

## Reading the *Kyōgyōshinshō*: Reading the General Preface⑤

### I . Section 2 of the Preface: The Teachings Coming into the World

#### A) A Look at the translations

**本文：**しかればすなわち、浄邦縁熟して、調達、闍世をして逆害を興ぜしむ。浄業機彰れて、釈迦、韋提をして安養を選ばしめたまえり。これすなわち権化の仁、齊しく苦悩の群萌を救済し、世雄の悲、正しく逆謗闍提を恵まんと欲す。 (『聖典』149頁)

**DTS:** This being so, when the conditions were maturing for the Pure Land, Devadatta succeeded in persuading King Ajātaśatru to commit a deadly crime. Thereupon, Śākyamuni came out into the world to make the mind of Vaidehī turn toward the Land of Peace and Happiness. This showed that here was a being ready to accept the teaching of the Pure Land.

Thus we see that these incarnated ones' benevolent spirit is to save all beings from misery and suffering and that the compassionate heart of the Bravest of the World extends even to criminals of the highest degree, blasphemers of the Right Dharma, indeed, to those who are utterly devoid of any stock of merit. (p. 42)

**CWS:** Thus it is that, when conditions for the teaching of birth in the Pure Land had matured, Devadatta provoked Ajātaśatru to commit grave crimes. And when the opportunity arose for explaining the pure act by which birth is settled, Śākyamuni led Vaidehī to select the land of peace. In their selfless love, these incarnated ones—Devadatta, Ajātaśatru, Vaidehī—all aspired to save the multitudes of beings from pain and affliction, and in his compassion, Śākyamuni, the greatest hero, sought indeed to bless those committing the five grave offenses, those slandering the dharma, and those lacking the seed of Buddhahood. (p. 3)

**Inagaki:** When the opportunity to reveal the Pure Land Way became ripe, Devadatta incited Ajātaśatru to commit grave offenses; and when a person to be saved by the Pure Land practice appeared, Śākyamuni led Vaidehī to choose her birth in the Land of Peace and Provision. All this shows that human incarnations of sages equally sought to deliver the multitudes from suffering and that the World Hero, out of pity, especially wished to save those who commit the five grave offenses, abusers of the [Right] Dharma, and those without any potential for good (*icchantikas*). (p. 3)

**Yamamoto:** And as the time was now ripe for the Way to the Pure Land, *Devadatta* instigated *Ajataśatru* to commit the *Deadly Sins* and as time was now meet for the Way to the Pure Land, *Shakyamuni Buddha* let *Vaidehi* seek her refuge in the *Land of Peace and Rest*. This was none other but that the 'Buddha in Human Form' desired to deliver all those lost in the mire of sorrow and pain and that the all-compassionate heart of the 'World's Hero' wanted to have pity upon the sinners of

the deadly sins, upon censurers of the Right Dharma, and upon the *icchantikas*. (p. 3)

試訳: Since this is the case, the conditions ripened for the pure realm and Devadatta led Ajātaśatru to bring about heinous injuries. The person ready to engage in the pure practice appeared and Śākyamuni caused Vaidehī to choose the land of peace and nourishing. These are, in fact, human beings appearing provisionally to do the benevolent work of the Buddha, uniformly liberating the multitude of suffering beings and the compassion of the hero of the world truly intending to benefit those who have committed the five grave offenses, slandered the Dharma, and lack all conditions for becoming a Buddha.

**E) Shinran’s understanding of these people as “provisional appearances” (*gonke no nin* 権化の仁)**

1) Precedent for such a view in the commentary on the *Contemplation Sutra* by Yuanzhao 元照 [Devadatta] had committed three heinous sins and entered hell while still alive. Ajātaśatru killed his father and harmed his mother, so together they have committed all five of the five heinous sins. These are all the deeds of great provisional appearances. Whether positive or negative, there is none that does not benefit living beings, because they are performed in order to end the occurrence of heinous acts in the world in the future.

From fascicle 2 of *Guanwuliangshoujing yishou* 觀無量壽經觀經疏 by Yuanzhao (1048–1116)  
T no. 1754, 37:287b12-14

2) Shinran’s position in the *Hymns on the Significance of the Contemplation Sutra*  
Amida and Śākyamuni extended expedients / Such as Ananda, Maudgalyāyana, Pūrṇa Maitrāyaniputra, Vaidehī, / Devadatta, Ajātaśatru, Bimbisāra, / Jīvaka, Moonlight, and Rain Coming.

Each of these great sages together with each other / Made expedients to lead / Foolish, ordinary, lowly sinners / Into the vow that does not leave behind even heinous evil doers.

*Jōdo wasan* 浄土和讃, TSZ 2 (“Wasan hen”):48

3) What does “uniform liberation” entail?

**F) About liberation of the heinous sinners, slanderers of the Dharma, and *icchantika***

- 1) This passage is not just about the *Contemplation Sutra*, but the *Nirvana Sutra*, too
- 2) Vaidehī’s liberation in the *Contemplation Sutra*
- 3) Ajātaśatru’s liberation as the liberation on an *icchantika*

## II. Section 3 of the Preface: About the Immediate Source of Our Liberation

### A) A Look at the translations

**本文:** 故に知りぬ。円融至徳の嘉号は悪を転じて徳を成す正智、難信金剛の信樂は、疑いを除き証を獲しむる真理なりと。(『聖典』 149 頁)

**DTS:** Therefore, be it known that the Auspicious Name embodying the supreme virtue which knows no obstructions is the right transcendental knowledge which transforms evil into merit, and that the faith which is beyond conceivability and as genuine as a vajra is the truth which makes us attain the realization by wiping out every trace of doubt we may have cherished. (p. 42)

**CWS:** We know, therefore, that the auspicious Name embodying the perfectly fulfilled supreme virtues is true wisdom that transforms our evil into virtue, and that the diamondlike shinjin so difficult to accept is true reality that sweeps away doubt and brings us to attainment of enlightenment. (p. 3)

**Inagaki:** Hence, I know clearly that the auspicious Name of the all-complete, supreme virtue is the embodiment of the perfect wisdom that can turn evil into merit and also that joyful faith, indestructible as a diamond but difficult to accept in our hearts, is the truth that removes our doubts and awakens us to enlightenment. (p. 3)

**Yamamoto:** Therefore it is clear to me that the all-pervading virtue of his Holy Name is the right wisdom that turns evil unto virtue and the faith adamant hard to attain is the truth that expels doubt and gives us light. (p. 3)

**試訳:** Therefore we should recognize that the name enriched with supreme, perfected, all-pervading virtues is the true wisdom that transforms evil, making it wondrous spiritual qualities, and that the adamant, hopeful acceptance, difficult to accept, is the true principle which removes doubts and causes us to attain enlightenment.

### B) Sources for the portion about the name

1) Transformation of evil into compassion in Daochuo's *Anleji* 安樂集

Third, [the Buddha] encouraged his father the king to practice *nianfo samadhi*. His father the king said to the Buddha, 'The completed virtues of the stage of Buddhahood are True Suchness, actual form, and the primary truth of emptiness. What is the reason that you do not have your disciple practice this?' The Buddha told his father the king, 'The completed virtues of the myriad Buddhas have innumerable and deeply wondrous states, supernatural powers, and liberation. Because this is not a state to be practiced by [foolish] ordinary human beings, [I] encourage [you], the father king, to practice *nianfo samadhi*.' The father king said to the Buddha, 'What is the form of the virtues of *nianfo*?' The Buddha told his father the king, 'It is as though, in a forest of *eraṇḍa* that is forty *yojana* square, there is one *gośīrṣa-candana*, which, although it has roots and sprouts, has not yet

broken forth from the ground. The forest of *eraṇḍa* is only foul smelling, not at all aromatic. If one eats those fruits or flowers, they will go mad and die. At a later time, the roots and sprouts of the *candana* gradually grow and have barely become like a tree. The fine aroma flourishes, and ultimately transforms this forest, completely making everything smell beautiful. Those sentient beings who see this all give rise to a rare mind.’ The Buddha told the father king, ‘For all sentient beings within birth and death, the mind of the *nianfo* is also like this. If one just connects one’s thoughts [to that Buddha], without cease, one will definitely be born before a Buddha. If one attains birth in the Pure Land once, then all the various evils are transformed and become great compassion, in the same way that this fragrant tree changes the forest of *eraṇḍa*.” In the parable, the forest of *eraṇḍa* stands for the three poisons, the three obstructions, and the limitless grave sins within the bodies of sentient beings. *Candana* represents the mind of the *nianfo* of sentient beings. ‘Have barely become like a tree’ means if all sentient beings simply can pile thought upon thought [of the Buddha] without break, the karmic path [to the Pure Land] is completed.”

From chapter 1, section 4 of the *Anleji*, SSZ 1:381-382

2) Passage in the *Ōjō yōshū* 往生要集 by Genshin 源信

The eighty-four thousand gates of defilement now filling my deluded mind and the eighty-four thousand gates of paramitas that Amida Buddha has fulfilled are originally, empty and quiet, and unobstructed as a single substance. Desire is itself enlightenment. Anger and ignorance are also the same, just in the way that water and ice do not differ in their nature. Therefore, a sutra states, “Passions and *bodhi* do not have two different substances. Birth-and-death and nirvana are not distinct entities.” I still lack the capacity for the fire of wisdom, so I am unable to melt the ice of passions and turn it into the water of virtue.

From chapter 5 of the *Ōjō yōshū*, SSZ 1:840

3) The source for “the enriched name” in the preface to Yuanzhao’s *Guanwuliangshoujing yishou*  
Just in order to conform to the capacities of beings and particularly save them all equally are there many gates. Some encourage constant practice of mantras; some exclusive adherence to the enriched name; some require strict focus of the mind, while others have one purify oneself and cultivate abstinence. Each accords to the different times and conditions. They are fully laid out in the various scriptures. Only this proper contemplation method [described in the *Contemplation Sutra*] ultimately leads to non-arising.

From the preface of *Guanwuliangshoujing yishou* 觀無量壽經觀經疏 by Yuanzhao (1048–1116)

T no. 1754, 37:279a-11

4) Another source for “the enriched name” by Yongqin 用欽 quoted in the *Kyōgyōshinshō*

If I now call the enriched name of one Buddha verbally and consider it mentally, then from the

cause until reaching the result, there is nothing that will not be endowed with immeasurable virtues.

*Seiten*, p. 187; TK, p. 63

5) Another source about the transformative power of the name by Zhongshi 宗稷 quoted in the *Kyōgyōshinshō*

The *Collection of Passages on the Land of Contentment* states: Zhongshi states, “A single grain of *qiongdan* ● (環一王) 丹 will change iron and make it gold. The single phrase of the true principle will transform evil karma and make it good karma.

*Seiten*, p. 199; TK, p. 80

**C) About “the name enriched with supreme, perfected, all-pervading virtues”**

- 1) About “the enriched name
- 2) About “supreme virtues” (*shitoku* 至徳)
- 3) About “perfected, all pervading” (*enyū* 円融)

**D) About “the true wisdom that transforms evil, making it wondrous spiritual qualities”**

- 1) The name as wisdom
- 2) The transformative power of the insight into the wisdom expressed in *Namu Amida Butsu*
- 3) On transforming evil into virtues