

**Guidance from Sixty-eighth High Priest Nichinyo Shonin
On the Occasion of the July Kosen-rufu Shodai Ceremony
July 7, 2019
Reception Hall, Head Temple Taisekiji**

On this occasion of the July Kosen-rufu Shodai Ceremony, conducted here today at the Head Temple, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to all of you for coming on tozan despite your busy schedules. As you know, July is the month when our Founder, Nichiren Daishonin remonstrated with the government. On July 16th in the first year of Bunno (1260), the Daishonin submitted his treatise: *Rissho ankoku-ron* (On Securing the Peace of the Land through the Propagation of True Buddhism) through Yadoya sa'emon-no-jo nyudo to Hojo Tokiyori, the all-powerful sovereign of Japan at the time.

In the Goshō, *Rationale for the Submission of the Rissho ankoku-ron* (Ankokuron gokan-yurai), the Daishonin states:

An earthquake of a magnitude never seen before occurred on the 23rd day of the eighth month in the first year of Shoka (1257). Then, there was a huge tempest on the first day of the eighth month in the second year of the same era. And a great famine occurred in the third year of Shoka (1259), followed by epidemics raging through the country in the first year of Shogen (1259). In the second year of Shogen, throughout all four seasons, the epidemics continued relentlessly. At this juncture, more than half of the common citizens of the country had died. The ruler of the country was tremendously distressed by these circumstances, and he looked for answers in both the Buddhist and non-Buddhist writings. Hoping for a solution, he asked that various prayers be made. These prayers, however, brought no relief at all. Rather, the famine and epidemics only grew worse. Observing this situation, I, Nichiren, examined the great collection of Buddhist scriptures and discovered the reason why these prayers not only were unanswered, but also caused the circumstances to deteriorate even further. There were passages that proved this to be true. Ultimately, I had no choice other than writing a treatise showing all of my findings. I gave it the title, *Rissho ankoku-ron*. On the sixteenth day of the seventh month in the first year of Bunno (1260), I handed this treatise through Yadoya nyudo to Saimyoji nyudo who is now deceased. I did this only so that I could repay my debt of gratitude to the country of my birth. I observed the enormous earthquake in the first year of Shoka (1257), and the great storm and famine, both of which also occurred in the Shoka era. I also observed the raging epidemics that took place in the first year of Shogen (1259). Then, I, Nichiren, made a prediction, saying, “These are signs indicating that our country will be invaded by a foreign nation.” It may appear to some that I am congratulating myself for making this prediction.

But, we must understand that if our nation is brought to ruin, the teachings of Buddhism will be destroyed as well. (*Gosho*, pp. 367, 369)

The Daishonin expressed his deep concern about the chaotic condition of the world in the Latter Day of the Law, with unusual occurrences in the heavens and natural disasters on earth, as well as famine and epidemics raging throughout the country. He declared that the root cause of the devastation of the country was solely the poison of slander due to heretical teachings. He warned that unless the people immediately stopped believing in erroneous doctrines, numerous disasters, including the two calamities of foreign invasion and revolt from within, would occur, one after another. He gives the following instructions on the only way to avoid these calamities:

You must immediately renounce your erroneous belief and take faith in the supreme teaching of the one vehicle of the Lotus Sutra. (*ibid.*, p. 250)

He admonishes that in order to actualize the Buddha land, one must sever one's attachments to erroneous doctrines without delay, and take faith in "the supreme teaching of the one vehicle of the Lotus Sutra." The Daishonin's true intention regarding the meaning of the phrase, "supreme teaching of the one vehicle of the Lotus Sutra" does not indicate the surface meaning of the words of the Lotus Sutra. Rather, it refers to Myoho-Renge-Kyo, hidden in the depths of the Life Span chapter of the Lotus Sutra—the sole essential teaching. It is the supreme Three Great Secret Laws, that is, the Dai-Gohonzon. He teaches that taking faith in the Dai-Gohonzon is the best way to secure the peace of the country.

Concerning "rissho" (propagating true Buddhism) of *Rissho ankoku-ron*, the Twenty-sixth High Priest Nichikan Shonin stated as follows:

The two characters for "propagating true Buddhism" (*rissho*) contain the significance of the Three Secret Laws. (*Mondan*, p. 6)

This means, "propagating true Buddhism" (*rissho*) signifies the establishment of the Three Great Secret Laws: the True Object of Worship of the Essential Teaching, the Daimoku of the Essential Teaching, and the High Sanctuary of the Essential Teaching, as they will illuminate the darkness of the ten-thousand years and more of the Latter Day of the Law. It is of utmost importance to uphold and propagate the correct Law, the Three Great Secret Laws, if one desires the peace and security of the land.

Furthermore, regarding "ankoku" of *ankoku-ron*, it is stated as follows:

The surface meaning of the characters refers to the country of Japan at present, while the true meaning refers to the entire world for all eternity. (*ibid.*, p. 5)

In other words, “*koku*” of *ankoku-ron* superficially refers to the country of Japan. In essence, however, it represents the entire world, or Jambudvipa. Although the *Rissho ankoku-ron* was addressed to Hojo Tokiyori, and his overview prediction written in this treatise refers to the two remaining disasters of internal strife and foreign invasion, it is, in reality, a letter of admonishment to all people. Furthermore, even though it is focused on refuting Honen’s slanders in a general sense, it is in a strict sense, a refutation of all erroneous sects.

Though the *Rissho ankoku-ron* is an admonishment written for the most powerful government official at the time, from the perspective of the Daishonin’s true intention, it is a treatise that instructs all people in the Latter Day of the Law to practice for both oneself and others, and to do shakubuku, aiming toward the realization of *Rissho ankoku* (Securing the Peace of the Land through the Propagation of True Buddhism).

Today, the members of each chapter of Nichiren Shoshu are moving forward and making all-out efforts, as we aim toward our goal—to achieve a membership of 800,000 Hokkeko believers by 2021, the 800th anniversary of the advent of our Founder, Nichiren Daishonin. In order to achieve our goal, it is essential first and foremost, that everyone in each chapter unite as one, regardless of age and gender, and strive to chant Daimoku and do shakubuku together.

In particular, we have only one and a half years remaining until the achievement of our goal. I sincerely pray that all chapters will first achieve this year’s shakubuku goals. Then, with this achievement, I hope you will powerfully advance forth, aiming toward the realization of our goal—establishing a membership of 800,000 Hokkeko believers by 2021.