



## THE FIVE CONTEMPLATIONS / MEAL GATHAS

### #1

#### **MEAL GATHA EXCERPT FROM THE MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS ORDER**

(*Zen Mountain Monastery Liturgy Manual*, ed. John Daido Looi. Mt. Tremper, NY: Dharma Communications, 1998, 44; also in *Oryoki Meal Gatha*, 60-2. Adapted)

First, seventy-two labors brought us this food;

We should know how it comes to us.

Second, as we receive this offering,

We should consider whether our virtue and practice deserve it.

Third, as we desire the natural order of mind to be free from clinging,

We must be free from greed.

Fourth, to support our life we take this food.

Fifth, to attain our way we take this food.

First, this food is for the Three Treasures.

Second it is for our teachers, parents, nation, and all sentient beings.

Third, it is for all beings of the six worlds.

Thus, we eat this food with everyone.

We eat to stop all evil, to practice good, to free all sentient beings, and to accomplish our Buddha Way.

### #2

#### **VERSE OF THE FIVE CONTEMPLATIONS FROM THE SOTO ZEN TEXT PROJECT**

(International Division of the Administrative Headquarters of Soto Zen Buddhism [*Sotoshu Shumucho*])

We reflect on the effort that

brought us this food and

consider how it comes to us.

We reflect on our virtue and

practice, and whether we are  
worthy of this offering.

We regard greed as the obstacle to  
freedom of mind.

We regard this meal as medicine  
to sustain our life.

For the sake of enlightenment we  
now receive this food



### #3

#### **THE FIVE CONTEMPLATIONS FROM THE EIHEI SHINGI**

(*Dogen's Pure Standards for the Zen Community: A Translation of the Eihei Shingi*, tr. Taigen Daniel Leighton and Shohaku Okumura, Albany: SUNY P, 1996, 92)

First, regarding how great an effort [brought us this food], we consider where it has come from.

Second, we reflect on whether our virtue and practice are worthy of receiving this offering.

Third, to protect the mind, abandoning our mistakes from greed, hate and delusion is essential.

Fourth, truly this good medicine is for healing our fragile bodies.

Fifth, now we receive this food for the sake of accomplishing Buddha's Way.

### #4

#### **THE FIVE CONTEMPLATIONS FROM PLUM VILLAGE**

(*The Plum Village Chanting and Recitation Book*, ed. Thich Nhat Hanh. Berkeley: Parallax, 2000, 21; revised and republished as *Chanting from the Heart: Buddhist Ceremonies and Daily Practices*)

This food is the gift of the whole universe —  
the Earth, the sky, and much hard work.

May we eat in mindfulness so as to be worthy to receive it.

May we transform our unskilled states of mind

And learn to eat with moderation.

May we take only foods that nourish us and prevent illness.

We accept this food to realize the path of understanding and love.

### #5

#### **CITY OF TEN THOUSAND BUDDHAS & BERKELEY BUDDHIST MONASTERY**

This offering of the faithful is the fruit of work and care,  
I reflect upon my conduct, have I truly earned my share?  
Of the poisons of the mind, the most destructive one is greed.  
As medicine cures illness, I take only what I need.  
To sustain my cultivation and realize the Way,  
So we contemplate in silence on this offering today.

### #6

#### **SHORT MEAL GATHA EXCERPT FROM THE MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS ORDER**

(*Celebrating Everyday Life: Zen Home Liturgy*, John Daido Looi. Mt. Tremper, NY: Dharma Communications, 1999, 75)

We receive this food in gratitude  
From all beings who helped to bring it to our table,  
And vow to respond in turn to those in need  
With wisdom and compassion.

Compiled by Michael I. Roehm, June, 2008; revised July 2008

Ethical Eating: Food and Environmental Justice:

<http://www.uua.org/socialjustice/issuesprocess/currentissues/ethicaleating/55648.shtml>

Bays, Jan Chozen, Mindful Eating ....