assembles all the teachings and cannot be fathomed. The broad practice of the Buddha's ethics embraces all the perfections and is difficult to calculate. The five realms of delusion are quickly extinguished by means of the practice of the precepts. The mental entanglements of the two kinds of death are cut off by means of the path of purity.

The precepts are a jewelled boat to cross the river of desire. They are a divine carriage to traverse the mountain of hatred. They are an immediate cause of entering the citadel of awakening. They are a direct path leading to the realm of the Buddhas. It is because of the precepts that the sustaining power of the Three Jewels, leading all beings to enlightenment, is forever fresh and new. The means of training thus provided for all kinds of beings has great saving virtue.

The spreading across the world of the sutras and their explanations comes solely through the power of the Vinaya. The cutting off of doubts through meditation and wisdom is exclusively a product of the power of practising the precepts. The precepts are the essentials by which the Dharma is protected and the Sangha remains harmonious. They are the model for teaching and saving all sentient beings. They are the level path of enlightenment and nirvana. They are an excellent model of the four wisdoms and the three manifestations of the Buddha.

PRECEPTS

The Resolution of All Members of the Order

With wholeness of heart, we vow

1. To live life in full entrustment to the grace of Amida Tathagata.
2. To deeply revere the Tathagatas Vows, especially the 18th Vow, as expressions of the working of Other Power.
3. To make the calling of Nembutsu my religious practice for all occasions. The Nembutsu comes as naturally as one's breath, and accompanies one everywhere.
4. To consider other skilful forms of religious practice (such as prostrations, meditation etc) to be forms of Nembutsu and ways of calling out to Amida. Other people's interpretations of these skilful practices is respected.
5. To dedicate ourselves to the path of the bodhisattva.

6. To acknowledge our bombu nature and vow to work tirelessly to remedy harm done through sincere acts of contrition.
7. To study, revere, celebrate and live daily life according to our precepts
8. To cultivate sympathetic joy and reflect faith and joy in our own lives.
9. To revere all Buddhist sangha's and their members, the ancestors, teachings and traditions especially those of the Pure Land way.
10. To humbly take refuge and highly value learning, mindfulness and discipleship of Amida Buddha, creating together a Pure Land in mutual support and co-operation.
11. To respect, honour and learn from all wisdom-traditions
12. To support the creation, nourishment and development of Sangha communities and to foster an atmosphere of inclusivity, acceptance and generosity.
13. To always understand one's spiritual role as that of discipleship to Amida Tathagata and service to others.
14. To exercise authority with grace and humility.
15. To have tender care, compassion and kindness for others. This is established upon an understanding of true spiritual equality, especially when at fault or mistaken and to refrain from blame or punishment.
16. To teach what is true, in a manner that is heartfelt and sincere.
17. To be humble and mindful that not everyone will be coming from the same place as oneself and so to teach in a way that benefits them and not you.
18. To acquire the eloquence of the Dharma and to see this as part of our training.
19. To listen to others and seek to understand and appreciate the spirit of their lives.
20. To not incite hatred, envy or harm towards others, directly or indirectly.
21. To be willing to constructively dialogue with those we experience as 'difficult', directly if possible, and via others if necessary, in a spirit of openness to learning, and not with the intention of gathering allies.
22. To recognise and acknowledge when we ourselves are contributing to the conflict.
23. To develop the skills of being a peacemaker and apply them generously when invited to.
24. to speak of the Dharma, the good life, and of faith and virtue.

25. to use speech that is gentle and not arrogant.
26. To be patient; to be aware when anger arises in myself, to redirect its energy constructively, and to exercise restraint. To respond compassionately in the face of the anger of others.
27. To vow to practise right livelihood, following a vocation that is not harmful to sentient beings or to nature, but conducive to their protection and good cultivation.
28. To go unarmed in the world, and not to make fame, gain or self-indulgence one's aim.
29. To not inflict harm on sentient beings, either directly or indirectly, and to not cause harm to the natural world or the environment more generally; to not eat the flesh of sentient beings unnecessarily.
30. to cultivate gratitude; and to appreciate the gifts I receive.
31. to be content with what I have;
32. to use my body and my sexuality in loving and life-giving relationships in a non-exploitative manner.
33. to acknowledge with compassion compulsive habits.
34. to understand and acknowledge the destructive power of alcohol, drugs, and gambling, to act skilfully in light of this understanding and to accept and invoke the unconditional love of Amida in overcoming the addictions of ourselves and others.
35. to selflessly work and care for others and help them on the spiritual path.
36. To regard oneself as a citizen of the world working for the liberation of all using non-violent means.
37. to hold ceaselessly to a vision of the Pure Land, working to bring forth an enlightened world.
38. to make the Amitarya sangha one's refuge, entrusting one's life to Amida's grace.
39. to be utterly guided by the nembutsu.
- (40. A personalised vow for each Amitarya.)