

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

Myosetsuji News

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GUIDANCE FROM SIXTY-EIGHTH HIGH PRIEST NICHINYO SHONIN

On the Occasion of the September Kosen-rufu Shodai Ceremony

September 6, 2020

The month of September already has begun in "The Year of Achieving our Shakubuku Goal," and we have four months remaining this year. I imagine that all of you are devoting yourselves every spare moment to exert your efforts to do shakubuku, aiming toward the achievement of this year's shakubuku goals, as well



as the realization of the establish-

Hokkeko believers, in commemoration of the 800th anniversary of the advent of our Founder, Nichiren Daishonin, which is approaching next year.

The Daishonin teaches the following in the Gosho, *Questions and Answers be-*

ment of a membership of 800,000

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Gosho Quote for November 2020

Reply to Nichinyo gozen

(Nichinyo gozen-gohenji)

This Gohonzon exists within faith alone, as expressed by the two characters, "belief" and "heart" (*shin-jin*). This is what is meant by "gaining entrance [to enlightenment] through faith alone" [in the Lotus Sutra]. The disciples and followers of Nichiren, without any doubt, wholeheartedly believe in "honestly discarding expedient means" and "not accepting a single verse of the other sutras." Thus, they can enter the Treasure Tower of the Gohonzon. How encouraging, how heartening! By all means, exert your best efforts for the sake of your future lives. It is most important to chant only Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo and attain Buddhahood. This will depend on the strength of your faith. The essence of Buddhism is to have faith.

(Gosho, p. 1388)

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

(Continued from page 1)

tween a Sage and a Foolish Man
(Shogu mondo-sho):

To begin with, in order to bestow benefit upon all people through the propagation of Buddhism, one first must have a thorough understanding of the teaching, capacity, time, country, and sequence of propagation. As for the periods [of propagation], there are the Former, Middle, and Latter Days of the Law. As for the Law, there are both Mahayana and Hinayana teachings. As for the practices, there are shoju and shakubuku. If one carries out shakubuku during the period when shoju should be practiced, this will be inappropriate. On the other hand, if one performs the practice of shoju during the era when shakubuku must be used, this will be an offense. Thus, it is of foremost importance to know first whether the present time is for shoju or shakubuku.

The time to practice shoju is when the Lotus Sutra spreads throughout the nation and there is not a single evil teaching or master. At that time, one should withdraw to the forests and devote

oneself to the practice of observing one's mind and the Law, carrying out the practices such as the five practices, the six practices, and the ten practices.

However, during the time of shakubuku, one should not act in this manner. When erroneous doctrines of various sects become rampant and compete against each other, gaining acclaim by taking the stance that their respective doctrines are superior to others; and when incorrect teachings are viewed as equal to the correct Law, and Mahayana and Hinayana followers fight with each other over what is correct—this is the time, above all else, to refute these slanderers. This is the practice of shakubuku. The Lotus

Sutra and Nirvana Sutra both state that if one is unaware of this principle, and is mistaken about the implementation of shoju and shakubuku, one



will be far removed from receiving the benefit of attaining Buddhahood. Rather, one will fall into hell. This is also clearly stated in the interpretations provided by Tiantai and Miaole. What I mention here is critical in conducting Buddhist practices. (*Gosho*, p. 402)

As the Daishonin reveals in this passage, of the two propagation methods of shoju and shakubuku, in this chaotic era of the Latter Day of the Law, when evil doctrines and erroneous teachings are firmly established, and good and evil equally fight against each other, the method of shakubuku must be the primary practice. He strictly teaches us that if shoju is mistakenly applied, in other words, if one implements the shoju method during the time when the shakubuku method must be used, then one will fall into hell rather than attain Buddhahood.

In the *Gosho*, *On Practicing According to the Buddha's Teachings* (Nyosetsu shugyo-sho), the Daishonin expounds as

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

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follows:

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. Now, in the Latter Day of the Law, who is correctly carrying out the practice of shakubuku exactly as taught in the Lotus Sutra? Whomever you may meet, conduct shakubuku to the people and refute the teachings of the other sects. Proclaim repeatedly with all your might that the Lotus Sutra is the only teaching that will lead the people to Buddhahood, and that the various other teachings obstruct them from attaining enlightenment and are the root cause for leading them to fall into hell. This will certainly provoke the appearance of the three powerful enemies. (*Gosho*, p. 673)

The Daishonin admonishes us that now in the Latter Day of the Law, when shakubuku is the correct method to be applied, if one neither denounces the enemies of

the Lotus Sutra nor carries out shakubuku—even though one knows and sees the slanders of heretical doctrines and teachings—then such a person should be censured with the declaration, “You only will lose the opportunity to practice the Lotus Sutra.”

When I look at the current unstable world due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I strongly feel that the members of each chapter must unite once again in the spirit of *itai doshin*, with a firm resolution and strong faith, and courageously conduct great shakubuku activities, despite any obstacles and devils. Now is the time for us to powerfully move forward. We must dedicate our life to propagate the mystic Law (*Myoho*), as we aim toward the achievement

of our goal—the establishment of a membership of 800,000 Hokkeko believers, in commemoration of the 800th anniversary of the advent of our Founder Nichiren



Daishonin next year.

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

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)

Please bear in mind that unless we eliminate the slanders of heresy, the root cause of misfortune that prevents one from attaining Buddhahood, world peace will not be realized, not to mention the happiness of each individual. I offer my sincere prayers that now is the time for the members of each chapter to unite as one and stand up to do shakubuku.



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