



Ringling The Joya Bell

BY REVEREND GENGO AKIBA

The 108 tolls of the bell represent the 108 *bonno* created in the past year by human beings in the process of living of which they are both aware of unaware. All human beings create *bonno* in the process of living. The meaning of the 108 *bonno* can be simplified by this statement: "All living creatures are born with genes of self-reproduction and of self-centeredness." This is a statement by a respected microbiologist, but this belief also coincides with Buddhist teachings. Activities related to simply living and maintaining life creates *bonno* and *mumyo*. The meaning of *mumyo* can be translated as *mu*, meaning nothing, and *myo* as light; in other words, "no light," or ignorance. But all wise people are living human beings and each is a holder of *bonno*. A translation of *bonno* can be broken into three categories: greed, anger, ignorance. Greed branches out to many branches and sub-branches, as do anger and ignorance. In living a normal and regular life, all of us are constantly burning the flame of this *bonno*.

However, human beings who completely understand themselves use the energy of *bonno* to change it to

creativity. In the West, this activity is commonly translated as intelligence, reasoning, and understanding. Buddhism simply speaks of *bussho*, or buddha nature and wisdom. All followers of Buddhism offer prayers before Shakyamuni Buddha. "The hope and promise to eliminate dangerous *bonno*." They then try to practice and devote their life to this promise. The deep and sonorous sound of the temple bell awakens people to the meaning of *bussho* and wisdom, traits that already are within us. Temple bells reactivate these uplifting qualities.

When you are ringing the bell, please give your thoughts or prayers for purifying the world and awakening the good Buddhist nature and wisdom in all. Ring with the wish that the sound you make and the power of this temple bell will help eliminate darkness from the world and bring peace to the world in 2022.

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