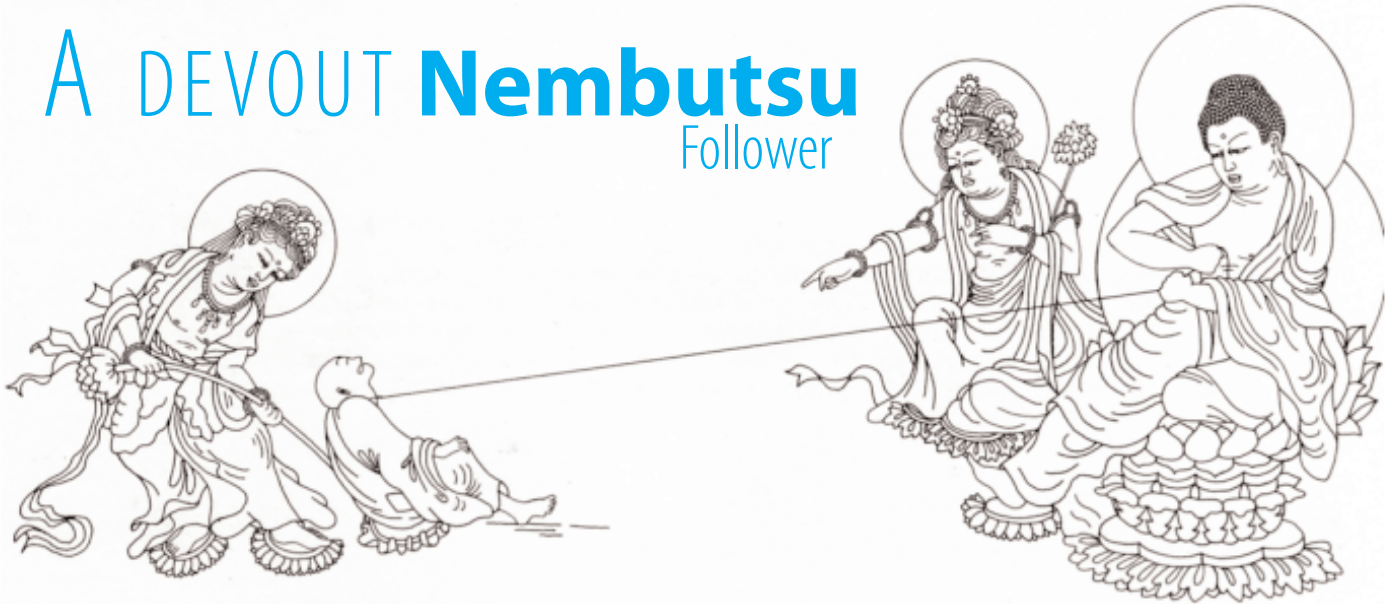


A DEVOUT Nembutsu Follower



This is a line drawing copy by Rahul Sariputra of a Kamakura painting. The painter is unknown. It shows a Buddhist follower lassoed by Amida Buddha, who is trying to pull the devotee to him. To the right of Amida Buddha is the Bodhisattva of Wisdom, Seishi, calling to the devotee to not resist. Behind the devotee is the Bodhisattva of Compassion, Kannon, who uses a lotus stalk to attempt to move the devotee towards the Buddha. What does all this mean?

For all the devotees intellectual and emotional devotion to the Truthreality called Amida, he is in actuality, resisting it with all his might. His love of self-power will not allow him to give in, except on his own terms. No matter how much Wisdom tries to transform his intellect, and no matter how much Compassion tries to transform his emotions, he forever resists giving in to the other power of Truthreality. Amida is the infinite, indescribable, inexplicable, inconceivable reality – taking human form and attributes - and forever struggling to make itself known to the forever retreating self.

And in spite of all the good and evil, miserliness and generosity, mean spiritedness and goodwill, love and hate created by us in the world of Samsara, there

remains an inner urge to experience on a different level, the true, the good, and the beautiful. There is a deep and inner urge to experience the light of Nirvana. On its deepest and almost unconscious level, every living thing moves towards the light. In Jodoshinshu, Amida, whose name is Infinite Light, moves towards all living things, making Nirvana known in Samsara, showing us Wisdom where there was only intellect, showing us Compassion where there was only clutching emotions. And even then, we prefer to return to our house afire over this illumination. This paradox is called Namoamidabutsu, and in Namoamidabutsu life is not a struggle at all, and yet, and yet.

Namoamidabutsu,

Rev. Mas