

Amida Buddha's Eyes
By Reverend Kazunori Takahashi

A few months ago, I had a slight problem when I was in Honolulu for some occasion. I always wear contact lenses, because my eyesight is not good. However, when I had a dinner at some restaurant on that day, I started suffering from eye irritation because of dry eye. I used an eyedrop, but the problem was not solved. I had my eyeglasses, but I didn't carry it at that time. Therefore, I just gave up wearing the contact lenses. Then I spent an evening without them for a while. However, it was really inconvenient, because I couldn't see my surrounding, such as other people's face, street signs, etc. I went back to the hotel somehow, then I wore my glasses at last. I really felt relieved at that time because I could see around.

After this incident, I remembered some teaching of Buddhism. Just like we have different eyesight, we see things differently. We encounter various events in our daily lives. If everything works out as we wish, it would be nice. However, lots of things don't go as we might have hoped. If we regard them as bad incidents, we would suffer from such things or complain about them. Buddhism teaches us that we tend to have such feelings, because of our self-centered viewpoint or *Gashu*. It is said that we often have a hard time to see things correctly. Once I heard an interesting thing that this viewpoint brings the following troublesome symptoms. If people have a self-centered viewpoint;

1. They think, "I am right. Others are wrong."
2. They hardly notice their own faults, but they see other's faults clearly.
3. They think that favorable people are good people, and unfavorable people are bad people.
4. They forget what they borrow, but they never forget what they lend.
5. They totally agree the above facts, but they hardly reflect on themselves.

Don't you think these symptoms are troublesome? This kind of viewpoint often causes us to suffer. However, fortunately, we have learned how to treat such self-centered viewpoint. We would live our lives relying on not our self-centered viewpoint but Amida Buddha's viewpoint.

Shinran Shonin said: **When the waters -the minds, good and evil, of foolish beings- have entered the vast ocean of Amida's Vow of wisdom, they are immediately transformed into the mind of great compassion.**

(Hymns of the Dharma-Ages: *Collected Works of Shinran*, p.408)

He illustrated that we tend to judge between good and bad, because of our self-centered mind. However, Amida Buddha has different viewpoint from ours. Just as various waters

enter the ocean and immediately become seawater, so our self-centered minds would be transformed into the mind of great compassion by Amida Buddha's working.

When we have unfavorable events, we would complain about such things because of our self-centered mind. If we cannot see a surrounding clearly, we would be able to wear glasses to see things correctly. If you are bothered by your self-centered mind, let us wear the glasses of Namo Amida Butsu together and live everyday with deep joy and gratitude. Namo Amida Butsu.