



Buddhist Thoughts

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Japanese Food Bazaar

Saturday, October 4th, 2008

1:00 pm - 8:00pm

at the *Salt Lake Buddhist Temple*

211 West 100 South, SLC

Free Admission * Everyone Welcome

sushi sukiyaki tempura teriyaki & other dishes

snack bar crafts chapel tours & more

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Why I am a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist

J.K. Hirano

This, then, is the true teaching easy to practice for small, foolish beings; it is the straight way easy to traverse for the dull and ignorant. Among all the teachings the Great Sage preached in his lifetime, none surpasses this ocean of virtues. Let the one who seeks to abandon the defiled and aspire for the pure; who is confused in practice and vacillating in faith; whose mind is dark and whose understanding deficient; whose evils are heavy and whose karmic obstructions manifold-let such persons embrace above all the Tathagata's exhortations, take refuge without fail in the most excellent direct path, devote themselves solely to this practice, and revere only this shinjin.

Preface to Kyogyoshinsho CWS, pg. 3-4

Our temples in the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) and our temple in Salt Lake City and Ogden are undergoing a change. It is evident that the Nisei (second generation Japanese American) who developed the organizational structure of our temples are dying out. The average age of the Nisei is probably in their early 80's. The Sansei (third generation Japanese American) are in their 50's and 60's. Our temples are also beginning to have many non-Japanese who do not come to the temple for cultural activities. The language spoken at our temple is 99% English. The economic level of the average temple member is probably in the middle class. The average educational level of our temple member is probably at least that of a college graduate. The majority of our members also attend the temple as families.

With the exception of our members attending the temple as families, there has been quite a change over the composition of the Sangha over the past 100 years of our temple. Yes, in 2012 our temple will be celebrating 100 years in Utah. Originally our members and the minister were Japanese speaking. There were very few if any non Japanese attending the temple. As much as for religious and spiritual sustenance, the temple was a gathering place for the entire Japanese community for secular reasons. As I have explained in previous articles, the temple was the guardian of a Japanese culture that the Issei (first

generation) hoped would be passed on to their children. I believe much of the culture of the temple has changed over the past 100 years. However, the reason we are Jodo Shinshu Buddhist has not.

Speaking from a very personal level, from the time I was a Dharma School student here, the religious climate of Utah has also changed. When I was a child, most of my friends had no idea of what a Buddhist was. In Salt Lake, Buddhism could only be found at our temple and the smaller Nichiren Temple. When the television show Kung Fu began in 1972, many people thought that all Buddhists must know martial arts. It was about this time that we began to hear about Zen Buddhism in popular culture. Robert Pirsig's Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance was published in 1974. Although there began to be English books on Buddhism in the 60's such as Phillip Kapleau's Three Pillars of Zen. Pirsig's book and the television show Kung Fu seemed to announce the arrival of Buddhism into the realm of Popular culture. It was during the 70's when the Tibetan Buddhists began to teach in the United States.

It was a nice change, when America and the culture around me, began to appreciate that Buddhism was a legitimate religion. I had attended various Christian churches with my friends, but many of their ideas didn't appeal to me. I also had two sets of friends, one group was from my neighborhood. The other group were the

kids I had met at the temple. As I got older, it became more obvious that I was different from my neighborhood friends since I wasn't planning to go on a mission. When I went to the University, most of my neighborhood friends had gone on missions. So the friendships I had developed at the temple, had become my primary friendships in college.

In college, as I began to explore my identity. I realized that much of the ethics or morality I had developed over the years, were from things I had learned at the temple. Ideas of the impermanence of life, karma, humility, etc. were the ideas that formed my own personal identity. Yet, I wasn't comfortable with expressing what Buddhism was. What was Buddhism, why were people suddenly interested in what the Buddha taught?

I went to the Institute of Buddhist Studies to find out exactly what Buddhism was. I learned about Theravada Buddhism, Zen Buddhism, Shingon Buddhism and a variety of Japanese forms of Buddhism. What I found is that Theravada Buddhism was a difficult highly disciplined path that one must leave the life of a householder and become a monk to fully realize. I had no intention of giving up sex and a variety of other things, to become enlightened. Shingon Buddhism was much too mystical for my taste. Performing a myriad of rituals to better understand the truth of this life was not something I could do. Zen Buddhism, although it has changed in America, required a great deal of time, sitting in meditation. It was also a form of monastic Buddhism and it required that I find a particular teacher to guide me. I didn't know much about the Tibetan forms of Buddhism, however, I knew that it required much more study than I was willing to give.

As I read more about Jodo Shinshu and the way Shinran had spent years in meditation and study, abandoning them for the Nembutsu practice. I realized that this was the only path that I was reasonably fit to follow. Shinran believed that enlightenment and nirvana were not secret or extremely difficult practices. It was in accepting

myself as a foolish being (bombyu) and having a belief in the compassion of the Universe (Amida Buddha) as the way to enlightenment. After studying many other religions, I knew without a doubt, I was a foolish being. I knew that I was confused in practice and had questions of faith. My mind was dark and I was deficient in many things. I also knew that I had committed a variety of things in my life that would be called heavy evil and karmic obstructions. As the preface to the *Kyogyoshinsho* states; *This, then, is the true teaching easy to practice for small, foolish beings; it is the straight way easy to traverse for the dull and ignorant. Among all the teachings the Great Sage preached in his lifetime, none surpasses this ocean of virtues. Let the one who seeks to abandon the defiled and aspire for the pure; who is confused in practice and vacillating in faith; whose mind is dark and whose understanding deficient; whose evils are heavy and whose karmic obstructions manifold-let such persons embrace above all the Tathagata's exhortations, take refuge without fail in the most excellent direct path, devote themselves solely to this practice, and revere only this shinjin.* Shinran was basically telling me that Jodo Shinshu was the path for a person like me.

It is wonderful that the religious climate in Utah has become more open. It is a blessing that our temples have opened up and our Sangha has moved on to be a part of American culture. However, I have been surprised by a few members who look toward other forms of Buddhism and express a type of infatuation with there being more non Japanese following them, than Jodo Shinshu.

It is as if they feel that since, non Japanese Americans are following Zen or Tibetan Buddhism, these forms must have something our teachings do not. I hope that they will begin to study what it is that Jodo Shinshu has before they become too discouraged. I encourage them to try Zen, try the Tibetan form of Buddhism, if they want to wear robes. However, if they believe that Jodo Shinshu is not sufficient to fulfill their personal needs and desires, they must ask

themselves, "Why am I Jodo Shinshu?" I think it is a great place to start. Namu Amida Butsu.

BWA News

Dot Richeda

On August 24th, the BWA held their Annual Steak Fry picnic at the Sugarhouse Park. Thank you to the following: Yuriko and Carl Dennison, Chie Sugaya, Jane Sakshita, Yo Uno, Reiko Matsuura, Maya Chow, Takeko and Ichiro Doi, Terry and Mits Fujinimi, Fran and Tom Akimoto, Tammi and Henry Kuramoto and to all the cooks for making this event a success. Also, thank you to everyone for bringing a delicious side dish to go with our steak, chicken, sausage and corn. See you next year.

I would like to thank the following: Takeko Doi, Setsuko Nagata and Terry Fujinami for preparing the "an" for the azuki for the Food Bazaar. Thank you to Takeko Doi for donating the lima bean for the "an." A Special thank you to Jeanne Konishi for coming and cleaning the refrigerator in the kitchen.

As a community service, we volunteered at the Chili Affair (for the Road Home) on Sept 17th. Thank you to Brenda Koga, Jane Sakashita, Ruby Doi, Irene Lennitt and Dot. I didn't realize you could make so many different kinds of chili and tasting all of them was fun.

Our next meeting will be October 12th at 11:30 am. Please join us.

Dharma School

Lisa Matsuda

As this new Dharma school year begins, I'm scrambling a bit, but happy to see all our students and their families back at the temple. I

truly appreciate all the help I'm receiving from parents and teachers with our classes and other Dharma school activities. This year we are so fortunate to have Troy Watanabe, Carmella Javellana, Brenda Koga, Judy Watanabe, Faye Mitsunaga, Maya Chow, LaVerne Kyed, Gail Minaga, Christy Fong and Stephanie Sueoka as our teachers.

As students are now routinely at the temple, parents please insure that your younger children stay off the stage in the gym. We also ask that you remind your older children to help keep their siblings from climbing up and playing on the stage.

This month Dharma school classes will be held on Sunday, October 12, only. No classes will be held the Sunday after Bazaar (Oct. 5), Fall Recess weekend (Oct. 19), or the day of our Halloween party (Oct. 26). We ask that each family please contribute one bag of candy toward our Halloween party.

The Jr. YBA is in need of new advisors for next year. Christy and Bruce Fong have guided this enthusiastic group of our Sangha for many years now and have done much to "pave the way" for some new parents to take on this important task. Please give serious thought to volunteering to help out our strong Jr. YBA group.

I need to thank Joy Furubayashi, Cheryl Nakano and Maya Chow for all they're efforts towards our back-to-school picnic. The Dharma school also thanks Judy Watanabe for acting as our Bazaar Representative. Thanks to all the efforts of both parents and students in helping to keep the dining tables clear at the Food Bazaar as well as providing the fun and entertaining games. We also thank everyone who donates items to the dessert booth and bake sales.

Lastly, as Faye Mitsunaga and Gail Minaga complete their term as Dharma school co-superintendents, we wish to thank them for executing their duties with such patience and deliberation. We so appreciate all the hours that they dedicated to completing the tasks required of them, and their continued service to our students

now as teachers.

Special Award Bulletin

Paul Terashima

I'm sorry I haven't kept all the people who have bought Special Award Tickets, who have won each month. Here are the monthly winners. Jan-Ritsuko Hayashi, Feb-Koyo Restaurant, March-Gail Minaga, April-Mike Furubayashi, May- Bob/Ida Okade, June- Yuriko Dennison, July-Kai Uno, and Aug-Nob Aoki.

I will make sure to keep everyone informed who wins each month. Thank you for supporting this Temple Fundraiser.

The Salt Palace will let everyone park in their west parking lot. Entrance into the parking lot is on third west. Just tell the attendant, you are going to the Buddhist Temple Food Bazaar and it will be free parking.

Thanks for Your Community Service

Brenda Koga

For over 5 years a group of women from the BWA have volunteered to help with the Chili Affair fund raiser for The Road Home—the homeless shelter. The event was held on the evening of September 17, 2008 at the Salt Palace Convention Center.

Once again a dedicated group donated their services to help raise funds for the homeless shelter. Deep appreciation is extended to **Ruby Doi, Jane Sakashita, Dot Richeda and Irene Linnell**. The executive director of the shelter along with others thanked the women directly and continue to recognize their efforts on behalf of the Salt Lake BWA to help end homelessness in our community.

Congratulations, Karen!

Almost two years ago, Karen Uemura-Cone invited some women from the temple to participate in her doctoral research study for her dissertation. She recently received funding to present her dissertation at the Asian American Psychological Association's national conference. As a result of her efforts, she won the award for the division of research studies involving women.

Congratulations to Karen for her achievements!

Costumes Needed

If you have Halloween costumes you no longer need, please bring them to the temple and deliver them to Brenda Koga. She is collecting costumes to be distributed to the children at The Road Home (homeless shelter) for their annual Halloween party. If you have any questions, please contact her at 466-6552. Thanks for your help.

October Shotsuki Hoyo *Service will be October 26*

Deceased	Date of death	Next of kin
Akita Sakae	10/25/36	Ruby Ushio
Iwasaki Ritsuko	10/25/61	Dean Iwasaki
Kano Gunpei	10/13/65	Marilynn Shimada
Masuko Kyushiro	10/25	Matsue Kasubuchi
Mitsunaga Ruth	10/30/95	Faye Mitsunaga-Eng
Muto Chiyo	10/15/83	
Ninomiya Katsuji	10/20/42	Yoshiko Ninomiya
Nishihara Alice	10/20/90	Greg Matsuura
Oda Mitsuji	10/9/31	Mumatsu Sasaki
Ogawa Fusaye	10/19/31	Sugino
Ogawa Kuma	10/6/19	Sugino
Oike Katsuye	10/14/74	May Koike
Saito Shizuno	10/26/21	Yoshiko Ninomiya

Sasaki Sukeichiro 10/19/68
Shiba Yoshiro 10/19/52
Sugiyama Unosuki 10/27/84
Tadehara Masami 10/9/87
Tohinaka George 10/28/95
Tokunaga Shigao 10/27/90
Tsuyuki Ikuzo 10/3
Wakayama Gerry 10/7/94
Yamamoto James 10/25/71
Tamagawa Frank 10/18/95
Hisae Tsutsui 10/15/01
Frank Ling 10/02/02
Betty Yamaguchi 10/8/04
John Imada 10/24/05

Charlie Sasaki
Yuri Uyeda

George Tadehara
Ayako Tohinaka
Tokunaga Family
Mark Tsuyuki
Mary Wakayama
Eleanor Nakamura
Shizue Tamagawa
Geraldine Chappel
Elaine Fukushima
Jeannie Yamaguchi
Reiko Imada

Glen, Susan, Candie, & Krista Furubayashi
Scott, Joy, Sydney, & Shelby Furubayashi
Mark, Gail & Matthew Minaga
Bill & Shigeko Mizuno
Jerry, Julee, Thomas & Elise Mori
Stan, Stephanie, Alli, & Sarah Anne Nakamura
Rhu & Sumi Sueoka
Greg, Theresa, Maxwell & Josef Sueoka
Jay, Stephanie, Samantha, & Cameron Sueoka
Paul & Kathy Terashima
Ken, Sharon, Alex, & Evan Tsukahara (Saratoga, California)
Troy, Judy, Haley, Max & Josh Watanabe

With Deepest Sympathy

Our Temple offers our deepest sympathies to the family and friends of

Rhu Sueoka

3/24/1916-7/28/08

We hope that through the nembutsu teachings and the strength of your family and community, you will find comfort in this difficult time. Namo Amida Butsu

Fruit, Raffle Prizes, and Goodie Bags Donors
Dru, Joni, Ryan, & Nick Sueoka – Flat Screen TV & other terrific prizes
SmART Space – Theresa Sueoka
Koyo Restaurant – Baron & Warren Kuihara
The Pagoda – Mark & Jodie Iwasaki
Creative Awards -Paul & Karen, Stephanie, & Katherine Seo
Café in a Box – Jerry Mori
Quality Produce – Paul Imamura
Brent, Sherrie, Tyler & Eric Koga
The Joy Luck Club
Jim, Faye, Marisa & Kyle Eng
Mike & Garrett Furubayashi

2008 Dharma School Building Fund Golf Tournament

Hole Sponsors who each donated \$100 or more

Gary, Jan, Curtis & Erica Takagi
Henry Hirano
Rev. Jerry, Carmela, Katie, Kacie, & Taylor Hirano
Kasubuchi Motors – Bob Kasubuchi
Brenda Koga
Brent, Sherrie, Tyler & Eric Koga
Steve Koga
Ken and Jean Kobayashi
Stan, Elaine, Michelle, & Lisa Endo
Ed, Tina, Emma, & Henry Munson
Garrett Furubayashi