

8/28/04

After reflecting upon the lecture of Rinban Fuji regarding the Pure Land and the compassion of Amida Buddha, Ed Parker

Since I was a child, I have questioned and I have questioned nothing more than this dream of existence, this delusion called self. Truth grows by each questioned layer stripped away. Like truth, I have only this passing moment of examination: "What am I?" What self lays beneath the fantasies, pretensions, and delusions of self? I question, but doubt all answers, having found answers temporal and relative. Answers have pretensions of permanence, but must perish for they exist only in the strength of conviction of those who cling to them. What are answers, but reflections of the deluded questioner?

Both my successes and my failures have taught me that I am only a limited being filled with blind passions. I examine my successes with a dubious eye and turn a skeptical ear to praise. I make mistakes, do foolish things, I see, but none to clearly, knowing full well that I swim in a sea of delusions. Guilt and remorse are simply part of my deluded sense of self, as is pride, arrogance and greed. How can I be more than I am? We fill ourselves with delusions of who we wish, or fear, we are, and are blinded to our own reality. I am no different. How can I know who I am? I am only a human being, limited and foolish. Still, I do my best, knowing that success and failure are no more than stories, not to be relied upon. Sometimes I wonder, were my delusions to vanish, would I be awake or gone as well?

We are finite creatures with finite intelligence, finite wisdom, incapable of perfection. Perfection is an absolute and absolutes cannot exist, existentially. But the Pure Land, the Pure Land is beyond our limitations. The Pure Land pulls us to that state of purity just beyond our conception, beyond our dreaming wonder and fantasy. It calls, just as Amida calls and in calling creates the possibility of our deepest dreams' attainment. Yet, Amida accepts us as we are, as we must accept ourselves. This is the compassion of Amida Buddha. Amida alone is infinite. Each of us must do our best and having done that, rely upon Amida's wisdom and compassion. Namu Amida Butsu