



# Metta

Winter 2021

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## New Year's Greeting

Happy New Year, everyone! At the beginning of this New Year, I would like to extend my best regards to you all.

Throughout the last year, the world suffered from the pandemic of COVID-19, which brought tremendous hardship to many people, and we still are not able to see when normalcy would return to our world. On this occasion, I would like to offer my deepest condolences to those who fell victim to the disease and express my sympathies to those who are currently undergoing treatment.

Meanwhile in the US, the media has widely reported systematic discrimination against African-Americans, social unrest and division among the general public brought on by the presidential election. It concerns me that many people have been left isolated in the midst of hardship.

'Dependent origination' is a universal truth that Buddha Sakyamuni presented. This fundamental Buddhist principle expresses that every thing, matter, and phenomenon arises from various causes and conditions. None of us lives by ourselves. We are living while being interconnected and mutually supported by one another. Considering the reality of a divided society, it is important that everyone deeply reflects on the principle of Dependent Origination that represents the true state of the world.

Even though having been introduced to the truth by Buddha Sakyamuni, ordinary people like us are still not able to accept it as it is. Therefore, to guide us to cope with the suffering caused by our own ignorance, Shinran Shonin clarifies Amida Buddha's compassion that always embraces us all. When the world is facing this unimaginable crisis, it is crucial that each of us experiences Amida Buddha's great compassion ourselves, and live each day to the utmost, having that joy and sensation in our hearts as the basis of our life.

I have been told that in this difficult time and situation, many of your sangha have been adopting new measures for sharing the Jodo Shinshu teaching that had not been previously considered. I find such efforts truly reassuring. It is my hope that your temples will continue serving as your spiritual home, and therefore, I sincerely ask for your understanding and cooperation to allow them to be so. With my heartfelt appreciation for each one of you, I would like to conclude my new year's greeting.

January 1, 2021

OHTANI Kojun  
Monshu  
Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji

## An Explanation of a Traditional Sectional Analysis of the Shōshinge, Part I

The Shōshinge appears at the end of the Chapter on Practice (Gyō Monrui) of the Kyōgyōshinshō, Shinran's masterwork on the Pure Land Way. It basically outlines the important ideas that appears in the whole of the masterwork. As a result, beginning with the efforts of Rennyo Shōnin, it has held an important place in the traditions and rituals of the Hongwanji and is part of the morning service at Honzan, Betsuins and other Hongwanji temples. Furthermore, one will hear it chanted at Hongwanji funerals.

The BSC has been working on a more accessible explanation of the Shōshinge and would like to share some of it with you. The following is a sectional analysis based on a traditional presentation found in the text *Essentials of the Kyōgyōshinshō (Honden Yōgi)* that is published by the Central Buddhist Academy (Chūo Bukkyō Gakuin), a Nishi Hongwanji academy where ministers are trained.

### Sectional Analysis of Shōshinge

In the *Essentials of the Kyōgyōshinshō*, pages 45-49 the Shōshinge is divided into three sections:

#### 1) Homage to Amida Buddha (Shōsan, 正讚)

First Line of Section 1: KI MYŌ MU RYŌ JŪ NYO RAI (Section 1 consists of this line to the next line)  
I take refuge in the Tathagata of Immeasurable Life!

Shinran begins with two phrases that have the same feeling as saying "Namo Amida Butsu," a fitting way of beginning the hymn. Refer to page 69 of the *Collected Works of Shinran*.

#### 2) The Section Based on the Sūtra (Ekyōdan, 依經段)

First Line of Section 2: HO ZO BO SATSU IN NI JI (Section 2 is from line until the line before Section 3)  
Bodhisattva Dharmākara, in his causal stage,

Then Shinran proceeds to cover what he considers the sutra that expresses the core teaching of the Pure Land way, the *Larger Sutra of the Buddha of Immeasurable Life* also known as the Larger Sutra. In this sutra, Shakyamuni Buddha tells of the story of Amida Buddha and the 48 Vows. Refer to pages 69 to page 70 of the *Collected works of Shinran*.

#### 3) The Section Based on the Commentaries of the Seven Patriarchs (Eshakudan, 依釈段)

First line of Section3: IN DO SAI TEN SHI RON GE (Section 3 is from this line until the end)

The masters of India in the west, who explained the teachings in treatises, And finally, in this section, he lays out the philosophical lineage of the Pure Land way, and chronologically follows the development of Mahayana Buddhism and the beginnings of Pure Land thought first in India, and then China. It is in China that Pure Land way becomes clearly expressed within Mahayana Buddhism and then is passed on to Japan. Refer to pages 70 to 74 of the *Collected Works of Shinran*.

Now that you are familiar with the three basic sections of the Shōshinge, a more detailed treatment of the each of the section will be given in the next issue of *Metta*. Suggestions for further reading: *Shōshin Ge*, Ryukoku Translation Series. *The Three Pure Land Sutras, Volume II, The Larger Sutra*.



The current logo from all the documents I have found was designed in 1992 under the direction of Rev. Yoshiaki Fujitani, when he was director of the Buddhist Study Center. The background of the black circle with the white stripes images a scene of the calm ocean and symbolize serene and tranquil state of

mind created by the Buddhist teachings which is represented by the white lotus flower in the center of the logo.

This also symbolizes the BSC, located in Hawaii on the crossroads of the Western cultures and the Oriental cultures, which shares the better understanding of different cultures and contributes towards the peace of human beings and the world.

The white lotus flower symbolizes a stage that is associated with the state of bodhi; that of becoming awakened to the wonders of it all. When one reaches this state it is said that one has mental purity and has reached a state of spiritual perfection.

## Metta

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## Kaneko Daiei's *Hanabira* poem

As we gaze upon the moonlit night,  
our thoughts drift to a friend far away,  
as we become the moonlight  
that calls on them to comfort them.

Like the flowers sent to someone who is ill,  
we become the flowers that work to soothe  
their troubled hearts.

As long as there is the feeling of love to back it up,  
even though we may be in this limited body of form,  
yet is it possible for us to go beyond it,  
to perform such miraculous deeds freely.

Once we become one in taste with  
the ultimately reality of the Eternal,  
what is there that will not turn out just as we had hoped.

As we become all the myriad phenomena there are,  
we manifest the divine powers of the gods.  
And as all the myriad phenomena become us,  
nowhere is the wondrous dharma they preach ever blocked.

Even if the petals (*hanabira*) be scattered,  
the flower is not dispersed.  
Even if one's form be destroyed,  
one never dies.

Eternity dwells in the depths of the present  
as it shines its light to the future.  
And as they dwell constantly  
on the other shore to  
this realm of birth and death,  
they become the light that shines upon  
our shore of life and death.

And yet it is only in saying  
the buddha-name *nenbutsu*  
that we can feel the light of Eternity  
shining upon us.

Translated by W. S. Yokoyama

Kaneko Daiei was born in the year 1881 to the family of the resident ministers of Saikenji, a Shin Buddhist temple in Japan's Niigata Prefecture. He attended the Shinshu University from 1901 and was mentored, along with Soga Ryojin, by one of its founding deans, Kiyozawa Manshi. All three would be important in the forming of a modern Shin Buddhist philosophy. After graduation he served successively as a professor at the Toyo University, the Shinshu Otani University and then at the Hiroshima Bunkyo University. In 1941 he returned to Otani University and in 1951, he became a professor emeritus. Kaneko Daiei passed on to the Pure Land on October 10, 1975.

Kaneko authored many books and essays on Shin Buddhism that has influenced the thought and work of many scholars of Shin Buddhism. For those who would like to read more about his approach in Shin Buddhism, a recent translation by W. S. Yokoyama of his *Shinshu no Yoshi* (A Thinking Person's Guide to Shin Buddhism) was published by the Shinshu Center of America and is available through Amazon Books on kindle format.

## 花びら

### Hanabira

月夜、遠方の友を思ふ。  
Tsukiyo, enpō no tomo wo omou  
われ月光となりて友を音訪へるのである。  
Kore gekkō to narite tomo wo otozueru no de aru.  
華を贈りて病者を見舞ふ。  
Hana wo okurite byōsha wo mimaisu.  
われ花となりて病床を慰問せるのである。  
Ware hana to narite byōshō wo imonseru no de aru.  
情至れば形ある身もなほ  
Shō itareba katachi aru mi mo nao  
この自在の業を為すことができる。  
Kono jizai no go nasu koto ga dekiru.  
まして永遠の真実と一味ともならば、  
Mashite eien no shinjitsu to ichimi to mo naraba,  
何事か思ひのままならぬものがあらう。  
Nanigoto ka omoi no mama naranu mono ga arō.  
われは万象となりて神通を現はし、  
Ware wa banshō to narite jintsū wo arawashi  
万象はわれとなりて妙法を説くに碍りはないのである。  
Banshō wa ware to narite myōhō wo toku ni gairi wa nai no aru.  
花びらは散っても花は散らない。  
Hanabira wa chitte mo hana wa saranai.  
形は滅びても人は死なぬ。  
Katachi wa horobitemo hito wa shinanu.  
永遠は現在の深みにありて未来に輝き、  
Eien wa genzai no fukami ni arite mirai ni kagayaki,  
常住は生死の彼岸にありて生死を照らす光となる。  
Jōjū wa shōji no higan ni arite shōji wo terasu hikari to naru.  
その永遠の光を感ずるものはただ念仏である。  
Sono eien no hikari wo kanzuru mono wa tada nembutsu de aru.

金子大栄

Kaneko Daiei

## Nurtured by Amida Buddha's Light of Wisdom and Compassion Bishop's New Year's Message Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii



Our Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Theme & Slogan for 2021 is “Building Healthy Sanghas: Nurturing Empathy and Respect.” It is a timely slogan especially as we begin a new year. When we take a moment to reflect on the situation of our nation and our society with the Coronavirus Pandemic, racial discrimination and even the climatic changes that are occurring on a global scale, it is not hard to see what our world needs is more respect and empathy.

The Larger Sutra provides wise counsel “*People in the world...should truly respect and love each other, refraining from hatred and envy. They should share things with others, refraining from greed and miserliness. They should always be friendly in speech and expression, refraining from quarrel and dispute.*” Unfortunately, it laments, “*...people in the world...do not believe that performing good deeds brings good results, or that seeking the Way leads them to attaining it.*”

However, all is not lost in that the Great Compassionate Light of Amida Buddha illuminates, nurtures and unconditionally embraces the spiritually foolish being who cannot completely break free from blind passions and attain enlightenment on one's own. In the Larger Sutra it says “*Sentient beings who encounter this light have the three defilements swept away, and they become soft and gentle in body and mind. They leap and dance with joy, and the good mind arises in them. When those suffering pain and travail in the three evil realms see this light, they all find respite and become free of afflictions. After their lives have ended, they will all gain emancipation.*” Thus, I believe, the late Jodo Shinshu Scholar Rev. Jitsuen Kakehashi was able to say, “*When we look at the world with an ordinary mind, it is distinctly divided into things we love and things we hate, but with the mind of the Tathagata, we are made to know that everyone is equally the Tathagata's indispensably important child. From that standpoint, we realize that we are all brothers and sisters and fellow human beings. Then slowly but steadily, we come to reflect on our self-centered thoughts, reject our blind passions and make efforts to see things and live our lives in a way that can be approved by the Tathagata.*” In this way, thanks to the Working of Other Power, we begin to slowly live in a new awareness and are assured the attainment of Enlightenment at the end of this finite life with our birth in the Pure Land.

His Eminence Gomonshu Kojun Ohtani says, “*By listening to the Primal Vow and how it was established by Amida Tathagata, we are enabled to become conscious of our own ignorance and self-oriented inclinations, and through such awareness, we naturally become gentle in word and deed in our efforts of minimizing our egoistic way of thinking.*” “*Even though our efforts may pale in comparison to the Buddha's Compassion, we are at least guided in the proper direction by the Buddha Dharma.*” Let us take to heart his words.

To conclude, I would like to share His Eminence's “Our Pledge.” The original was written in Japanese and his expressed wish was that it be translated by each locale in a way that would resonate with the people of that region. Thus, this is Hawaii's Version (which can also be sung as it has also been put to music by BJ Soriano). In a few short verses, it captures the essence of a healthy Hongwanji Sangha which recites the Nembutsu in awareness, joy and gratitude of Great Wisdom and Compassion, and emphasizes respect and empathy.

### Our Pledge

Reaching out to others,  
I will share a smile and gentle words.  
Just like the Buddha, who always calls out with Aloha.

Breaking away from my greed, anger and ignorance,  
I will try to live in peace and harmony.  
Just like the Buddha, who shares tranquility and kindness with all.

Moving forward from self-centeredness,  
I will share a life of joy and sorrow with others.  
Just like the Buddha, whose caring heart always embraces us.

Realizing that I live because of others,  
I will strive to live life to the fullest with an attitude of gratitude.  
Just like the Buddha, who promises to embrace us all.

Thank you, Happy New Year and Namu Amida Butsu.

In gassho/anjali,  
Eric Matsumoto, Bishop

President's New Year's Message  
Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

Happy New Year! Akemashite Omedetou Gozaimasu! Hauoli Makahiki Hou!

I hope that you and your loved ones are healthy and in good spirits as we enter the New Year. The year 2020 was a year to remember, mostly from the effect that the COVID-19 pandemic had on all of us. We experienced lockdowns, isolation from family and friends, and job loss or insecurity. And most difficult of all, some of us lost family or friends to the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you have kept up with the news, you know that there is a very good chance that 2 or 3 pharmaceutical companies will have vaccines available for the Coronavirus before the end of this year. The good news is that the first two vaccines appear to be very effective in preventing COVID-19 disease. Also, you can be sure that the FDA is looking very carefully at the safety profile for each vaccine. As vaccine availability increases, there is good reason to believe that we may be looking at an optimistic scenario of returning to a more "normal" lifestyle by the summer or fall of next 2021. Let's hope that the vaccines continue to show effectiveness with a good safety profile and that enough people will step up and get vaccinated!



Through the difficult times caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, our collective Sangha responded by sewing masks for others, helping with daily chores such as shopping or cleaning, sharing meals, delivering produce, and by calling or messaging others. Ministers shared the Dharma through YouTube, Facebook and other electronic media. Small in-person services were held as permitted by law in spite of the risk to our ministers' health.

Our actions through this pandemic confirms that our Sangha is vibrant, caring and compassionate. Although we were separated physically, we connected with others through individual and collective acts of kindness.

As we look forward to the New Year of 2021, let us reflect upon what we are grateful for-life, family, friends and a supportive community. Let us wake up each morning grateful for Amida Buddha's Compassion, which surrounds each one of us.

*"Happiness does not depend on what you have or who you are;  
it solely relies on what you think." - Buddha*

With Gassho,

Warren Tamamoto MD  
President, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

**ENTRUST ENTRUST ENTRUST**

Namu Amida Butsu  
Entrust in Amida Buddha

Namu Amida Butsu  
Fear not, just entrust

Namu Amida Butsu  
You'll be embraced, never abandoned

Namu Amida Butsu  
Your Savior and Loving Parent

Namu Amida Butsu  
Entrust and never doubt

Namu Amida Butsu  
Buddhahood will surely be yours

Namu Amida Butsu  
To the Pure Land you will go

Namu Amida Butsu  
Amida Buddha's Primal Vow fulfilled

Namu Amida Butsu  
This your final life of suffering

Namu Amida Butsu  
Entrust, Entrust, Entrust!

NAMU AMIDA BUTSU  
Thank You, Amida Buddha

Gassho,  
Richard St. Clair (Shaku Egen)

**What Kind of Fool I Am: A Gatha of Faith**

What kind of fool I am,  
Sunken in the pit of karmic evil,  
Scorched by my burning passions  
And a victim of my foolish self-will.

Yet somehow Amida Buddha  
Knew all this and much more,  
Gaining salvation and Buddhahood  
Carrying all to the opposite shore.

Amida Buddha's Great Compassion  
Reaches out to the suffering throng  
Through His Primal Vow he assures  
Buddhahood despite all their wrong.

Amida is greatest of all Buddhas,  
Only He made Buddhahood possible  
For us entrenched in evil karma and  
Otherwise lost forever in hell.

The Nembutsu, Amida's Great Name  
Is salvation for the evil ones first  
And then the good persons too--  
No longer by our evil natures cursed.

Buddhahood in the Pure Land  
Is the reward to all who entrust  
In Amida's great Primal Vow  
When their bodies are turned to dust.

Namu Amida Butsu  
I thank Amida Buddha, my Savior  
Let us all learn to trust His Compassion  
And pass through that Golden Door!

Gassho,  
Richard St. Clair (Shaku Egen)

## MAHALO FOR YOUR DONATIONS TO THE BUDDHIST STUDY CENTER

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May Imamura-Uruu      Aiea

### In Memory of Dr. Fujio Matsuda

May Imamura-Uruu      Aiea

### In Memory of Roseline Tsuyuko Yano

Sharon Tanaka              Honolulu

We gratefully welcome memorial donations and donations in all forms. We are now on Paypal! There is a link on our website. Please make all checks payable to the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. Thank You.

The Buddha said to Ānanda, “The majestic radiance of the Buddha of Immeasurable Life is exalted and supreme, the radiance of other Buddha cannot compare with it. Some Buddhas’ light shines upon a hundred Buddha-lands, and other Buddhas’ light shines upon a thousand Buddha-lands. Briefly stated, the light of the Buddha of Immeasurable Life illuminates all the Buddha-lands in the eastern quarter, which are as many as the sands of the Ganges. In like manner, it reaches those in the southern, western, northern, and four immediate quarters, as well as above and below.

...

“For this reason, the Buddha of Immeasurable Life is called Buddha of Immeasurable Light, Buddha of Boundless Light, Buddha of Unhindered Light, Buddha of Incomparable Light, Buddha of Light that is Lord of Blazing Light, Buddha of the Light of Purity, Buddha of

the Light of Joy, Buddha of the Light of Wisdom, Buddha of Uninterrupted Light, Buddha of Inconceivable Light, Buddha of inexpressible Light, and Buddha of Light Surpassing the Sun and Moon.

“Sentient beings who encounter this light have the three defilements swept away, and they become soft and gentle in body and mind. The leap and dance with joy, and the good mind arises in them. When those suffering pain and travail in the three evil realms see this light, they all find respite and become free of afflictions, after their lives have ended, they will all gain emancipation.”

**From: the Larger Sutra also known as *The Sutra on the Buddha of Immeasurable Life*.**

This translation is from *The Three Pure Land Sūtras, Volume II, The Sutra on the Buddha of Immeasurable Life*, The Shin Buddhism Translation Series. pp. 36-37.

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## **Classes that have Restarted**

We are happy to announce the resumption of classes:

**ZEN MEDITATION: TUESDAYS 6:30PM**

**YOGA is planning on restarting**

**PLEASE OBSERVE SANITATRY PRECAUTIONS  
AND PROPER SOCIAL DISTANCING AS GUID-  
ED BY YOUR INSTRUCTORS.**

**FACE MASKS/COVERINGS ARE REQUIRED**

**Director**            Rev. Kevin Kuniyuki

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