



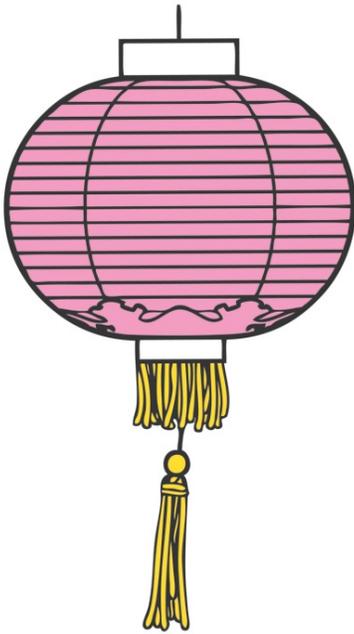
Buddhist Thoughts

Salt Lake Buddhist Temple: 211 West 100 South
Salt Lake City, Utah 84101, volume 20 issue 7
web site: slbuddhist.org

July, 2013
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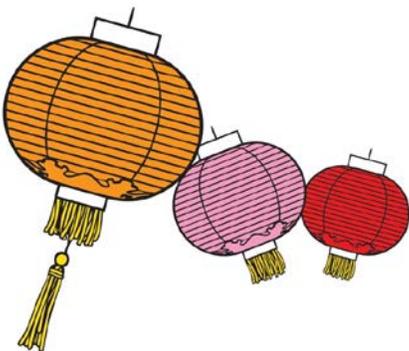
SALT LAKE BUDDHIST TEMPLE OBON JAPANESE FESTIVAL

Saturday, July 13, 2011
211 West 100 South, SLC



Japanese food served from 1 pm
Japanese items and gifts for sale
Snack bar open from 3:00-10:00
Memorial Lanterns are \$5

Chapel Tours 2:00-7:00
Taiko Drum Exhibition 7:00
Obon Street Dancing 8:00



For further information
www.slbuddhist.org

Hatsubon 2013

July 14th, 1:00p.m.

Ryuuji Dick Hirasuna	7/21/12
Katsuko "Sally" Mann	9/4/2012
May Mitsuko Matsuda	9/6/2012
Fusaye Nakamura Kano	10/17/2012
Masako Ikegami Morinaka	10/22/2012
Sab Miyuki Watanabe	11/16/2012
Chad Masanori Tohinaka	9/15/1987
Elsie Masaye Shiramizu	12/19/2012
Nobuko Margaret Horiye	12/18/2012
Hideo Morinaka	12/29/2012
Akiko Kawata Sugino	1/18/2013
Akio Dick Hamada	3/19/2013
Suyeko Watanabe	4/27/2013
Toshi Oki	4/30/2013
Kerry Mamoru Shimada	5/4/2013
Kim Kiyomi Kawashima	5/10/2013

Each of these names represents more than an individual. They were fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, aunts, uncles, brothers and sisters. These sixteen names represent hundreds of individuals who have been touched by death over the past year. These sixteen Dharma friends were loved and had touched the lives of many and their influence lives on in this world.

Amida Buddha's compassion embraces us in the worlds of past, present and future. Obon is the bridge of love that spans these worlds. It is a time we breach the divide that we put up between them and us. It allows us to celebrate along with our Mothers and Fathers, Grandfathers and Grandmothers, brothers and sisters who have died before us. We dance in love. We gather in joy. In Love, the world of the living and dead are one.

Our Obon festival is on July 13th, we can use the help of all members and friends in preparation. If you are available to help, please see Dot Richeda.

OBON: A CELEBRATION OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Carmela Javellana-Hirano M.D.

The story of Mogallana during the time of Sakyamuni Buddha illustrates the original story of Obon, now an annual festival in Salt Lake City, Utah two and a half millennia later. In present day, dancing to traditional Japanese music as the peasants and farmers did in old Japan embodies our deep gratitude and joy for our ancestors, without whom life itself would not be possible. For Mogallana, a top disciple of the Buddha, his story of Obon began when his dear mother died. As he had strong intuitive powers, he saw that his mother ended up in the hell of hungry ghosts. Hungry ghosts are excruciatingly ravenous because they have enormous bottomless stomachs, but mouths and necks so tiny they will only allow a grain of rice to be eaten at a time. Mogallana brought his distress to the Buddha, who suggested that Mogallana offer food to the devas and bodhisattvas. His offerings were accepted

and his mother was freed from hell. In his joy, he started dancing, which became the first Obon. This is an example of a mutually loving relationship between Mogallana and his mother.

There is another story, very different from the above. This is the story of Ajatasatru -- one of tragedy and severe family dysfunction. When he was born, his parents, King Bimbisara and Queen Vaidehi were told by a fortune-teller that when this little prince grew up, he would kill his own father for the throne. So his parents threw their infant son off a high tower, but he survived. Overcome with guilt and shame, they compensated by raising their child with utmost love and care. When he grew up, he found out about his parents' secret from Devadatta, the jealous cousin of the Buddha, who he had repeatedly tried to thwart and kill, without success. Enraged, Ajatasatru sent his father the King to the dungeon to starve to death. He had allowed his mother the Queen to visit his father everyday until he found out that she had been sneaking food to her husband. So he sent his mother to the dungeon as well. His father eventually died of starvation. He was going to have his mother killed as well, and this is when his own unbearable hell came to fruition.

Ajatasatru: Unbearable Suffering as the Gate to a Life of Nenbutsu (A Paper presented at the Summer Pacific Seminar, July 5-7, 2013 in Berkeley, CA)

“Then the World-Honored One, the Guide of Great Compassion, entered the Samadhi of moon-radiant love for the sake of Ajatasatru. Having entered this Samadhi, he cast a brilliant light. That light, cool and refreshing, shone upon the body of the King, and the sores healed instantly...” (CWS I, p. 133)

The premise of this paper is that immense suffering to the point of hopelessness and helplessness CAN be a life-changing impetus for a life of humility and gratitude. It is the common ground in which human beings can truly connect with each other at the heart level – the heart of understanding and empathy. Without this pain, our frailty as human beings enslaved by our ego may remain in the darkness of denial and ignorance, and we may not truly awaken to what heals us of our afflictions created by desire, hatred and false interpretations of life as it is. Therefore, in order for us to seek relief from our disturbing emotions and thoughts, we have to experience enough discomfort – like a frog in boiling water – to desire to jump out of our predicament. The act of jumping out carries with it a semblance of hope, some degree of faith, that our pain somehow will end, not sure how or where, to anything but this hell.

Whereas most “Western” models of psychotherapy aim to alleviate the client’s suffering through self-powered practices that elevate the poor trampled ego to a state of blissful innocence, the Shinshu Buddhist model aims to reveal to the self the manipulations of one’s own ego and shrink it down to the smallest, humblest, and least obtrusive size possible.

The story of Ajatasatru is difficult to comprehend, much less accept, because we are asked to realize that we are no different from him. Ajatasatru had killed his father and was going to kill his mother. When the gravity of his evil act dawned on him, he became seriously ill, full of shame and self-reproach, causing eruptions of weeping foul-smelling sores that covered his whole body. (Most likely an autoimmune fulminant necrotizing dermatitis and dermolysis of psychosomatic origin from acute sympathetic nervous system overdrive consistent with severe internalized trauma.) Various remedies tried did not even touch his boils, including his mother’s salves and the counsel of several of his ministers. Finally his uncle and minister Jivaka, who was also a (most likely, integrative) physician, encouraged Ajatasatru to meet with the Buddha, the great Sakyamuni. On their meeting, the Buddha expressed his empathy for Ajatasatru’s plight, his own dilemmas as a human being caught in the conflicts of desire, and the Vow of Amida Buddha to save all sentient beings without exception. Just as the Buddha saw himself as inseparable from Ajatasatru, so are we also asked to see his heinous

crimes against his parents, and by extension, the rest of humanity as OUR crimes against our parents, and by extension, the rest of humanity. The evil of Ajatasatru is our own evil. This doctrine most difficult to accept is at the heart of the human dilemma itself: my evil, and therefore my suffering is my own doing, borne from my ignorance and karmic burden. Blaming and shaming others (or turning to mind-numbing psychotropic agents) are so much easier to do, because they temporarily alleviate the pain of my own wrongness, my imperfections, my guilt. In the Western world, guilt and culpability are commensurate to burning in the eternal fires of hell after death.

In the mental health field, especially in the work of psychotherapy, where the innermost secrets of suffering beings are heard, their stories listened to, their hearts understood and accepted, lie the great opportunity and privilege for both the client and the psychotherapist. Opportunity because every experience of pain is experience of wisdom and compassion at work; and privilege because the stories shared are at the heart of the dharma, the noble teachings that illustrate of the universality of human suffering and its deliverance.

Every session begins with a recount of the client's troubles and struggles, their victories and triumphs, and the insights they have gained during the process. But unlike contemporary "Western" psychological models, which emphasize "self-esteem, self-sufficiency, and self-empowerment," the Shinshu Buddhist model emphasizes 1) the inseparability of self and others, such as the joining of client and therapist, and 2) this suffering that joins both becomes the gate that opens the path to "AAA," as taught by *Sensei* and IBS professor, Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto: Awareness of the reality of suffering itself, the Authentic and honest admission ("coming clean") of the sufferers of their own participation in contributing to the suffering of all beings, including themselves; and finally the Appreciation of the unconditional and infinite Kindness that heals us simultaneously as we suffer in spite of our evil. This quote comes to mind: "Kindness is the Highest Form of Wisdom."

This very suffering is what brings us down to our knees in utter surrender and humility. For as long as we keep "fighting" the "enemy" (e.g., our unmet desires, the negativity of others, the unfeasibility of the current situation, etc.), we keep the delusion of self-power alive. For as long as we stay attached to self-power, we are setting ourselves up to eventually run out of it, as we often do. In the Western model, the client's helplessness is the therapist's opportunity to "save" the client from their predicament. The problem with this is that often the therapist is clueless about all the causes and karmic conditions which have led to the client's dilemma. With this cluelessness come the therapist's own mistaken assumptions, inaccurate interpretations and often patronizing arrogance of being able to "help" the client. In the Shinshu Buddhist model, the client's helplessness is the therapist's helplessness, the client's pain is the therapist's pain, the client's evil is the therapist's evil. What good does this do to anyone?

Here lies the paradox of the healing process itself: in recognizing this pain and helplessness we all go through as human beings, our arrogance and entitlement can no longer hold up a "false self" innocence, righteousness, denial, minimization and projection. Our suffering becomes our white flag of surrender to whoever is there to help us. In seeking help, we look around us for answers. Then we begin to notice how everything in our immediate environment is living out its impermanent existence for our sake – the water we drink, the food we eat, the air we breathe, the earth sustaining every living thing, the community of fellow human beings at work, day in and day out, eking out a living by taking care of our streets and cars and establishments. The more we notice the world around us, the more we recognize the inconceivable Kindness always at work to make our lives more convenient, more comforting, more livable. This Kindness is the Primal Vow of Amida – nonjudgmental, nondiscriminating, unstoppable and infinite -- the *eso eko* directed to us evil and selfish beings. It is with this Kindness that we realize we are being healed simultaneously, even as we suffer. But to truly

realize this, we need to be humbled, even humiliated, by our own realization of evil, the same evil of Ajatasatru, and go through the process of shame and guilt, remorse and repentance, and ultimately reconciliation with the self and the human condition that binds all of us. This moment of acceptance is the same moment we also accept the wisdom and compassion of Amida Buddha. This is the moment of articulating “Namo Amida Butsu.”

“There are two good means by which sentient beings can be saved: one is shame and the other is self-reproach. Shame means not committing further evil oneself; self-reproach means not leading others to commit evil...Shame means to feel humility before others; self-reproach means to feel humility before heaven...To be without shame and self-reproach is not to be human; it is to be a beast. Because one feels shame and self-reproach, one reveres father, mother, teachers, and elders...” (CWS I, p. 131)

In the cosmic lotus pond, we all sit in the mud of our ignorance. As the Light of Amida penetrates this mud, we begin to turn our attention to the source, the *tariki* or Other Power of Amida. We can follow this light with a semblance of hope, some degree of faith, that somehow this light can lead us out of the darkness. We can bask in the “Buddha’s Samadhi of moon-radiant love,” the same light that healed Ajatasatru. As we grow towards the light, the mud of ignorance does not disappear; in fact we begin to appreciate its significance: “no mud, no lotus” as succinctly stated by Thich Naht Hanh. We begin to appreciate the significance of suffering itself. It is obvious the source of this healing light does not originate in the mud, in the human *bonno* of ego. Nevertheless, the Light is there, beckoning, inviting us to follow, the calling voice of Amida tirelessly reaching out to us. Our choice is here now: stay stuck in the mud and ignore the Light, or stay stuck in the mud and follow the Light. Either way, the mud is here. Either way, the Light is here. The Nenbutsu follower is a follower of this Light. As Jodo Shinshu Buddhists and Nenbutsu followers, we say “Namo Amida Butsu” -- “I take refuge in the healing light that embraces me just as I am.”

Shotsuki Hoyo

July 15, 1:00 pm

Deceased	Date of Death	Next of Kin
Beppu Yoshio	7/25/55	Jane Sakashita
Fujii Daiji		Amy Tomita
Hasegawa Masuta	7/1/81	Roxanne Hasegawa
Kameda Tasaku	7/14/84	
Konishi Becky	7/14/91	Jeanne Konishi
Konishi Isamu Lawrence	7/1/91	JeanneKonishi
Matsuda Kanji	7/1/63	Dick Matsuda
Matsumiya Kaoru	7/1/54	Sego Matsumiya
Matsumori Tome	7/12/86	
Matsuura Yosaku	7/31/40	Reiko Matsuura
Mochizuki Jiro		Jerry Mochizuki
Nishida Roy Kazuo	7/10/03	Aiko Okada
Okino Shoichi	7/31/89	Kazuko Okino
Sanada Shintatsu Rev.	7/6/82	Tracy Roberson
Sasaki Shozo	7/73	Charlie Sasaki
Satomura Tome	7/20/86	Kimiko Mizuta

Sugino Kizo	7/28/52	Bob Sugino
Tohinaka Heizo	7/15/53	Sachiko Tohinaka
Yamaguchi Hoshiro	7/14/91	Jeanne Yamaguchi
Sumida Kimiyo	7/9/95	Barbara Mitsunaga
Tadehara Yukiyei	7/22/98	Amy Tomita
Roy Naosaburo Tachiki	7/16/01	Steven Tachiki
Ken Ogura	7/20/07	Alice Ogura
Rowena Ling	7/21/07	Elaine Fukushima
Henry Hirano	7/29/11	Jerry Hirano

June Donations

SHOTSUKI HOYO

ELEANOR KOBAYASHI	\$125	TSUI KOBAYASHI, MIKI HASEGAWA, KENNETH KOBAYASHI, PAUL HASEGAWA, \$25 FOR OBON
BRENDA KOGA	\$20	
MASAMI HAYASHI	\$25	FUMIYE FUJI
TOM AKIMOTO	\$25	UHECHI AKIYAMA
HISAKO MINAGA	\$100	
NOREEN OKUBO	\$50	FLOYD OKUBO B. MAYEDA, FRED
YOSHIKO UNO	\$50	AOKI
CHARLIE SASAKI	\$20	
MERRY NAKAMURA	\$20	
HISAKO MINAGA	\$100	KOZO MINAGA 3 YEAR MEMORIAL
IVAN VAN LANNINGHAM	\$100	

GRADUATION & ATTENDENCE

LISA IMAMURA	\$50	TREY IMAMURA
SANDRA IWASAKI	\$25	EMILY IWASAKI
LAVERNE KYED	\$50	AIMEE KYED
MAYA CHOW	\$30	SAMANTHA CHOW MIYE
SHERRI HAYASHI	\$10	(ATTENDENCE)
CHRISTY FONG	\$25	DHARMA SCHOOL
LAVERNE KYED	\$40	DHARMA SCHOOL
MARK MINAGA	\$20	DHARMA SCHOOL
RISE HIRABAYASHI	\$10	DHARMA SCHOOL
JANE SAKASHITA	\$20	DHARMA SCHOOL

NIKKEI SENIOR

CENTER

\$30 FOR MAY 4TH LUNCHEON.

COME AND JOIN US!!

2013 OBON FESTIVAL ACTIVITES

JULY 13, 2013-SATURDAY SCHEDULE

- FOOD: 1:00 – 8:00 PM
- YBA SNACK BAR 3:00 – 10:00 PM
- SALT LAKE BLDG FUND 1:00 - 10:00 PM
- ENTERTAINMENT 3:00 - 6:00 PM
INSIDE/OUTSIDE
- CHAPEL TOURS: 2:00 - 6:00 PM
- DANCE FESTIVAL:
 - OGDEN TAIKO GRP 7:00 - 8:00 PM
 - OBON DANCE 8:00 - 10:00 PM

JULY 14, 2013-SUNDAY SCHEDULE

- 10:30 Obon Seminar “If the Buddha went Nuts”**
David Pating M.D.
- 1:00 pm **OBON_SERVICE:**
Guest Speaker Dr. David Pating

OBON CEMETARY VISITS

- July 12th 6:00 pm Redwood Memorial States
7:00 p.m. Mt. View Memorial Estates
- July 14th 10:00 pm Salt Lake City Cemetery beginning at the northernmost section