

Greed, Anger, Fear

Sept 2018

I am a little behind the times with this subject but I hope you got to read Bishop Matsumoto's piece of the separation of immigrant children from their parents. I hope you took some time to reflect on it and see how you would feel if it happened to your family. "Oh, but Shaku, such a thing could not happen to us nowadays," you might say. Is that so?

Bishop Matsumoto and the President of the BCA both cited the relocation of their ancestors at the onset of our involvement in the Second World War. The relocation was a product of fear, after you get through all the propaganda, fear usually lies underneath anger and anger is one of the Three Poisons of Greed, Anger and Ignorance.

If we look at any conflict or negative situation, whether it be between Brother and Sister, husband and wife, county and county, state and state, country and country, somewhere you will find one or all of the Three Poisons at work to some degree or other. The Buddha knew this, as did Shinran and Rennyō and all the 7 Patriarchs'. Just because those who lived in the old days spoke of it does not mean that the Poisons no longer exist. They are alive and well and living inside us just waiting for the opportunity to take over. If you reflect on this you will see them.

Once you see and accept them, then you mostly have a choice as to whether you yield to them or not yield to them. In the heat of emotion though it is really easy to give in to them. Our mindfulness in this regard, is essential. That is why, on every statue, in every picture of the Buddha, you will see his eyes are half closed allowing him to see outward and to see inward. This is a reminder to us.

"Shaku, my mommy told me that I was a good little boy or girl all the time, ask her." Yeah, so did mine, and it might have been somewhat true back in kid times, we are no longer children.

If we reflect on our lives and times honestly we will see those times when the Poisons took over, and while we can be, and should be remorseful about those occurrences', we cannot see all the causes and conditions that brought that occurrence into being so we cannot really judge ourselves.

To come back to the present day though, we do not really think such a thing as the relocation camps could happen again. I want you to think back to the time when the restrictions on immigration were made for people of certain nationalities and the back lash on the folks from those restricted countries who have been living in this country for years, seeking what every immigrant to this country has sought, a better life.

Do you really think that there was no one in the government or outside the government who was thinking, "Those people should be put in camps."

Greed, Anger(fear) Ignorance.