

TITLE: Kiyomeno Fudodo (Kiyomeno Fudo Hall)

Kiyomeno Fudodo (Kiyomeno Fudo Hall) is a temple dedicated to the deity Fudo Myoo. The temple, which takes its name from the deity, enshrines an image of Fudo Myoo (Sanskrit: Acala), one of the most important Buddhist deities revered by the Shingon sect of esoteric Buddhism. Although often depicted with a fierce expression and surrounded by a flaming halo, Fudo is considered a compassionate incarnation of the celestial Buddha, Dainichi Nyorai (Sanskrit: Vairocana), who delivers Buddhist truth to human beings. Pilgrims traveling up the trail to Koyasan would stop to pray and make offerings to Fudo Myoo before continuing their journey to the top of the sacred mountain.

Tradition states that the original image of Fudo Myoo enshrined at this hall was created by Kobo Daishi (774–835), also known as Kukai, the Japanese priest who founded Koyasan as a center of esoteric Buddhist teaching and worship. The original Fudo statue was 84 cm tall and carved from cedar. Because the image was damaged by time and weather, it is now stored at the Koyasan Reihokan Museum for safekeeping.

The hall is currently located about halfway up the Fudozaka Pilgrimage Trail, between the trail's starting point at Gokurakubashi Station and its upper terminus at the Fudozaka Guchi Nyonindo Hall. However, the Kiyomeno Fudodo was originally located along the earlier iteration of the Fudozaka Trail. The first hall suffered damage, and was rebuilt, during the seventeenth century and again in 1883. When the Fudozaka Trail was renovated and relocated to this position in 1915, the Fudodo was also moved to its current location.