

Myosetsuji News

ISSUE 241

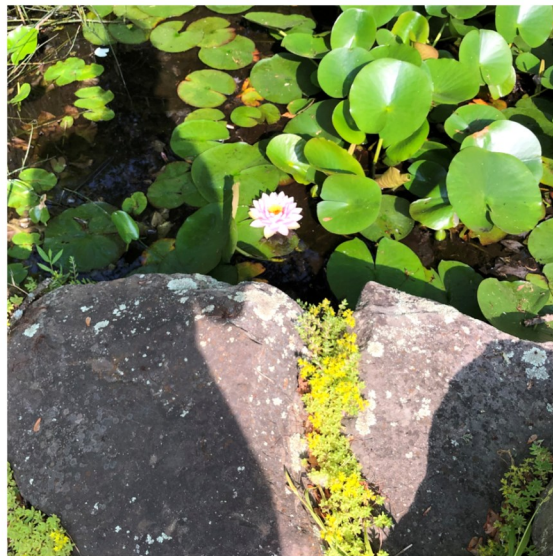
JULY 1, 2021

GUIDANCE FROM SIXTY-EIGHTH HIGH PRIEST NICHINYO SHONIN

On the Occasion of the May Kosen-rufu Shodai Ceremony

On this occasion of the May 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 today, despite your busy schedules.

Today, Japan and the rest of the world are undergoing turbulent conditions due to the novel coronavirus disease. However, at such a difficult time, I believe that



we must unite together, based on the spirit of *itai doshin*. Upholding the principle expounded in the *Rissho ankoku-ron*, we must do shakubuku and advance the propagation of the mystic Law (*Myoho*), in order to achieve world peace and the happiness of the people.

The Daishonin teaches the following in the Gosho, *On Practicing according to the Buddha's Teachings* (Nyosetsu shugyo-sho):

The fifth Five-hundred-year

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Gosho Quote for July 2021

Reply to Myoshin ama

(Myoshin ama gozen-gohenji)

[Your illness must be the work of the Buddha, just as described in the Vimalakirti Sutra (*Jomyo-kyo*) and the Nirvana Sutra.] These sutras describe the reason why those who are ill should be able to attain Buddhahood. Illness can motivate one to pursue the path to supreme enlightenment. Furthermore, among all ailments, the five cardinal sins, the disbelief of the *icchantika*, and the slander of the Law are the serious illnesses that truly pained the Buddha. Without a single exception, the people of Japan today are affected by the most critical disease of all—the serious affliction of grave slander.

(Gosho, p. 900)

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

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Period, which corresponds to the beginning of the Latter Day of the Law, is the time when the pure and perfect teaching of the single truth of the Lotus Sutra is to be propagated throughout the world. This is the age of conflict, when the pure Law will become obscured and lost, and the Lotus Sutra and pre-Lotus Sutra teachings are confused. When there are enemies, you should take up a sword, stave and bows and arrows. When there are no enemies, you do not need such weapons. In the present time of the Latter Day of the Law, the pre-Lotus Sutra teachings are the enemies of the Lotus Sutra. When the teachings of the one vehicle of Buddhahood is spread, all the pre-Lotus Sutra teachings become its enemies. When the Lotus Sutra and pre-Lotus Sutra teachings are confused, you first should refute the pre-Lotus Sutra teachings using

the true Mahayana. Of the two practices of shoju and shakubuku, this is called shakubuku, based on the Lotus Sutra. Tiantai's statement, "The Lotus Sutra is the teaching of shakubuku, the refutation of the provisional doctrines" is, indeed, based on reason.

If you exert yourself now in shoju, by carrying out the four peaceful practices, will it not be the same as sowing seeds in the winter and expecting to harvest in the spring? When a rooster crows at dawn, it is helpful. But if it crows in the evening, it is disquieting. It is nonsense to seclude yourself in the mountains without refuting the enemies of the Lotus Sutra and carry out the practice of shoju at a time when the Lotus Sutra and pre-Lotus Sutra teachings are confused. You only will lose the opportunity to practice the Lotus Sutra. (*Gosho*, pp. 672-673)

I think you have listened to this passage on several occasions. This *Gosho* passage shows precisely how important it is for us do shakubuku in this age of the Latter Day of the Law. In particular, when the whole world is in a state of chaos due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we must, once again, read these golden words. The most important thing for each of us now is to stand up and do shakubuku with determination, and devote ourselves to propagate Myoho-Renge-Kyo, yearning for the realization of



true world peace and the happiness of as many people as possible.

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

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)

The Daishonin teaches that the most essential thing for us, regardless of age or gender, is to stand up and courageously do

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

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shakubuku with a firm resolution, in order to save those who suffer the direst distress from the poison of slander, and to realize the establishment of the peaceful, Buddha land.

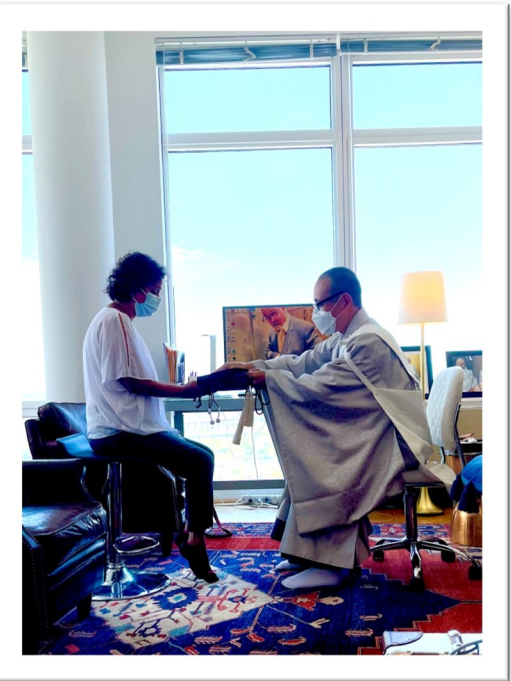
Furthermore, the Goshō, *Attaining Enlightenment at the Initial Stage of Faith through the Lotus Sutra* (Hokke shoshin jobutsusho), states as follows:

If they hear the Lotus Sutra, which enables people to attain Buddhahood, this [encounter] will sow the seed of [Buddhahood] into their lives, and they eventually will attain enlightenment without fail. Therefore, Tiantai and Miaole follow this notion and expound in their commentaries that they should tirelessly teach the Lotus Sutra. It is like those who falter and fall to the ground and who are able to use that very ground to

push themselves up to stand again. In the same way, even if they descend into hell, they will rise again before long and attain Buddhahood. The people in the world today have turned their backs on the Lotus Sutra and, for that offense, they will undoubtedly fall into hell. Therefore, in any case, one should strongly teach and make people listen to the teachings of the Lotus Sutra. Those who follow and take faith in it will be able to attain enlightenment, and even those who slander it will likewise attain Buddhahood in the end through the poison-drum relationship. In any case, the seed of Buddhahood can be found nowhere other than the Lotus Sutra. (*Goshō*, p. 1316)

I think you already have heard about the “poison-drum relationship” stated in this passage. This refers to 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, whether they wish to hear it or not. Even though they are not willing to listen to the mystic Law (*Myōhō*), once they hear the correct Law with their ears, they will be able to form a relationship with it, and then awaken to it and practice it. This will lead them to the attainment of Buddhahood.

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



positive relationship, will be saved in the future without fail, if they form a relationship with the true Law.

Once again, we must take these words to heart, “In any case, one should strongly teach and make people listen to the teachings of the Lotus Sutra. Those who follow and take faith in it will be able to attain enlightenment, and even those who slander it will likewise attain Buddhahood in the end through the poison-drum relationship. In any case, the seed of Buddhahood can be found nowhere other than the Lotus Sutra.”

I sincerely wish that all members of each chapter will unite as one, based on the spirit of *itai doshin*, and do shakubuku, and then overcome today’s distress due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With these efforts, I hope you will make further advancement toward the propagation of the true Law.



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