



Buddhist Thoughts

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Buddhism in a Nutshell

Masami Hayashi

The purpose of human life is accomplished when we experience true entrusting, whereby a limited foolish being realizes its unity with unlimited Other Power. It is a non-dual relationship in which a foolish being remains forever a foolish being until the moment of death, when one is liberated from all karmic bondage.

On February 7, I was invited to speak to a group known as the LDS senior Singles. They wanted me to give a ten minute talk on Buddhism and then spend the remaining time answering questions. Some of you probably were asked to talk on Buddhism at your school. What did you tell them?

This morning I'd like to give you a summary of my message. There were 18 elders ranging in ages from 64 to 90. First I talked about the uniqueness of Buddhism. I stated that Buddhism is a religion of enlightenment. The basic search for truths of life has constantly changed its tradition. For all schools of Buddhism the basic truths of life is full of ups and downs, life is impermanent, and life is interdependent. Symbolically there are 84,000 paths to enlightenment. Buddhism teaches that humans can become Buddha. When humans become enlightened they become truly human. They will come to fully realize their true selves and become a Buddha.

What we see around us is not necessarily true and real. This view may be distorted by our self-centeredness. By overcoming self-centeredness, we see a fish simply as a fish, a stone as a stone, a tree as a tree. Each reality is viewed into the fullness of its own being. But a self-centered view regards them as utility, something that can be beneficial and profitable. They see fish as food, stones as building materials and trees as lumber. Problems arise when greed becomes excessive, ecology is ignored and the environment becomes deteriorated. Ultimately, the self-interested and unenlightened person may destroy mankind.

The second part of my message was focused on Shin Buddhism. Shin Buddhism is the most popular type of Buddhism in Japan and the oldest organized form of Buddhism in the West. In 2012, we will be celebrating our 100 year anniversary since Salt Lake Buddhist Temple was established. Other forms of Buddhism seem to be focused mainly about the mind. Shin Buddhism is about the heart. It relies on emotions, imagination and relationships between people to bring about spiritual awakening, an awakening that opens our heart to "deep entrusting" rather than enlightenment of the

mind with penetrating wisdom.

The emphasis on “heart feeling” in Shin Buddhism is greater than that of other forms of Buddhism. For nearly 800 years it has been devoted to providing lay people with a way in which to experience awakening and joy in their own everyday lives.

In Shin Buddhism, awakening isn’t something we strive for and obtain through our own efforts by studying or meditating. When our hearts rooted in gratitude and awareness of others glow within us, we express our feelings by saying, “Namo Amida Butsu,” a phrase called the nembutsu. The nembutsu is close to the hearts of every Shin Buddhist. “Namo Amida Butsu,” are words simple to understand. It translate as “I take refuge in Amida Buddha.” Amida Buddha is not a creator or a supreme being. . It is a symbol and has the qualities of compassion and wisdom that we are able to realize in our experiences of our daily life. Wisdom helps me see myself and life as they really are. Compassion enhances my appreciation for things and assures me that I am embraced and not forsaken. The nembutsu is not a mantra, a prayer, or a practice to generate enlightenment. Our founder, Shinran, taught that we should think of nembutsu as the practice of Amida Buddha, not as our own. When we say the nembutsu, we are allowing Amida’s practice flow through us. Nembutsu is something in which we participate, not something that we produce. It is something we receive from Amida.

Shin Buddhism is a religion of awareness. Besides being aware of the basic truths of life understood by other schools of Buddhism, it stresses the need to become aware that we are imperfect and the greed, ignorance and anger that we possess make us powerless to realize enlightenment by our own power. Shin Buddhism teaches that the source of our suffering is clinging to our ego and the deluded belief that one’s own individual power is sufficient to overcome the deep resentment, greed, and ignorance that we have. We are taught to rely wholly on the Other Power. Giving up Self-Power is virtually impossible.

Shin teaching is realistic, and it provides assurance of enlightenment. From our human perspective, it is impossible to attain enlightenment, but when we become more aware of the basic truths of life and our imperfections, we become appreciative for all beings and materials that sustain and nurture our lives. We come to realize that “life is a privilege and not a right.” With deeper awareness, we become more concerned and appreciative and work for the betterment of all life. When this awareness leads to a transformation within us, it is called “shinjin.”

Those having “shinjin” no longer worry about life after death because they are at peace within themselves. According to Shinran, we are assured of realizing oneness or enlightenment immediately upon death in becoming one with the cosmic wisdom and compassion.

Buddhism teaches that death is a part of life, and that although none of us can predict death, we need not worry about the hereafter because we are always embraced in the absolute Wisdom and Compassion of Amida Buddha. Buddhism emphasizes universal life rather than the individual soul. Heaven and hell are conditions of life created by us here and now and do not denote places after death. To live fully is to be prepared for all events with trust and serenity, and to avoid a morbid preoccupation with death and concern about what will take place when we die. Death clarifies life’s truths. Dying is part of the human condition. To live decently and then serenely leave the world is total fulfillment.

Shin Buddhist tradition is appealing because it emphasizes on sincerity, humility, naturalness and gratitude as the keys to living an authentic life. They focus on gratitude toward all as essential to our awakening, and the ideal of equality of all beings without distinction were powerful parts of its appeal. In Shin Buddhism there are no spiritual elites, just fellow practitioners, all equal in the embrace of Amida's compassion and wisdom. Chanting nembutsu is an activity available to all people in any situations. Nembutsu is not a type of prayer, it is a statement of thanksgiving. Nembutsu is our response to awaking, not a method whereby we seek to awaken. Namo Amida Butsu is itself the final destination.

After my formal talk of 10minutes, I generated enough questions that required 50 minutes to answer. I learned some of their feelings about Buddhism. Most of their thoughts were positive and agreed to our Buddhist ways. However they commented that in the LDS religion they are perfect in contrast to our being imperfect. But in general the discussion went well and everyone felt that they learned a lot about Buddhism.

Heart of Amida

Equality of all sentient beings within the great Compassion is Amida's call.

No matter what our thoughts, and life may be,, Amida's call never forsakes.

Equality is the heart of Amida. All we need to do is to entrust ourselves to this truth.

President's Message

Dot Richeda

The Temple General Membership meeting was held on January 30, 2011. For those in attendance, thank you for taking the time from your busy schedule to attend this important meeting.

One area of concern is the West Building. If you have any suggestion on what we can do with the building please let me know. Victor Oiishi, our agent, is in the process of leasing the building.

Tomio Mistsunaga and Phil Sakashita will be in charge of Toban this year. If you are not on the list and would like to volunteer, please see one of them.

Again, thank you for your support.

BWA NEWS

Brenda Koga

Wow...March is here and spring is on its way. The BWA has a full schedule planned for this year. The following is the remaining 2011 events for the tentative calendar decided by the membership at our last meeting on January 23, 2011:

March 6: Omigaki (Altar cleaning/polishing)
April 10: Hanamatsuri -prepare items for luncheon
April 30: Nihonmatsuri—Preparation of food to sell
May/June: Tentative BWA Appreciation Activity
July 9-10: Obon—food preparation (July 8 prep. Day)
August 21: BWA Annual Steak Fry
October 1: Annual Food Bazaar
October 16: Eshinniko/Kakushinniko Service-memorial & new member induction
November: Elections for new officers and board
December: Bodhi Day Luncheon—Main Dish Preparation—Salads & Desserts

The BWA records by our treasurer, **Reiko Watanabe** show the following as paid members for the BWA as of February 21, 2011:

Black, Holly	Koga, Brenda	Richeda, Dot
Chen, Joyce	Koga, Sherrie	Sakashita, Connie
Chow, Aki	Konishi, Jeanne	Sakashita, Jane
Chow, Maya	Matsuura, Reiko	Sato, Donna
Dennison, Yuriko	Minaga, Gail	Shimada, Misuko
Doi, Takako	Minaga, Hisako	Sugaya, Chie
Fong, Christy	Mitsunaga, Helen	Takagi, Nancy
Fujinami, Terry	Mitsunaga, Junko	Taketa, Nanae
Furubayashi, Maxine	Miya, Karie-Minaga	Terashima, Chic
Hirano, Carmela	Nagata, Setsuko	Terashima, Kathy
Ikegami, Bobbie	Nakamura, Takae	Uno, Yoshiko
Iwasaki, Sandy	Okada, Aiko	Watanabe, Judy
Koike, May	Okubo, Yukie	Watanabe, Reiko
		Yakumo, Kazuko

If you feel there is an error or if you have questions regarding your BWA membership, please contact Reiko. Remember you must be a temple member to be a member of BWA. The BWA is offering to assist anyone who would like to be a member of the organization, but is not able to join the temple. Please contact Brenda Koga if you have concerns.

In January we were saddened to hear of the loss of one of our very devoted members, **Ruth Aoki**. We will all miss seeing her smiling face and her cheery greetings. She was very dedicated to the BWA and all the temple events. Our sincere condolences to her family and friends.

More recently we were again informed of another great loss to not only the BWA, but the entire temple with the passing of **Yukie Okubo**. Yukie was such a huge contributor to the temple, not just monetarily, but offering much of her time and services. She was the temple historian for many years and much of our temple history was preserved by her dedicated efforts. She was truly a strong follower of the Dharma and practiced devoutly. Our sympathies to her family as well.

Our next meeting will be March 20, 2011 at 11:30 a.m. in the West Wing Jr. High classroom. Your attendance is appreciated since we will be discussing preparations for Hanamatsuri and Nihonmatsuri.

Dharma School

Christie Fong

It's great to see our students each Sunday at Dharma School! It is important students try to attend class each week as our teachers begin practices for their programs for Hanamatsuri.

Thank you to the **second** grade students for helping lead the Golden Chain and Promise during services through February. We will have the **Pre-School/1st grade** class help with those duties in March.

The annual **Ski party/Barbecue** at the Brighton Ski resort is planned for **March 13th**. Meet in the parking lot by 8:30 at our usual spot. (Remember: that is Daylight Savings time so it will be 1 hour earlier!) If you are planning on attending, please sign up for something you can contribute to the lunch. It would be helpful if you let either Maya Chow or Karie Minaga-Miya know the number of family members or friends that plan on joining for lunch. Bring the lawn chairs, foldable picnic tables and hopefully the sunshine!!!

The Bowling party is tentatively rescheduled for May 1st. Details will follow in the next Buddhist Thoughts.

The Dharma School is planning an end of the year, beginning of the new year Family Outing at the Mill Hollow camp facility. It is scheduled for Labor Day weekend. It will be a great way to go camping because all that is needed is your sleeping bag!! Food is included! If you and your family are interested in participating, mark your calendars, save the dates and more details will be coming. All members of the Sangha are encouraged to participate.

Dharma School Ski Party

Where: Brighton Ski Resort

When: Sunday - March 13, 2011

Meet at Brighton at 8:30 a.m

(at bottom of ski school hill - near the large
garbage bins)

Dharma School will provide the hamburgers, hot
dogs, chili, chips and hot chocolate!

Please
Bring a Something to share



Campaign BCA – The 21st Century

Campaign Update – March 2011

By Robert Noguchi – BCA Fundraising Manager

By the Numbers:

Thanks to your generous gifts and pledges, the campaign has raised over **\$550,000** in 2010!

As of 12/31/2010, the campaign has raised **\$18,736,836** since its inception in March 2003. Not only has this gone towards funding for the Jodo Shinshu Center, but also the wonderful programs being run there.

Just Announced:

Southern District Council will hold a benefit Golf Tournament on **Monday, August 22, 2011**, at the Tustin Ranch Golf Club in Tustin, CA. Many thanks to **Steve Ishii** of Orange County Buddhist Church for chairing this tournament! Please support this event by being a sponsor! For more information, please e-mail scishii@pacbell.net or call 714-996-4649.

Institute of Buddhist Studies Receives Two Gifts:

Rev. Seishin Kiyoshi and Mrs. Marrie H. Yamashita of Berkeley, CA, established a \$100,000 IBS Scholarship Endowment on December 29, 2010. The purpose of the scholarship is to support BCA ministerial candidates, IBS graduates for further studies, and prospective ministers from Japan who wish to study at IBS and serve in the BCA.

Mr. Noboru Hanyu of San Francisco, CA, pledged \$500,000 on January 26, 2011, to establish an endowed professorial chair at IBS through his living trust. It will be named the **Noboru and Yaeko Hanyu Buddhist Chaplaincy Professorial Chair**.

Annual Giving:

The Coordinated Fundraising Committee is presenting an Annual Giving program at BCA's National Council Meeting in Visalia, CA. Details are coming soon.

For More Information:

Contact: Robert Noguchi in the Campaign Office at the Jodo Shinshu Center – 510-809-1453 or e-mail: robert@bcacampaign.org.

March Shotsuki Hoyo

March 27, 10:00 am

Deceased	Date	Next of kin
Adachi Henry	3/11/97	Masayo Adachi
Brouwer Mayeda Emiko	3/4/96	Fumio Mayeda
Endo Nobuzo	3/16/93	Stan Endo
Ikegami Mitsuko	3/2/72	Yuta Ikegami
Imada Matsuyo	3/12/91	Tsukamoto
Ishimatsu Otoichiro	3/21/48	Chizuko Ishimatsu
Iwata Miya	3/11/91	Tsuruko Imai
Kano Setsu	3/14/40	Victor Oishi
Kida Uwano	3/16/67	Jeff Kida
Koseki, Iseko Ada	3/17/92	Kathy Terashima
Kumagai Hyozo	3/11/86	John Kumagai
Maeda Matsuzo	3/18/64	Koga Family
Matsumiya Chiyo	3/12/90	Jeanne Konishi

Matsumiya Jinzaburo	3/19/64	Jeanne Konishi
Matsuura Kame	3/25/54	Francis Akimoto
Muraki Tomekichi	3/1/75	
Nakano Tokuyo	3/3/91	Atsumu Nakano
Namba Makiji	3/2/57	
Nishikawa Emily	3/20/95	Nancy Wayman
Sasaki Yvonne Katsuyo	3/16/56	Haruto Sasaki
Shimizu Toshi	3/24/88	Kerry Lee
Tachiki Tetsu	3/18/83	Steve Tachiki
Uyeda Hisashi Harry	3/7/85	Ray Uyeda
Kobayashi Sakae	3/17/00	Ken Kobayashi
Shiba Takataro	3/10/01	Helen Nakashima
Igata Toshizo	3/2/02	Tomi Igata
Kasai Seiko	3/20/02	Grace Kasai
Taketa Shizuo	3/1/04	Nanae Taketa

2011 FEBRUARY DONATIONS

Robert Kasubuchi	30	Shotsuki Hoyo
Chizuko Ishimatsu	50	Shotsuki Hoyo
Ben & Maurea Terashima	20	Hoonko
Grace Kasai	150	Dana Award & goodie bag
Ruth Aoki Family	500	Memorial for Ruth
Marianne Weissman	25	Memorial for Mary Nakai
Jean Shiba, Kumiko Okuda, Bobby Okuda	1000	Memory of Mitzi Okuda Kishiyama
Takeo Iwamoto	100	Shotsuki Hoyo
Bob & Akiko Sugino	20	Shotsuki Hoyo for Gentaro Ogura
Ivan Van Laningham	100	Special
May Koike	50	Shotsuki Hoyo
Aiko Okada	25	Shotsuki Hoyo
Aiko Okada	100	Memorial for Hide Nishida
Brenda Koga	20	Shotsuki Hoyo - Michiko Koga
Paul & Kathy Terashima	25	Shotsuki Hoyo
Ruby Doi	25	Shotsuki Hoyo
Bruce & Christy Fong	20	Shotsuki Hoyo -Tokusaku Sueoka
Chic Terashima	50	Shotsuki -Masayo Doi & Kay Terashima
Setsuko Nagata	30	Shotsuki Hoyo
Byron & Reiko Watanabe	50	Shotsuki Hoyo
May Akiyama	25	Shotsuki Hoyo
Terry & Mits Fujinami	25	Pet memorial
Ichiro & Takeko Doi	25	Shotsuki Hoyo

NEHANE

Brenda Koga	25	Bruce & Christy Fong	20
May Akiyama	25	Terry & Mits Fujinami	25

Mark & Gail Minaga	25	Ichiro & Takeko Doi	25
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BWA

Marianne Weissman	25	Memorial for Mary Nakai	
Ruth Aoki Family	100	Memorial for Ruth	
Yoshiko Uno	10	Special	

DHARMA SCHOOL
GOODIE BAG –

Sachiko Tohinaka	20	May Akiyama	20
Ruby Doi	25	Reiko Imada	40
Asako Mori	30		
Ruth Aoki Family	100	Memorial	
Marianne Weissman	25	Memorial for Mary Nakai	
Paul Terashima	10	Dharma Ski Outing	

YBA

Ruth Aoki Family	100	Memorial	
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JR YBA

Ruth Aoki Family	100	Memorial	
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