

NICHIREN DAISHONIN TEACHES: "AFTER ALL, THE ULTIMATE VOW IS TO PROPAGATE THE DAIMOKU THROUGHOUT THE WORLD." - GOSHO P. 1862

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GUIDANCE FROM SIXTY-EIGHTH HIGH PRIEST NICHINYO SHONIN

On the Occasion of the March Kosen-rufu Shodai Ceremony

On this occasion of the March Kosen-rufu Shodai Ceremony, conducted here today at the Head Temple, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to all of you for participating, based on firm faith, while the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is still raging and we are facing obstacles under various circumstances.

As described in the poster from the Commemorative Committee for the 800th Anniversary of the Advent of Our Founder Nichiren Daishonin, now is the very time for us to do shakubuku. Thus, during this year, "The

Year of Advancement with the

Spirit to Repay Our Debt of

Gratitude," each of us must stand up with firm resolution and courage, and exert our utmost efforts to perform shakubuku toward the achievement of kosen-rufu of the entire world. Through these efforts, we will be able to repay our debt of gratitude.

Now, when the novel coronavirus prevails globally, we must once again read in reverence the Daishonin's true intention expounded in his *Rissho ankoku-ron*. Then, each one of us must take to heart the golden words, "One's life is insignificant while the Law is supreme. You should be willing to

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Gosho Quote for April 2022

Letter to Chikugo-bo in the Cave Prison (Tsuchiro-gosho)

Tomorrow, I, Nichiren will depart for the province of Sado. Tonight, as I feel the cold, it pains me to think of how it must be for you in prison. You are an admirable man to have read the Lotus Sutra in its entirety, with both your body and mind. In doing so, you will effectively be able to save your father and mother, the six types of kin, and all mankind. When all others practice the Lotus Sutra, they read it with their mouths but do not believe it in their hearts. And even if they believe it in their hearts, they do not put it into action. You are upholding the sutra with both body and mind. How admirable!

(Gosho, p. 483)

GUIDANCE FROM SIXTY-EIGHTH HIGH PRIEST NICHINYO SHONIN (*CONTINUED*)

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give your life to propagate the true Law,” and resolutely conduct shakubuku, in order to overcome the current difficulties.

The Daishonin teaches the following in the *Rissho ankoku-ron* (On Securing the Peace of the Land through the Propagation of True Buddhism):

When I, with my limited knowledge, read the sutras, I find that all people have gone against the correct Law and become wholly devoted to evil doctrines. This is why all the guardian deities have abandoned this country and sages have left this land, not to return. Seizing this opportunity, devils and demons rush in, bringing disasters and calamities.

This is most fearful. We must speak out! (*Gosho*, p. 234; *The Gosho of Nichiren Daishonin*, Vol. 2, p. 3)

As the Daishonin indicates, the miserable state of the world today is because, “all people have gone against the correct Law and become wholly devoted to evil doctrines.” Furthermore, he teaches the following:

How deplorable it is that the

people go against the Buddha’s admonitions that are based on his true intentions! Indeed, how pitiful it is that they follow the fallacious words of this deceptive and irrational monk [Honen]! If one desires peace to reign throughout the entire nation without delay, he should first and foremost put an end to the slanders that prevail throughout the country. (*Gosho*, p. 247)

In order to overcome the hard-



ships we are facing today, it is essential that we refute slander, the root cause of misfortune, and sow the seed of the mystic Law (*Myoho*) into the lives of as many people as possible, and perform the shakubuku of refuting heresy and revealing the truth.

In the *Gosho, On the Teaching, Capacity, Time, and Country* (Kyokijikoku-sho), the Daishonin states as follows:

We should assiduously teach the Lotus Sutra to those who commit slander, in order to let them from a poison-drum relationship, following the example of Boddhisattva Never Disparaging. (*Gosho*, p. 270)

As you already know, “a poison-drum relationship” is a metaphor expounded in the Nirvana Sutra. It is said that when a drum smeared with poison is beaten, all those who hear the sound of the drum will die.

In the Buddhist teachings, even if one hears the Law and opposes it, through the relationship of hearing Myoho-Renge-Kyo, this person will eventually sever his or her earthly desires and attain Buddhahood. This is likened to beating a drum smeared with poison.

In other words, by teaching Myoho-Renge-Kyo to those who slander, even if they oppose it, we can make them encounter the true Law, which will become the cause for them to attain enlightenment in the end. This is also called a reverse relationship.

Now in the Latter Day of the Law, even those who have a reverse relationship, to say nothing

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GUIDANCE FROM SIXTY-EIGHTH HIGH PRIEST NICHINYO SHONIN (CONTINUED)

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of those with a positive relationship, will be saved in the future without fail, if they are made to listen to Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo of the Three Great Secret Laws and form a relationship with it.

I assume you are aware of Bodhisattva Never Disparaging (*Fukyo*) who emerged in the Middle Day of the Law, after the death of a Buddha named Awesome Sound King (Ionno). He preached that all living beings inherently possess the Buddha nature, and recited the words of the “Twenty-four-character Lotus Sutra.” He bowed in reverence to everyone he met and never despised them. That is why he was called Bodhisattva Never Disparaging. However, people disrespected and persecuted him with staves, sticks, stones, and tiles. Yet, Bodhisattva Never Disparaging continued his practice of bowing. Those who disdained and mistreated Bodhisattva Never Disparaging fell into hell once, but later, they were saved through their reverse relationship formed by hearing the Lotus Sutra. Explaining the practice of Bodhisattva Never Disparaging, Shakyamuni expounded the role model of the propagation of the true Law after his death and the benefits of a reverse-relationship.

Today, the slanders of erroneous teachings prevail throughout the land so, the world condition is chaotic due to wars, famine, epi-

demic, extreme weather, and so on. At this very time, emulating the spirit of Bodhisattva Never Disparaging, we must sow the seed of Myoho-Renge-Kyo into the lives of as many people as possible and perform shakubuku. This is exactly, “Let’s Do Shakubuku Now!”

The Daishonin teaches the following in the Goshō, *The Doctrine of Ichinen Sanzen* (Ichinen sanzen homon):



The basis of this sutra is to [lead one to enlightenment] solely by one’s listening to the Law. This teaching does not discriminate against evil people, women, people of the two vehicles, and *icchantika*. Thus, the [Expedient Means (*Hoben*; second) chapter of the Lotus Sutra] states that all people attain Buddhahood by carrying out the Buddha way. [The Treasure Tower (*Ken hoto*; eleventh) chapter of the Lotus Sutra] also expounds on the Buddha’s profound wisdom, which bestows benefits equally on all living be-

ings. When, upon hearing it, one believes that good and evil are identical, not two; and right and wrong also are not two, then one can attain enlightenment in one’s present state of mind. This is attaining Buddhahood in one’s present form. One can reach this state and ascend to the state of enlightenment in this very existence. Even those who do not grasp this principle will obtain the Buddha’s boundless wisdom if they chant the Daimoku.

Shakyamuni and the other Buddhas will rejoice. The sutra states, “I am overjoyed, and so are the other Buddhas.” Even if a medicine is compounded with one hundred or one thousand ingredients, one’s illness will not be cured unless one puts it in his mouth. Even if one owns treasures in a store-

house, he will starve unless he opens it. Even if one carries medicine in his pocket, he will die unless he takes it. (*Goshō*, p. 110)

Faith is actual practice and experience.

I sincerely wish that you will take to heart these golden words and furthermore devote yourselves to your practice for oneself and others, so that you will develop the life condition of the attainment of Buddhahood in this lifetime.

**MYOSETSUJI
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