

Forgive and Go On Together

By Sachi Hannah

I am just a girl who wants something better for our world. I knew little about the power of forgiveness, until I heard these stories. They may be of the past, but they will teach us for the future. They can guide us along with other stories of forgiveness and peace. They can teach us what to do in the future.

Over Thanksgiving I heard my grandmother's story. She had immigrated from Japan to escape the lingering devastation from the Second World War. Her homes in Tokyo and Wakayama had been bombed nightly by America. Yet she forgave America. And that night I learned how powerful forgiveness is. It belongs to the future, but to find it, you must look back.

When I heard her story I immediately thought of my trip to Hiroshima and meeting a very kind Hibakusha, a person who had survived an atomic bomb. A person who had suffered at the hands of America. Yet he was not resentful, he even made us gifts. He told us his story. He was five years old when it happened. His father had died. He would always have sorrows from that time. His kindness taught me to let go of my grudges and give people a second chance.

I went to a graveyard in Japan so my grandmother could see my great grandfather's grave. It was a place of sorrow, but it was also a place of hope. People brought flowers to rest on the graves, to give a gift to the resting souls. The flowers gave the graveyard a whole new tone. It felt like a place where there was sorrow, but a place to start over, a place to forgive. I could feel that it was a place to remember what was done and grieve, but to give second chances. A place to remember.

I have learned from these people and places that to go forwards, we must first look back and apologise and then walk into the future hand in hand. If we are together we may not go fast, but we will go far, stronger than before.

I hope that tomorrow will bring not only kindness, but forgiveness. For when the people of the world forgive, they can be kind. They can bring peace, love, acceptance, and justice to our world. Working together would bring out the best in people. Together we can do anything. We can take on the world. We can be unstoppable.