

***The Buddha's Wish for the World***  
**by Monshu Koshin Ohtani**  
**Foreword by Professor Robert Thurman**  
**In Bookstores: September 2009**

The Pure Land tradition is the most widely practiced form of Buddhism in the world. In Japan, the Pure Land path is epitomized by **Jodo Shinshu** (Shin Buddhism), Japan's largest Buddhist denomination. The head of Jodo Shinshu, **Monshu Koshin Ohtani**, has written a book that will be available in English for the first time. ***The Buddha's Wish for the World*** will be published in September, 2009, by the **American Buddhist Study Center Press**.

*The Buddha's Wish for the World* is dedicated to honor the 750<sup>th</sup> memorial of **Shinran Shonin** (1173 – 1263), the founder of Jodo Shinshu, who established this spiritual path in 13<sup>th</sup> century Japan. The book includes a foreword by world-renowned Buddhist scholar, **Professor Robert Thurman**, the Jey Tsong Khapa Professor of Buddhism at Columbia University and Founder of Tibet House in New York.

Born in Kyoto in 1945, Koshin Ohtani is the twenty-fourth Monshu or head of the Jodo Shinshu tradition. He also serves as chief minister of **Nishi Hongwanji**, the tradition's head temple in Kyoto and one of the largest Buddhist centers in the world. In the United States there are two Jodo Shinshu organizations - **Buddhist Churches of America** with over 60 temples on the mainland and **Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii** with 37 temples. There are also temples in Canada, South America and Europe.

*The Buddha's Wish for the World* is composed of 36 short inspirational chapters, demonstrating how Buddhism is lived in everyday situations. Monshu Ohtani shares his insights on kindness, compassion, mindful attention to others, faith, and self-understanding through personal stories and examples. *The Buddha's Wish for the World* was written for general audiences, not just followers of the Shin tradition. Americans who are familiar with other Buddhist teachings will find many similarities, but also unique differences that come out of the Pure Land vision.

Professor Robert Thurman writes in his introduction to *The Buddha's Wish for the World*: "If the foundation of Monshu Ohtani's vision is this cosmic sense of the omniscient presence of the infinite light and life Buddha, his wisdom reaches out to us by sharing with us his clear perception of freedom and goodness in the most ordinary places of thought and life." Thurman goes on to say that the book includes a "range of observations of life and liberation, from the tiny but utterly significant moments in ordinary life, of the turning of the mind from egotism to altruistic heart's entrustment to the vast and beautiful vision of the immanence of the all-enfolding universal compassion of Amida Buddha."

Monshu Ohtani will be visiting the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii temples in early September to commemorate Shinran Shonin's 750<sup>th</sup> memorial. To coincide with this special visit, *The Buddha's Wish for the World* will be released to temple members as well as the general public.

At the heart of Shin Buddhist teaching lies a vision of true reality alive with wisdom and compassion, working to bring all beings to the highest fulfillment of human life, the attainment of Buddhahood. Shinran taught that this activity manifests itself as Amida Buddha, the Buddha of infinite light and life. Amida Buddha resolved to save all beings by bringing into his Pure Land, the realm of enlightenment, all who say his Name.

The Pure Land school of teaching originated first in India, flowered in China as a distinct tradition, but accomplished its full development in the Shin school teachings in Japan founded by **Shinran Shonin**. Westerners are familiar with the Dalai Lama and various forms of Buddhist meditation, but most are unaware of the Pure Land tradition – which actually is the most popular and accessible form of Buddhism in the world. Repeating the name of Amida Buddha is practiced by Buddhists throughout the world – in China, Taiwan, Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, Japan, Tibet as well as in many western countries.

**D.T. Suzuki**, the world-renowned Buddhist scholar and Zen writer, called Shin Buddhism, “Japan’s major religious contribution to the West.” In fact, towards the end of Suzuki’s life, he even became something of a practitioner of Shin Buddhism himself.

*The Buddha's Wish for the World* committee: Hoshin Seki – Project Director; Rev. Marvin Harada – Editor; Rev. Tatsuo Muneto – Editor at the Buddhist Study Center; Dr. Alfred Bloom – Editorial Advisor; and Dr. Gordon Bermant – General Advisor.

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