

## 17th August 2002 – Remembrance at Three Wheels

A remembrance service was held at the Three Wheels Buddhist Centre in West London on Saturday 17 August. The Reverend Professor Kemmyo Taira Sato, resident priest, officiated at the service. BCS member Philip Daniel gave the following short sermon.

*† Open up your petals, like roses planted near running streams. †*

Once more you have done me the honour of asking me to contribute to this very special gathering. As August 15th draws nearer I wonder what I can say in this company which would speak from heart to heart across our differences of culture, upbringing and the expression of our religious sense. I reach not for the anodyne but for true comfort, hope and elevation of spirit, and, given our sad contemporary world this is no easier than it would have been long, long ago when those of my generation were young solidiers in a foreign land involved in the global conflict of those days. This year few of us can escape the horror of September 11th 2001. I don't know your experiences but I did what I rarely do in the working week. For some reason I had decided to take my lunch break at home, and I switched on the television for the news at noon, and did not leave it for six hours. During that time I moved from sitting in my armchair to kneeling, with my beads, as fellow human beings in front of me plunged to their deaths from those shattered towers until they themselves collapsed into smoking pyres. There seemed little enough hope or comfort in that, nor in much that has happened since, in Afghanistan, or elsewhere, or is by some threatened to come. And yet, and yet, we must not feel in this only despair at the human propensity to destroy. Last year you may recall I found in the prophet Isaiah's words a convergence which all could share. He called on us all to be clean vessels bringing our oblations to the Blessed One. A printer's devil ensured that in the last edition of our BCFG journal the word became 'obligations' and, after a moment of exasperation, I realised that was not such a bad meaning after all.

This year, at the same season, Isaiah, in a passage I should be reading tonight at 6, but is now postponed to Sunday, speaks as he often does, to us all, Jew and Christian and others besides. 'He who has ears to hear, let him hear.' (Mk. IV 9)

For Isaiah says:-

'Have a care for justice, act with integrity, for my salvation will come, and my integrity will be manifest.'

And as usual he omits no human person - 'Strangers who have attached themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love his name, these will I bring to my holy mountain. I will make them joyful in my house of prayer. Their oblations and their sacrifice will be accepted on my altar, for my house will be a house of prayer for all peoples.' (Is. 56)  
Reverend Professor and dear friends, there is probably nothing I can say to you or members of this company that you have not heard before, though each in the language he best understands. I can only seek to underline what the old Jewish prophet said, and which applies to the house of prayer, as much as to anywhere sincere, trusting and loving hearts seek to speak to one another.

'My House Shall Be Called a House of Prayer for All Peoples'. Shalom, and peace be

with you.



The Reverend Professor Kemmyo Taira Sato leads prayers at the service at the Three Wheels Buddhist Centre.



Philip Daniel is seated to one side of the empty chair and Mr. Satoru Yanagi, of the All Burma Veterans Association of Japan, with Mrs Yanagi, are seated on the other side. The Reverend Professor Kemmyo Taira Sato, reads before the altar, from the sutras.

18th August 2002 - Reconciliation