

解脱歌

Song of Liberation

心密初祖大愚法师

By Dayu Acharya

永嘉大师《证道歌》调古神清，有足多者，而宏德上人注释亦有独到之处，今熔于一炉，间参我见，作《解脱歌》。

Master Yongjia's "Song of Enlightenment" has an ancient tune and a delightful spirit, and it has plenty to offer. Master Hongde's commentary also has its unique point of view. However, now let me melt both in one pot, blending in my own perspective, and make the "Song of Liberation".

觉后乐，乐如何？听我教唱解脱歌，不让古人风调高，我今何妨拈句和。

The joy of enlightenment, how is it? Listen to my singing the "Song of Liberation".

Not letting the style of ancient masters prevail, I shall now weave words and sing along.

本无妄，亦无真，原来二法空无性，无性无相不着空，即是如来真实性。

No falsehood, and no truth, this duality is in fact empty of essence.

Without essence, without form, neither dwelling in nothingness, the true-nature of Buddha as it is.

见实相，诸法空，刹那顿悟万法同，一旦风光藏不住，赤裸裸的覩面逢。

Perceiving the true-nature, all dharma cease, one is instantly awakened to the dharma's root.

Once the scenery no longer hides, it manifests vividly in your face.

决定说，佛心印，有人不肯如实信，直截根源当下了，摘叶寻枝渐教人。

Absolute truth, the seal of the Tathagata, but some would not truthfully believe.

Who comes to the root is enlightened in an instant, those fiddling with branches and leaves belong to gradual school.

几回生，几回死，亘古亘今长如此，神头鬼面有多般，返本還元没些子。

Countless times of birth, countless times of death, aeons after aeons so it is.

Sometimes with god's head, sometimes with ghost's face, returning to the root the diverse manifestations vanish.

习显教，修密宗，方便门异归元同，自从踏遍涅槃路，了知生死本来空。

Following exoteric schools,<sup>1</sup> or practicing tantric methods,<sup>2</sup> ways vary but they reach the same root.

After traversing all paths to nirvana, I realize that birth and death do not inherently exist.

行也空，坐也空，语默动静无不空，纵将白刃临头颅，犹如利剑斩春风。

Walking is empty, sitting is empty, so are speaking, working and staying tranquil.

Even a shining blade striking my head, it is like a sharp sword slashing spring breeze.

顿觉了，妙心源，无明壳裂总一般，梦里明明有六趣，觉后空空无圣凡。

Sudden awakening, reaching the omnipotent root, instantly cracks the shell of ignorance.

The six realms<sup>3</sup> are doubtless in dreams, but enlightenment vacates the idea of sinner and saint.

烦恼本，即菩提，罪福没性何处觅，无绳自缚解脱后，大摇大摆大休息。

The nature of affliction, it is the same as bodhi,<sup>4</sup> where can one find virtue and sin?

Breaking free from the ropeless self-bondage, I hop and promenade in great peace.

莫攀缘，莫执著，随缘随份随饮啄，不变随缘行无碍，自在随心大安乐。

No fixation, no clinging, follow the flow of life and fulfill the destiny.

Changeless and flowing free, it is the ultimate liberty and tranquility.

但得本，莫愁末，妙用纵横活泼泼，弹指敲开不二门，升堂直入如来屋。

Returning to the root, fretting not about branches, marvelous functions exhibit freely and vibrantly.

Meeting the non-duality<sup>5</sup> in a split second, I march straightly into the Tathagata's home.

宗亦通，说亦通，团团杲日丽晴空，百千三昧无量义，只在寻常日用中。

Mastery of Chan, fluency in dharma, the radiant Sun is shining in the clear sky.

Unfathomable samadhi and endless meanings, they exhibit themselves in daily routines.

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<sup>1</sup> exoteric Buddhism

<sup>2</sup> tantric Buddhism

<sup>3</sup> The six realms of existence: gods, demi-gods, humans, animals, hungry ghosts and hell denizens.

<sup>4</sup> enlightenment

<sup>5</sup> Buddha nature bears no dualistic concepts such as good or bad, sinner or saint, observation or observer, action or actor, etc.

觉心体，生佛同，有情无情共鼻孔，无缚无脱无遮障，迷时自碍悟自通。

Awakened to the root, common to Buddha and all beings, the sentient and non-sentient share the same nostril.

No bondage no barrier, and no liberation, delusions hinder but enlightenment dissolves all.

无形相，极灵妙，非亲证知那能晓，镜里看影虽不难，水底捉月怎办到！

Without a form, yet marvelously potent, how can one understand without direct experience?

Images in the mirror is easy to see, but catching the moon in the water will never succeed.

狮子吼，无畏说，百兽闻之皆咋舌，香象奔波失却威，天龙寂听生欣悦。

Valiant words, like a lion's roar, other beasts heard and all dropped tongues in shock.

In fears mighty elephants scattered, but a divine dragon listens with serenity and joy.

狮子儿，众随后，三岁即能大哮吼，若是野狂逐法王，百千妖怪虚开口。

Lion's cub, whom the multitudes follow, it can make thunderous roars at three years old.

Like jackals faking the lion king, hundred-thousands of wizards talk in vain.

谁无念，谁无生，莫将镜影认作真，若以断灭为究竟，何异外道邪见人。

Who without birth, who without thought, reflection in a mirror is never real.

But if taking nihilism as ultimate truth, one echoes the heretics who bear deluded views.

大丈夫，秉慧剑，般若锋兮金刚焰，非但能摧外道心，并且破除邪魔见。

A gallant man, holds the sword of wisdom, the sharp edge of prajna glowing with diamond flame.

Strikes down not only heretical beliefs, he cuts through also the wizards' fallacies.

震法雷，击法鼓，海水奔腾须弥舞，毛头许里乾坤定，大千沙界寸土无。

Booming the dharma thunder, beating the dharma drum, the sea surges and the Sumeru<sup>6</sup> dances.

The universe sets in the tip of a hair, the whole galaxy of worlds have not an inch of land.

让他谤，任他毁，把火烧天徒自累，我闻恰是空中风，何碍甚深大三昧！

May some slander, may some derogate, those who torch the sky gain only weariness.

Like a wind passing by my ears, how could it ever disturb the profound samadhi?

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<sup>6</sup> Mount Sumeru

一切声，皆实相，恶言善语无二样，不因谤赞别冤亲，方契本心平等相。

Each and every sound, preaching the absolute truth, slander or praise makes no difference.

Slander or praise, enmity or affinity, there is no such things in the mind of equanimity.

赞无增，谤无减，空中鸟迹著云天，太虚饮光消契阔，幽谷回声话晚烟。

Praise would not add, slander would not reduce. A bird flying across the sky leaves no trace.

Daylight recedes into the expanse of universe, dark valley echoes the last chimney smoke.

默时说，说时默，大施门开无壅塞，有人问我解何宗？我为摩诃般若客。

Silence in talking, talking in silence, the door of majestic offering<sup>7</sup> opens without hinderance.

About my dharma origin should one ask, I am a visitor from Maha Prajna Paramita.<sup>8</sup>

昔曾说，今懒说，山河大地广长舌，或是或非人不识，逆行顺行天莫测！

Spoke often in the past, now I prefer silence, mountains and rivers have broad long tongues.<sup>9</sup>

Doing right or wrong people cannot see, going along or against gods cannot predict.

常独行，常独步，脚底草鞋狞似虎，举趾粉碎金刚地，不觉踏断来时路。

Often walk alone, often step in solitude, straw sandals on the feet look like a tiger scowl.

Kicking toes shattered the Avici jail,<sup>10</sup> stomping feet unwittingly broke the treaded road.<sup>11</sup>

疯颠汉，无字经，信口掉舌说不尽，海底金乌天上日，目中童子眼前人。

A mad man, keeping a wordless scripture, expounds it till tongue drops but reaches no end.

The golden raven<sup>12</sup> is the radiant Sun, and the lad in my sight stands right in my front.

觉即了，不施功，物我俱亡心境空，菡萏枝枝撑夜月，木樨叶叶扇香风。

The wakening of enlightenment, no work is relevant, myself and surroundings break into emptiness.

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<sup>7</sup> dharma teaching

<sup>8</sup> the Perfection of Wisdom

<sup>9</sup> Mountains and rivers speak incessantly.

<sup>10</sup> Avici hell-the hell of incessant suffering

<sup>11</sup> a path to enlightenment

<sup>12</sup> In some Chinese legends, golden raven refers to the Sun.

Arrays of flowering lotus hold up the moonlight, osmanthus scent wafts through the night breeze.  
有等人，寻经论，终年求解不起行，分别名相那知休，入海算沙徒自辛。

Plenty of others, scouting the scriptures, seek understanding year after year without practice.

Grasp words and phrases with no end, much like wading in the sea and counting the grains of sand.  
佛当日，曾叮咛，数他珍宝无己分，从来蹭蹬行不利，难免枉堕文字坑。

At the time of Buddha, the Honored One advised: it is fruitless to count the treasure of others.

Road always bumpy and journey full of peril, falling into a text pit is often inevitable.

亦愚痴，亦憨呆，海市蜃楼生实解，执指为月枉施功，根尘法中盲摩揣。

It is foolishness, it is ignorance, people foraging a mirage for substance.

Grasp futilely a finger pointing at the moon, scouring blindly the realm of sense and phenomenon.

心为根，境为尘，两种犹如镜上痕，痕垢尽净光始现，心境双亡性乃真。

Mind being a sense, phenomenon being the dust, both are like marks on a mirror face.

Marks cleaned and mirror shines, our true nature stands when mind and phenomena dissipate.

非不非，是不是，毫厘差之千里失，是即龙女顿成佛，非则善星人身失。

Is it, or is it not? A hairbreadth difference can cause a thousand-mile miss.

It is, naga king's girl transformed instantly to a Buddha;<sup>13</sup> it is not, monk Sunaksatra lost human form.<sup>14</sup>

种性邪，错知解，不达如来本性怀，二乘苦行非究竟，外道练身终必坏。

Deluded mind, false understanding, it does not reach the Tathagata's true meaning.

Hinayana's ascetic path is incomplete, the heretics' body toning ends in putrefaction.

不思维，解脱力，恒沙大地载不起，摩诃般若波罗蜜，甚深般若波罗蜜。

Beyond imagination, the power of liberation, can't be carried even by an infinite land mass.

The maha prajna paramita, it is the profound wisdom of transcendence.

圆顿教，没人情，翻身踏倒涅槃城，威音那畔至今日，好个风流画不成！

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<sup>13</sup> According to a story in Lotus Sutra Chapter 12 *Devadatta*, naga king Sagara's 8-year old daughter transforms instantly to a Buddha.

<sup>14</sup> According to Nirvana Sutra Chapter 40 *On Bodhisattva Kasyapa*, Bhiksu Sunaksatra dropped to hell due to false understanding of enlightenment.

The supreme and awakening teaching, with no regard to worldly feelings, it turns around and stomps on the nirvana witterings.

Wei-Yin<sup>15</sup> appearing lively today, what a wonderful scene that can be depicted by no paintings.

方便门，善巧开，火中生莲终不坏，勇施犯重悟无生，早已成佛无障碍。

The door of expedient dharma, being deftly opened, a lotus blooming in fire can not be burned.

Monk Courageous Offering, who had broken the fundamental precepts,<sup>16</sup>

once awakened to the birth-less,<sup>17</sup> he walked the path to buddha-hood with no impedance.

一切处，悉兰若，无闹无静无牵挂，怡然幽居无遮殿，游戏人间实潇洒。

Here and there, all apt for retreat, disturbance or serenity makes no difference.

Relish the solitude in a roofless palace, traverse the the bustling world with ease.

江月照，松风吹，更于何处觅作为，万世古今如电拂，三千刹海一芦苇。

The moon rippling in the river, the wind passing by pine trees, what else do I need to seek?

The infinite past and future is a flash of lightening, three thousand galaxies sit in a single reed.

旃檀林，无杂树，郁密幽深狮子住，境静林间独自游，走兽飞禽皆远去。

The forest of sandalwood, mixed with no other trees, it is thick and deep that only lions live.

I stroll quietly through in solitude, beasts and birds hiding far away.

心境明，照无碍，廓然莹彻周法界，万象森罗隐现中，一颗圆明无内外。

The luminous mind, gleams with no obstruction, encompassing the vast expanse of dharma realms.

Reflecting all and myriads of phenomena, it is a shining pearl without inside or outside.

日可冷，月可热，邪见何能坏真说，无筋空力大无比，螳螂岂能拒车辙？

The sun could cool, the moon could burn, fallacies can never blight the absolute truth.

The muscleless emptiness has insurmountable strength, how could a mantis fend a running wheel off?

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<sup>15</sup> Bhīṣma-garjitasvara-rāja buddha, regarded as the first known buddha. See Lotus Sutra Chapter 20 *Bodhisattva Sadāparibhūta*. But buddha nature is a universal and timeless existence. Also see footnote 17.

<sup>16</sup> According to the sutra “佛说净业障经” (English translation unknown), numerous kalpas in the past, Monk Courageous Offering broke the precepts on adultery and killing. After deep repentance and long cultivation, he reached enlightenment and became a buddha.

<sup>17</sup> Buddha nature has no beginning and no ending. It is thus birth-less.

如实唱，如实听，未曾开口已和竟，三世诸佛齐唱和，尽未来际无穷尽。

Singing as it is, hearing as it is, my song is completed even before opening mouth.

Buddhas of the three times<sup>18</sup> resound in harmony, for all eternity boundless and endless.

歌毕不觉哈哈大笑，和者喝曰：不怕开了口合不得吗？诸人且道，这疯汉哈哈大笑，毕竟作么生？

I can't help bursting into laughter after singing the Song of Liberation. Listeners may question: "Aren't you afraid of not being able to close your mouth?" Readers please comment: what is this mad man really laughing about?

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<sup>18</sup> past, present and future