

Divine Incantations to the Protective Gods of the Five Directions

From the Taoist encyclopedia, *Secret Essentials of the Most High*, 574 CE

Translated by Livia Kohn

“Oh, Great God of the East!
Bright Star of the Ninefold Energy of Azure Heaven!
You brilliantly illumine the Eastern Regions,
Penetratingly shine through the Nine Gates,
In your revolutions, glittering with the brightness of Pure Yang!

Oh, come and cleanse out all filth, do away with all evil vapors!
Open the light for your divine lads,
To come and protect me and my house!
Restrain the demons and tie up all nasty specters!
As I rise to face the imperial lords above!

May I reverently follow the rightful Tao,
As set forth in the Red writings and Jade documents,
The talismans and instructions of the nine high heavens!

May I hitch up the dragons and get ready to rise,
Rise up to the peaceful abode of Heaven,
And soon be a flying immortal!

Oh, Fiery Star of the South!
Floating Brilliance of the Threefold Energy of Cinnabar Heaven!
In your revolutions, you shine forth and illumine all with Highest Yang!
Above you are, the power of Red Essence.

Oh, open the light for your divine lads,
Marshall your host of fiery soldiers,
To come and protect my three palaces within!
Behead all obnoxious powers and tie up all nasty specters,
Cut the King of Illusion into little pieces
An all that obeys the Dark Lord of the North.

May all the winds and fires in the eight directions
Blow and shine together, blending in a blaze!
How dare anyone not obey
The rightful Tao in its progression?

May I enjoy the highest merit,
Be preserved by Heaven forever and ever,
Through a million kalpas without end.

Oh, Great Whiteness of the West!
Floating Essence of the Sevenfold Energy of the Heavens!
You radiance shines forth through the Golden Gateway,
Penetrates with brightness even the deepest dark—
The Pure Star in your midst,
Known as the Emperor of all Numen.

Oh, guard my spirits and secure my house,
Protect my body from all harm!
Oh, destroy the source of all obnoxious powers!
Let the Way of the King be upright and enlightened,
And all the halls and residences clear and dignified.

May the Three Luminaries join their radiance
And the Tao harmonize with the spontaneous flow of all!
May I fly up to the Purple Gardens
With the talismans and instructions of Numinous Treasure!

May my goodwill spread over the myriad living beings!
May my merit aid them all—
And Heaven and Earth be greatly now at peace!

Oh, Thunderous Star of the North!
Active Power of the Fivefold Energy of Dark Heaven!
Your splendid brilliance reaches even into Great Abstrusity!
Oh, Venerable God of Black Numen!
Flying darkness in feathery garb!

Oh, come and protect all my five gateways,
Assemble the good essence and apprehend the bad!
Humbly I dare put forward this request:
Expel and scatter, destroy and behead all evils,
As the Jade talismans command!

Oh, Spiritual Perfected of Eightfold Majesty!
Seal off my gates of viciousness and all hindering obstructions,
Let me be open to the brightness of the Tao!

Shine and sparkle through my body
Like the Three Luminaries shining forth together!
May I steer the empty air and stride on the winds,
Life up my body into the flight of the immortals.

Oh, Protector Star of the Center!
Mysterious Perfected and Powerful Ruler
Of the Unified Energy of the Yellow Middle!

You spread brilliance and flowing brightness
Through all the Nine Heavens.

Oh, open the light for your divine lads,
Twelve in number,
For your primordial energy, clear essence of Yang.
And let it float aloft in wafts of vermillion mist!

Oh, let your light pervade my residence,
Reach as far as into my very own body!
Drive out and destroy the hundred obnoxious forces,
Kill all the demons, however many millions!

May this divine incantation to the Mountain of the Center
Penetrate to Heaven and give me protection!
May the five sacred animals be securely on guard
to let me fly up and ascend to the immortals.”

Divine Incantations to the Protective Gods of the Five Directions

From the Taoist encyclopedia, *Secret Essentials of the Most High*, 574 CE

Translated by Livia Kohn

The Taoist Experience: An Anthology. Edited by Livia Kohn. New York, State University of New York Press, 1993. Index, bibliography, 391 pages. ISBN: 0791415805. Quote found on pp. 112-115.

Professor Kohn states, p. 107, that “Incantation to the Protective Gods [of the Five Directions],” is taken from the *Wushang Biyao* (Secret Essentials of the Most High; 6a-7b). This text is the first Taoist encyclopedia, commissioned by Emperor Wu of the North Zhou in 574 C. E.”

This document distributed online at: <http://www.egreenway.com/taoism/difd.pdf>
June 9, 2010

Endnotes by Mike Garofalo