

**Guidance from Sixty-eighth High Priest Nichinyo Shonin  
On the Occasion of the October Kōsen-rufu Shōdai Ceremony  
October 1, 2017  
Reception Hall, Head Temple Taisekiji**

Good morning, everyone!

On this occasion of the October Kōsen-rufu Shōdai Ceremony, conducted here today at the Head Temple, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to the large number of participants in attendance.

As you know, Nichiren Shoshu is powerfully advancing, with unity between the priesthood and laity of each chapter, based on the spirit of *itai dōshin*, aiming toward our goal—to achieve a membership of 800,000 Hokkeko believers by 2021, when we will be commemorating the 800th Anniversary of the Advent of our Founder Nichiren Daishonin. We have three months remaining this year, and this is our crucial point in achieving our goals.

Do and it will be done; don't do and it will not be done. If something is not done, that is because no one did it.

This well-known phrase of Yōzan Uesugi, the feudal lord of the Yonezawa domain, was his instruction to his retainers.

The meaning of this phrase is that you can accomplish anything, if you have a firm determination. It all depends on one's willingness.

Nothing will be accomplished, unless we have strong belief and make persistent efforts in such a manner that we carry through to the end, no matter what happens.

Likewise, it is essential that we move forward in a decisive manner toward the propagation of Myoho-Renge-Kyo with dauntless determination and faith, no matter what obstacle and devil may stand in the way. We must proceed under the banner of absolute conviction in the Dai-Gohonzon, and our great aspiration to save all living beings.

The Daishonin teaches the following in the Gosho, *Questions and Answers between a Sage and a Foolish Man* (Shōgu mondō-shō):

Everyone, from the noble emperor down to lowly commoners, knows that one cannot escape death once being born. Yet not a single person in ten million has seriously considered this as an important matter or has grieved over it. Confronted with life's transience, we are frightened by our lack of knowledge about Buddhism and grieve over being preoccupied with secular affairs. Yet, it appears that those who have preceded us in death are wretched, while we who still remain in this world are thankful for surviving. Yesterday, we were busy with one thing, and today, we are busy with something else. In this world we pointlessly are bound by the five desires. We do not notice that the time passes so quickly—just like the shadow of a white colt passing across a crack in the wall. We are as ignorant about our own fate as sheep being taken to slaughter. Also, we are helplessly confined within a prison of worry about food and clothing, fruitlessly falling into the trap of chasing fame and fortune, only to return to the familiar neighborhood of the three evil paths and endlessly transmigrating the six paths. Among those understanding this state of affairs, who will not grieve, who will not feel sorrow?

(*Gosho*, p. 381)

Many people in the world do not try to seriously examine the issue of birth and death, unless they experience a close encounter with their own death. Though knowing it in their heads, people are too busy to think about this issue, since they are preoccupied with pleasure, reputation, and appearances. Accordingly, they spend their lifetime in vain, transmigrating the six paths.

However, not a single person can escape death. Thus, the most essential thing for us now is to believe in Myoho-Renge-Kyo of sowing the seed of the true cause, the secret Law that can save all living beings, and correctly understand the principle of birth and death. Then, we should establish the world of Buddhahood within our lives, the best state of life with happiness, which can last for all eternity.

It is taught in the Goshō, *Questions and Answers on Embracing the Lotus Sutra* (Jimyō hokke mondō-shō) as follows:

Apart from the land of eternally tranquil light where the Buddha resides, every realm is a place of suffering. If we leave the realm of [the Buddha's] original enlightenment, what joy can we find? I believe that embracing Myōhō-Renge-Kyō, which ensures “peace and security in this lifetime and good circumstances in the next,” is the only honor to pursue in this lifetime and is the guide to maintain enlightenment in the future. Single-mindedly chant Nam- Myōhō-Renge-Kyō and encourage others to do the same. This will remain as your only memory from this present, human life.

(*Goshō*, p. 300)

Revering these golden words, it is vital that we devote ourselves to practice for oneself and others, based on absolute faith in the Dai-Gohonzon. We also must be aware that herein lies the path for the attainment of Buddhahood.

Looking at the chaotic condition of the world today, each of us must be aware that, in light of the principle expounded in the *Risshō ankoku-ron*, the root cause for this extreme confusion is the poison of slander. The most important thing for each of us to do right now is to resolutely conduct shakubuku, precisely following the teachings of refuting heresy and revealing the truth.

In the Goshō, *Attaining Enlightenment at the Initial Stage of Faith through the Lotus Sutra* (Hokke shoshin jōbutsu-shō), the Daishonin teaches:

If they hear the Lotus Sutra, which enables people to attain Buddhahood, this [encounter] becomes the seed [of Buddhahood] for them, and they eventually will attain enlightenment without fail. Therefore, Tiantai and Miaole follow this notion and expound [in their commentaries] that one should tirelessly teach the Lotus Sutra. It is like those who falter and fall to the ground, but 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 Latter

Day of the Law will definitely fall into hell as a result of turning their backs on the Lotus Sutra. In any case, one should strongly teach and make people listen to the teachings of the Lotus Sutra.

(*Gosho*, p. 1316)

Engraving these golden words into your hearts, all the members of each chapter must unite in the spirit of *itai dōshin*, and single-mindedly do shakubuku—refuting heresy and revealing the truth.

I offer my sincere prayers that all of you will strive to chant ever more Daimoku, and with the benefits and joy gained from chanting Daimoku, you will achieve this year's shakubuku goals without fail.