

Okyobi Ceremony  
14<sup>th</sup> April 2019  
Chief Priest of Hokkeji Temple  
Rev. Shindo Imafuku

[High Priest Nichinyo Shonin's Guidance]

In the *Risshō ankoku-ron* (On Securing the Peace of the Land through the Propagation of True Buddhism), the Daishonin teaches that the root cause for a society in disorder is solely due to the poison of evil doctrines. Unless we completely refute these erroneous teachings, neither human happiness nor world peace can be realized.

[Explanation]

Nichiren Daishonin teaches that the root cause for a society in disorder is solely due to the poison of slander. In Buddhist concept of “slander” or “slandering the true Law” signify denying the true teaching and speaking ill of it. The Daishonin states, “Slander means to oppose the true Buddhist Law.” As the Daishonin says, any action that opposes the true Law is slander. He also declares, “Slander means to slander the Buddha and priests.” When we do or say things that the Daishonin admonishes us not to do or say, this entails slander.

Regarding “Slander”, Nichiren Daishonin describes the characteristics of the fourteen slanders, which he admonishes us to avoid in our faith and practice. And they are:

1. **Arrogance:** to look down on the true Law.
2. **Negligence:** to be idle in Buddhist practice.
3. **Arbitrary, egotistical judgement:** to interpret the Buddhist teachings with one's self-centered thinking and be carried away with it.
4. **Shallow, self-satisfied understanding:** to judge the true Law with one's shallow knowledge and not to seek deeply.
5. **Attachment to earthly desires:** to be so wrapped up in earthly desires that one does not seek true Buddhism.
6. **Lack of seeking spirit:** not trying to understand the true Law.
7. **Disbelief:** not believing in the true Law.
8. **Aversion:** to dislike the Buddhist teachings and to disparage them.
9. **Deluded doubt:** to doubt the true Law.
10. **Vilification:** to slander the Buddhist practitioners.

11. **Contempt:** to despise those who believe in true Buddhism.
12. **Hatred:** to hate those who believe in the true Law.
13. **Jealousy:** to be jealous of those who believe in the true Law.
14. **Grudges:** to hold grudges against the believers of true Buddhism.

These are the fourteen slanders. We have to be careful not to commit these slanders, since we may do so without realizing it. The Daishonin states that the offense of committing the fourteen slanders is “heavier than the five cardinal sins,” which are five extremely heavy sins: killing one’s father, killing one’s mother, killing an Arhat, injuring the Buddha and causing him to bleed, and destroying the harmony among the practitioners. Any slander we commit including the fourteen slanders becomes a cause for our great suffering and great, protracted unhappiness in the future.

From the time of Second High Priest Nikko Shonin, Nichiren Shoshu has instructed us to uphold the Daishonin’s teachings firmly and strictly and to admonish those who slander. The Gosho “Admonition Against Slander” states:

To seek enlightenment without repudiating slander is as futile as trying to find water in the midst of fire or fire in the midst of water.

We will never become happy if we commit slander. Therefore, we have a great mission to shakubuku people who commit slanders while we ourselves avoid slander. The Daishonin teaches in the Gosho, *A Comparison between the Lotus Sutra and Other Sutras* (Shokyō to hokekyō to nan-i no koto), as follows:

When Buddhism becomes corrupted, society becomes defiled and chaotic. Buddhism is like the body and society like the shadow. When the body is twisted, so is the shadow. (*Gosho*, p. 1469)

When viewed in light of the Buddhist mirror, the cause for misfortunes—including natural disasters, tragic accidents and troubles, wars and famine, corruption and confusion in politics, economics, and education—is solely due to the disorder of various religions. It is because the people believe in erroneous teachings instead of the correct Law. Therefore, the Daishonin expounds in his Gosho as follows:

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. (*Risshō ankoku-ron, Gosho*, p. 247; *The Gosho of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 2, p. 35)

Putting these golden words into practice and saving many people who suffer adversity due to the poison of slander is undoubtedly the noble mission given to us. Our mission also is to purify the world, save one's country, and then save the entire world through it. Let us chant Daimoku assiduously with the spirit of itai doshin, and courageously do shakubuku to achieve our shakubuku target for this year and for the future kosen-rufu of Africa.