



Buddhist Thoughts

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Why Shinran Shonin's Life Matters

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 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.

Kyogyoshinsho CWS pg. 3

This passage is from the magnum opus written by the founder of our sect of Buddhism, Shinran Shonin. It highlights who Jodo Shinshu is specifically taught for. I have realized that the person Shinran Shonin is describing in this passage is me. It is as though when I read this passage it says, "This, then, is the true teaching easy to practice for Jerry Hirano;" I believe that for one to truly consider themselves a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist, one must be able to see this also.

This month we will be celebrating Gotan E (Shinran Shonin's Birthday) Why should this monk born over 800 years ago be remembered? What have I received from Shinran Shonin's teachings. Having been born and raised a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist, it was through Jodo Shinshu that I learned about Buddhism. Within Buddhism I have found one of the most non-judgmental, compassionate teachings in the history of mankind. The historical Buddha Shakyamuni has said, "There are 84,000 paths to enlightenment." What he means by 84,000 paths is that there is an infinite number of ways to awaken to Truth. Each of us human beings are individuals; consisting of our own histories and various causes and conditions which make up our lives. We each have our own stories and truths that make us who we are. Buddhism recognizes that the teachings must be flexible to encompass so many different viewpoints. There cannot be only one true and real teaching. Just as there cannot be only one story or history to identify each and every one of us, yet, why is Jodo Shinshu out of those 84,000 paths the right truth for **my** life.

The essence of the Buddhist teaching is found within Jodo Shinshu. Jodo Shinshu has enabled me to see myself as the "foolish being" (Bombyu in Japanese). The focus of Amida Buddha's practice is to enlighten foolish beings such as myself. I know without a doubt that I am a foolish being, filled with greed, anger, ignorance; however, I recognize how my life has been blessed and I am alive as a result of the wondrous compassionate embrace of Amida Buddha, the essence of the relationships that surround

me and allow me to exist. This teaching of the Buddha's compassion is directed towards the foolish being filled with greed, anger and ignorance resonates with the truth I have found in my life. Jodo Shinshu has shown me my life is not about just me, the foolish being, but in the relationships the world has given me. The words, the terminology, the rituals, the traditions all resonate with who I am. This is why I am Jodo Shinshu Buddhist. I hope that the members of our Sangha will all be able to feel gratitude for the teachings of this our teacher Shinran Shonin.

This year for our Gotan E service and seminar, we are fortunate to have my good friend the Venerable Seelawimala Madawala. I have known and often introduce him as "Bhante", which is similar to the Japanese word "Sensei". Bhante was one of my teachers at the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS). I would like to include some excerpts from short bio and history of Bhante written by Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto, the current Provost of (IBS) for Bhante's 25 years of service to IBS in 2001.

During the past twenty-five years, the Venerable Madawala Seelawimala, known to most people simply as "Bhante," has been instrumental in introducing the three treasures of the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha to a vast number of persons in the Western world. As one of the principal members of the Institute of Buddhist Studies educational and religious community since 1976, Bhante Seelawimala has been a true teacher and good friend in the Dhamma to all who have met him. Without question, his wise guidance and wholesome influence have impacted not only his students at IBS, but also many Buddhists and non-Buddhists throughout northern California and North America.

Bhante's life

Bhante Seelawimala was born to a respected family in Kurunegala District, Sri Lanka in 1947. His father, Mr. Tikiri Bandara Ratnayake, and his mother, Mrs. Swarnalatha Briatice Balasooriya Kumarihamy, gave him the name Lionel Bandara Ratnayake at his birth. He grew up, with his three sisters, as the only boy in the family. His father died when he was five years old. His mother, who was a capable and prominent woman in the district, was able to raise the children without difficulty.

Bhante's mother, who is well educated in the Buddha Dhamma, saw signs of a monk in her young son, and found that he was seriously interested in becoming a monk. She contacted the Venerable Master (Achariya) Hendiyagala Seelarathana of the Ancient Cave Temple in Sri Lanka, who was respected as the most capable Dharma teacher at the country at the time. After examining the child's personality, the Venerable Master agreed to ordain him as a novice monk one day after his 10th birthday. The young monk received the Dharma name Seelawimala, which incorporates a portion of the name of his Master, Seelarathana. Young Bhante Seelawimala became his master's first disciple.

When he had strictly trained the young monk for one year, and after deep consideration, Venerable Master Seelarathana decided to give his disciple a non-traditional education. Although young ordained monks always study with other young monks at schools specially designed for monks, Bhante's master wanted to send him to regular school to study with lay children. Since this was an unusual practice in the educational system in Sri Lanka, it was a controversial idea. However, after many serious meetings, Maliyadeva Boy's College, the most prestigious school in the North Western Province in Sri Lanka, finally agreed to accept him as the only monk to become a regular student. Venerable Master (Dr.) Dickwela Piyananda, who later established the first Theravada Temple in America (in Washington, D.C.) in 1967, was the Vice Principle of the school at the time. He was also one of the best Dhamma friends of Ven. Master Seelarathana. Venerable Piyananda was also instrumental in admitting the young monk to a public school. He also accepted position of the spiritual mentor (upajjhaya) to the young novice monk. From that time on, the eleven-year-old monk grew up under the direct supervision of these two great masters. Throughout primary school and high school he was the most well-known and well-loved student of the school. He received the highest honor from the school by being appointed the

editor of the annual College Magazine.

In 1966 he entered the University of Sri Lanka, Peradeniya, through Maliyadeva Boy's College. While majoring in Buddhist Philosophy at the University, he received full ordination in 1968 at the Malwatta Chapter of Syamopali Maha Nikaya in Kandy. Immediately after graduation, Bhante joined the teaching staff at the Bhikkhu Training Center at Maharagama, Sri Lanka, and served on the Editing Board of the Tripitaka Encyclopedia published by the Sasana Sevaka Society, Colombo. During this period, he closely associated the Venerable Madihe Pannasiha Maha Nayake Thera of the Amarapura Maha Nikaya.

In 1972 the Wijayawardhane Trust offered him a scholarship to the University of Sri Lanka to learn to teach Buddhism in English, so that in particular he might be able to teach the Dhamma in the West. An excellent student, Bhante Seelawimala completed his Master's Degree in Buddhist Philosophy in 1974 at the University of Sri Lanka, Peradeniya. It was at that time that Bhante's teacher, Venerable Dr. Dickwela Piyananda, introduced Bhante to his close friend, Rev. Kenryu Tsuji, the Bishop of Buddhist Churches of America, who was visiting Sri Lanka at the time. In 1976, Rev. Tsuji, as the president of the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) in Berkeley, invited Bhante to join the Institute to teach Early Buddhism.

Thus, Bhante Seelawimala was invited to play a vital role in the religious education of future BCA ministers and in the effort to effectively disseminate the Dhamma in America. Both he and Reverend Haruyoshi Kusada, the director of IBS from 1964 until 1983, were to become major influences in the religious development of dozens of ministers within the Buddhist Churches of America. In his classes, Bhante has always been able to present the teachings of the Buddha in a way that is truly understandable to persons born and educated in America. Bhante's classes always begin with a detailed explication of the suttas, which are presented in both Pali and English. He then focuses on terms and concepts, which are essential to an understanding of the Buddha's intent. Bhante's unique talent lies in his then being able to re-phrase the original sutta passages, often through the use of practical examples and illustrations. In this way, Bhante is able to allow students not only to grasp the logic and rationality of the Buddha's teachings, but also to gain a glimpse of its immediate reality.

When he first arrived in the US twenty-five years ago Bhante was the only Theravada monk in Northern California. As a result, for many years he spent countless hours helping individuals and families in the Sri Lankan, Cambodian and other Buddhist communities in the area. Even though today there are now a number of monks in the area, Bhante still continues to provide Buddhist persons with assistance. He also regularly visits Washington State, Oregon, Arizona and Edmonton, Canada to share Dhamma with persons living there.

Please join us for the Gotan E seminar on Saturday May 14, 3-5 at the Salt Lake Buddhist Temple, West building. Bhante will be teaching on "What the Buddha taught and the Metta Sutra."

SLBT President's Message

Stan Endo

The Temple clean-up day was held on April 23. Although we didn't get to all of the repairs completed, the clean-up and trimming effort was FANTASTIC!!! Everything looks just "great". Thanks to ALL OF YOU who came out to work on both buildings, inside and out. We filled one large dumpster with trimmings, garbage and junk that has accumulated over the years. Thanks to the Building Fund team for preparing a delicious spaghetti lunch as we all worked hard and needed the fuel.

The Finance and Funding Committee and Temple Board continues to work towards achieving our objective of increasing revenue by 10% and reducing spending by 5%. To that end, we will no longer

pay for lawn mowing and maintenance. Instead, selected members have volunteered to mow the lawn once a week over the month. It turns out to be an easy thing to do and will save the temple money. If there are others that want to help, please let me know. This applies to not only lawn mowing but many other repairs and maintenance that our Sangha has some real expertise to perform. Every bit helps where we can do the work ourselves instead of contracting it out!

The membership is trying to reduce costs and work smarter by employing new ideas like the Point of Sale system that Vanessa Shiba has taken the lead to implement. This system will help not only with donations but with sales and tracking of expenses during our big events such as Nihon Matsui, OBON and the Food Bazaar.

Buddhist Women's Association (BWA) News

Elaine Endo

Our annual BWA Wendover bus trip in conjunction with Ogden BWA will be on Sunday, June 26. If you are interested in joining us, please contact me as soon as possible. The cost will be \$22.

Our May meeting will be on Sunday, May 22 after service. Please plan on joining us then.

Infant Presentation (Hatsumairi) May 15

On Sunday May 18, we will be holding an infant presentation service. This service is for any child born into our Sangha over the past year. This service is to help begin the child's first steps along the Nembutsu path. The child is presented before the Buddha and the Sangha. They are presented with a gift from the Temple. Those interested please fill in the form and return it to Rev. Hirano

Infant's name

Date of birth

Parent's names

Address

Phone

Temple member Yes No

May 22nd Special Meeting Notice

The Board of Trustees is convening a Special Meeting for the Sangha on May 22, 2016 following Family Service. The sole purpose of the meeting is to vote on a proposed change to the SLBT By-Laws to include Organization Presidents as Trustees of the Board for insurance liability purposes. By-Laws Article VI, Section 2 identifies Trustees in addition to those elected to the Board. Article VI, Section 2A currently reads "A representative of each affiliated organization". Changing it to say "Presidents from each affiliated organization" would make Organization Presidents Trustees of the Board.

Special Award Winners

March: Corey Shimada

Good Luck to everyone for the April drawing

May Shotsuki Hoyo

May 15, 10:00 am

Name	Date of Death	Next of kin
Akita, Sam Hideo	5/17/64	Janet Thomas
Aoki, Michio Mike	5/13/92	Sharon Carmichel
Atagi Tomi	5/26/89	June Seo
Fujii Fumiye	5/10	Masami Hayashi
Hirano Ikuye	5/10/88	Jerry Hirano
Hirano Kazuyo	5/31/92	Jerry Hirano
Iwasaki Tori	5/28/69	Paul Iwasaki
Minaga Taka	5/15/96	Mark Minaga
Miyake Mitsuyoshi	5/31/84	Jim Miyake
Moshizuki Kuniko	5/21/83	Takeo Mochizuki
Namba Jin	5/20/84	Kaz Namba
Ninomiya Tei	5/8/64	Ninomiya Family
Nishida Seiichi	5/15/64	Okada Family
Nishikawa Shigeru	5/18/98	Nancy Wayman
Nakahara Nancy	5/21/99	Lily Nakahara
Okino Masano	5/18/81	Imamura Family
Shiba Hideo	5/4/96	Ayako Shiba
Sueoka Kame	5/15/89	Dru Sueoka
Suzuki Saku	5/31/00	Yeiko Nagata
Tanaka Hiroshi	5/6/91	Masahiro Tanaka
Tsuyuki Yoshiko	5/27/91	Mark Tsuyuki
George Nakai	5/12/01	Maryanne Nakai
Haruo Nakagiri		Howard Nakagiri
Nishiye Sasaki	5/15/05	Shigeru Sasaki
Sumi Hattori	5/16/2006	Gary Koga
Ben Mayeda	5/20/07	Craige Mayeda
Helen Yoshinaga	5/2009	Rolen Yoshinaga
Roy Yoshinaga	5/27/2001	Rolen Yoshinaga
Brent Winward	5/25/2013	Tadao Winward
Linda Winward	5/28/201	Tadao Winward

MARCH-APRIL 2016 DONATIONS

(March 22 – April 25, 2016)

Dana Campaign

Sanctuary for Healing & Integration (Carmela Javellana Hirano)	200	Roberto Toro	8.33
Troy & Ashley Holbrook	100	Hiroshi & Mary Aramaki	200
Aaron Froemming	10	Stephen Proskauer & Lucia Gardner	100

Spring Ohigan

Buster Mayeda	30	Jane Sakashita	25
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Hanamatsuri

Tom & Fran Akimoto	30	Marcus & Karie Minaga-Miya	25
May Akiyama	25	Asako Mori	30
Nobuo Aoki	50	Haruko Moriyasu	50
Hiroshi & Mary Aramaki	50	Tina & Edward Munson	100
David & Holly Black	25	Setsuko Nagata	50
Andrew & Courtney Boyer	10	Ray Nishikawa	25
Aki & Neil Chow	20	Kenneth Nodzu	25
Karen Cone-Uemura	25	Linda Oda	25
Carl & Yuriko Dennison	50	Alice Ogura	50
Richard & Lynne Doi	100	Kiyoko Olsen	20
Takeko Doi	100	Grace Oshita	100
Stan & Elaine Endo	100	Dot Richeda	50
Thomas Endo	100	Kiyomi Jo Ryujin	25
Jim & Faye Eng	100	Jane Sakashita	50
Mits & Terry Fujinami	100	Charlie Sasaki	20
Brian Fukushima & Tammy Park	200	Donna Sato	40
Maxine Furubayashi	50	Walter & Karen Sato	25
Tom & Kim Hattori	20	Bob & Setsuko Schock	25
Masami Hayashi	100	Lynn & Marilyn Shimada	50
Sherrie Hayashi	25	Jamie Doi Slade	25
Dean Hirabayashi	25	Jun Sudoko	50
Max & Kathleen Hirabayashi	30	Nobue "Nancy" Sudoko	25
Rev. Jerry & Carmela Hirano	100	Dru & Joni Sueoka	25
Troy & Ashley Holbrook	100	William & Pamela Sugihara	20
Tom & Marion Hori	25	Bob Sugino	25
Paul & Sandy Iwasaki	30	Nancy Takagi	25
Christie Jenn	30	Christopher & Shelley Taketa	50
Joseph & Rose Kamaya	100	Nanae Taketa	50
Bob Kasubuchi	30	Kazuko Terasawa	35
Brent & Sherrie Koga	40	Chiyoko Terashima	25
Jeanne Konishi	100	Paul & Kathy Terashima	50
Henry & Tammie Kuramoto	35	Cindy Yamada Thomas	100
Steven & Rae Louie	50	Sachiko Tohinaka	25
Richard Matsuda	35	Robert & Tami Tokita	100
Kenneth & Renee Matsuura	50	Yoshiko Uno	20
Hisako Minaga	20	Byron & Reiko Watanabe	100
Mark & Gail Minaga	25	Troy & Judy Watanabe	30
Helen Mitsunaga	50	Kazuko Yakumo	50
Reiko Mitsunaga	25	cash	20
Tomio & Junko Mitsunaga	100	cash, Hanamatsuri flowers	106

Nihon Matsuri Donations

Cash	15	Marcus & Karie Minaga-Miya	50
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Shotsuki Hoyo

Marcus & Karie Minaga-Miya	100
Nobuo Aoki	50

In Memory Of:

Nokotsudo & Shotsuki Hoyo

Craige Mayeda	50	Ben Mayeda
Karen Cone-Uemura	25	Ethan
Tina & Edward Munson	100	Eva Aoki
Stephanie Sueoka	25	Fujie Kunimoto
Hiroshi & Mary Aramaki	25	George Sakashita
Tom & Fran Akimoto	50	Kiyoshi Akiyama, Chotaro Matsuura
Chiyoko Terashima	25	Kiyoyuki Terashima
Paul & Kathy Terashima	50	Kiyoyuki Terashima
Hisako Minaga	100	Kozo Minaga
Mark & Gail Minaga	40	Kozo Minaga
Marcus & Karie Minaga-Miya	50	Kozo Minaga
anonymous	150	Michiye Endo
anonymous	150	Nobuzo Endo
Richard & Lynne Doi	25	Rae S. Fujimoto
Nancy Takagi	25	S. Hachisuka
Lynn & Marilyn Shimada	25	Shige Shimada
Nanae Taketa	25	Shinobu Taketa
Andrew & Courtney Boyer	20	Shizue Adachi
Stephanie Hattori	20	Shizue Adachi
Tom & Kim Hattori	25	Shizue Adachi
William & Pamela Sugihara	20	Shizue Adachi
Tom & Junko Mitsunaga	30	Shizuko Mitsunaga
Robert & Tami Tokita	25	Shizuko Mitsunaga
Lynn & Marilyn Shimada	25	Tai Oishi
 BWA		
Dot Richeda	50	In memory of Fred Richeda
 Dharma School		
Asako Mori	25	Goodie Bag
Jun & May Sudoko	30	Goodie Bag
Jamie Doi Slade	25	Bowling Party
Dot Richeda	50	In memory of Fred Richeda
 Temple General		
Don Marion	233	
Tracy Sudoko	500	
Gary Hamamoto & Liz Muramoto families	1000	Aiko Okada funeral
cash	52.50	Fred Richeda service
Nikkei Senior Center	60	rental
Joe & Mariko Kuwahara	100	In memory of Buntaro & Shizuko Mitsunaga, Hiroshi, Kiyoshi & Masami Mitsunaga

2016 PAID SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIPS

These members contributed \$1200 per member in this premier membership category.

Richard Doi
Lynne Doi
Brian Fukushima
Tammy Park
Carmela Javellana Hirano
Buster Mayeda
Craig Mayeda
Reiko Mitsunaga

Marcus Miya
Karie Minaga-Miya
Kenneth Nodzu
Dave Sekino
Paul Terashima
Kathy Terashima
Roberto Toro
Yoshiko Uno

2016 PAID MEMBERSHIPS

All 2016 paid memberships, through April 25, 2016. Younger kids not listed.

Tom & Fran Akimoto
May Akiyama
Nob Aoki
Hiroshi & Mary Aramaki
David & Holly, Delaney Black
Andres Calderon
Geraldine Cookie Chappell
Aki & Neil Chow
Carl & Yuriko Dennison
Ruby Doi
Takeko Doi
Rachael Elliot
Stan & Elaine Endo
Jim, Faye, Marisa Eng
Jeri Freedman
Aaron Froemming
Mits & Terry Fujinami
Elaine Fukushima
Maxine Furubayashi
Richard Gamonal
Hayo & Jeannette Hayakawa
Masami Hayashi
Sherrie Hayashi
Dean Hirabayashi
Troy & Ashley Holbrook
Bobbie Ikegami
Lisa, Trey, Mitchell Imamura
Chizuko Ishimatsu
Tomiye Ishimatsu
Tak Iwamoto
Sandy Iwasaki
Bob Kasubuchi
Sadie Kato
Yoshiko Kido
Keizo, Evangeline, Jacqueline Kobayashi
Brent & Sherrie Koga

Tina, Emma, Henry Munson
Jorgen Olsen
David & Julia Nagata
Setsuko Nagata
Torao & Merry Nakagawa
Takae Nakamura
Yosh Nakayama
Ray Nishikawa
Alice Ogura
Lee Oikle
Gary & Ryoko Okamoto
Chris Oki
Jorgen Olsen
Linda Omori
Grace Oshita
Dot Richeda
Kiyomi Jo Ryujin
Jane Sakashita
Phillip & Connie Sakashita
Charlie Sasaki
Tom Sasaki
Donna Sato
Walter & Karen Sato
Bob & Setsuko Schock
Steven & Vanessa Shiba
Lynn, Marilyn, Corey Shimada
Jamie Doi Slade
Chad & Kim Smith
Rick & Susan Spehar
Jun Sudoku
Nobue "Nancy" Sudoku
Dru & Joni Sueoka
Stephanie Sueoka
Bob Sugino
Nancy Takagi
Gary & Kathleen Takenaka

Kelvin Kojimoto
Jeanne Konishi
Henry & Tammie Kuramoto
Pam Lancaster
Richard Matsuda
Kenneth & Renee Matsuura
Shauna Mayeda
Gina Mejia
Hisako Minaga
Mark & Gail Minaga
Helen Mitsunaga
Tomio & Junko Mitsunaga
Bill & Shigeko Mizuno
Asako Mori
Haruko Moriyasu
Mikio Moriyasu

Christopher & Shelley Taketa
Nanae Taketa
Chiyoko Terashima
Kirk Terashima
Paul & Kathy Terashima
Cindy Yamada Thomas
Sachiko Tohinaka
Robert & Tami Tokita
Ivan Van Laningham
Byron & Reiko Watanabe
Troy & Judy Watanabe
Dallas Weaver
Robert Weitzel & Georgia Geerlings
Arthur Yakumo
Kazuko Yakumo

Gotan E Seminar
What the Buddha Taught and the Metta Sutra
Venerable Seelawimala Madawala
May 14, 3:00 pm
West Wing of SL Buddhist Temple
Bhante will also be the guest speaker for our Gotan E service

JUNE BOOK CLUB
“Who Ordered This Truckload of Dung?”
Monday, June 6, 7 p.m.
Salt Lake Buddhist Temple
West Wing, 100 S. 215 W.
“Ajahn Brahm is the Seinfeld of Dharma”
The book may be purchased in Lumbini’s Garden Bookstore

The Salt Lake Buddhist Temple Sangha embraces the LGBTQ Community.

Show support and march with us at the 2016 Utah Pride Parade on Sunday, June 5. Meet at Temple front steps @ 8:30 a.m.