

I. Review of Workshop 1: The Past

II. Review of Workshop 2: The Present

III. Introduction to Workshop 3: The Future

A. What can we as Jodo Shinshu Buddhists do to help create a peaceful world in the future?

- 1. Past Judged**
- 2. Present Judging**
- 3. Future ?**

B. Rev. Suwa Message

http://vhbt.org/dharma_school/Anniversary/ryoga.htm

C. Need for a New Perspective (A Jodo Shinshu Perspective)

- 1. Past Bad**
- 2. Present Good**
- 3. Future What is Good? What is Bad?**
 - a) Article 10**
 - b) Tannisho, Chapter 13**
 - c) Go-Shosoku Shu**

Source Materials

From the 17 Article Constitution by Shotoku Taishi

Article 10:

Severing anger from one's heart, and discarding indignation, one should not become angered over the differences of people. Everyone has a heart; a heart becomes attached to different things. If he is thus (i.e., right), then I am not (i.e., wrong); if I am thus, then he is not. I am not always the sage, he is not always the idiot: together we are just bonbu (foolish beings). The truth of thus or not, who is to correctly determine this? That together we are both wise and foolish, is like the earring that has no end. Therefore, even if the other person is to be enraged, one should instead be fearful of one's errors. Even if you think that you alone have gained (the answer), one should follow the assemblage and do things together.

From the Tannisho written by Yuiinbo (translation from Collected Works of Shinran, Vol. 1, Pp. 670-671)

Chapter 13

On the assertion: People who are unafraid of committing evil because of the inconceivable working of the Primal Vow are in fact impudently presuming upon the Vow and therefore will not attain birth.

This is a statement of one who doubts the Primal Vow and fails to understand the influence of good and evil karma of past lives.

Good thought arise in us through the prompting of good karma from the past, and evil comes to be thought and performed through the working of evil karma. The late Master said, "Knowing that every evil act done- even as slight as a particle on the tip of a strand of rabbit's fur or sheep's wool- has its cause in past karma."

Further, the Master once asked, "Yuien-bo, do you accept all that I say?"

"Yes I do," I answered.

"Then will you not deviate from whatever I tell you?" he repeated.

I humbly affirmed this. Thereupon he said, "Now, I want you to kill a thousand people. If you do, you will definitely attain birth."

I responded, "Though you instruct me thus, I'm afraid it is not in my power to kill even one person."

"Then why did you say that you would follow whatever I told you?"

He continued, "By this you should realize that if we could always act as we wished, then when I told you to kill a thousand people in order to attain birth, you should have immediately done so. But since you lack the karmic cause inducing you to kill even a single person, you do not kill. It is not that you do not kill because your heart is good. In the same way, a person may not wish to harm anyone and yet end up killing a hundred or a thousand people."

Thus he spoke of how we believe that if our hearts are good, then it is good for birth, and if our hearts are evil, it is bad for birth, failing to realize that it is by the inconceivable working of the Vow that we are saved.

Buddhism and War, Workshop 3

Outline

There was, in those days, a person who had fallen into wrong views. He asserted that since the Vow was made to serve the person who had committed evil, one should purposely do evil as an act for attaining birth. As rumors of misdeeds gradually spread, Shinran wrote in a letter, "Do not take a liking to poison just because there is an antidote." This was in order to put an end to that wrong understanding. It by no means implies that evil can obstruct one's attainment of birth.

He also said, "If it were only by observing precepts and upholding rules that we should entrust ourselves to the Primal Vow, how could we ever gain freedom from birth-and-death?" Even such wretched beings as ourselves, on encountering the Primal Vow, come indeed to "presume" upon it. But even so, how could we commit evil acts without any karmic cause in ourselves?

The Master further stated:

For those who make their living drawing nets or fishing in the seas and rivers, and those who sustain their lives hunting beasts or taking fowl in the fields and mountains, and those who pass their lives conducting trade or cultivating fields and paddies, it is all the same. If the karmic cause so prompts us, we will commit any kind of act.

These days, however, one finds people making a show of themselves as "seekers for the afterlife," posting notices at nembutsu practice halls saying that those who have committed such and such acts may not enter, as though only good persons should say the nembutsu. Are not people who do this indeed "outwardly expressing signs of wisdom, goodness, or diligence, while inwardly embracing falsity"?

Even the evil we commit while "presuming" upon the Vow occurs through the prompting of past karma. Thus, Other Power lies in entrusting ourselves wholly to the Primal Vow while leaving both good and evil to karmic recompense. The Essentials of Faith Alone states:

Do you know the power Amida possesses, when you say that because you are a being of karmic evil you cannot be saved?

Since you have a heart that presumes upon the Primal Vow, the mind of entrusting yourself to Other Power becomes all the more firmly settled.

If you entrusted yourself to the Primal Vow only after completely ridding yourself of karmic evil and blind passions, then there would be no presuming upon the Vow. But to rid yourself of blind passions is to become a Buddha, and for one who is already a Buddha, the Vow that arose from the five kalpas of profound thought would be to no purpose.

People who admonish others against presuming upon the Primal Vow themselves appear to be possessed of blind passions and defilements. Does not this condition itself imply presuming upon the Vow? What kind of evil is meant by "presuming upon the Vow" and what kind is not? Rather, is not this entire line of argument the product of immature thinking?

Buddhism and War, Workshop 3

Outline

From “Go-Shosoku Shu,” A Collection of Letters (translation from Collected Works of Shinran, p. 560)

Letter 2

Nevertheless, since the prohibition of the nembutsu [in the past] led to the arising of disturbances in society, on this occasion I hope that everyone will, deeply entrusting themselves to the nembutsu and firmly embracing prayers [for peace in the world] in their hearts, together say the nembutsu....it would be splendid if all people who say the nembutsu, not just yourself, do so not with thoughts of themselves, but for the sake of the imperial court and for the sake of the people of the country. Those who feel uncertain of birth should say the nembutsu aspiring first for their own birth. Those who feel that their own birth is completely settled should, mindful of the Buddha's benevolence, hold the nembutsu in their hearts and say it to respond in gratitude to that benevolence, with the wish, **"May there be peace in the world, and may the Buddha's teaching spread!"** Please consider this carefully.

The term that is translated into English as "peace" is not the term "heiwa" but "annon." Heiwa is a term that has the image of everything being "level," and "harmonious." I believe it has the nuance of being "fair." This harmony, however, can be broken at any time. Because of this "peace (heiwa)" can also be defined as the state of not being at odds or at war. Annon, on the other hand, has the image of being at ease (assured) and tranquil. There is no sense of a tension that is kept in balance in this term. It is the state where, because one is at peace (with themselves), that even the possibility of violence ceases to exist. How does one reach this state? Shinran Shonin says it is through the Dharma. It is the Nembutsu.