

**Guidance from Sixty-eighth High Priest Nichinyo Shonin
On the Occasion of the September Kosen-rufu Shodai Ceremony
September 1, 2019
Reception Hall, Head Temple Taisekiji**

On this occasion of the September Kosen-rufu Shodai Ceremony, conducted here today at the Head Temple, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to the large number of participants in attendance. The month of September already has begun in “The Year of Courageously Advancing Forward,” 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 establishment of a membership of 800,000 Hokkeko believers by 2021, the 800th anniversary of the advent of our Founder, Nichiren Daishonin.

The Daishonin teaches the following [in the Gosho, *The Doctrine of Ichinen Sanzen* (Ichinen sanzen homon)]:

Even if a medicine is compounded with one hundred or one thousand ingredients, one’s illness will not be cured unless one puts it in his mouth. Even if one owns treasures in a storehouse, he will starve unless he opens it. Even if one carries medicine in his pocket, he will die unless he takes it.
(*Gosho*, p. 110)

As the Daishonin teaches in this passage, one’s act of taking faith in Buddhism is not logic or theory, but it is one’s actual practice. Likewise, our attainment of Buddhahood can only be achieved through one’s actual practice, experience, and action. We cannot attain enlightenment through desk theory.

The Daishonin instructs us as follows in the Gosho, *Letter to Chikugo-bo in the Cave Prison* (Tsuchiro-gosho):

When all others practice the Lotus Sutra, they read it with their mouths but do not believe it in their hearts. And even if they believe it in their hearts, they do not put it into action. You are upholding the sutra with both body and mind. How admirable! (*Gosho*, p. 483)

Thus, even if one understands these golden words in one’s heart, unless one actually puts them into action and experiences what the golden words state, it is absolutely meaningless. The vast and boundless benefits of the Gohonzon will not become part of one’s experience. The same thing exactly applies to shakubuku.

The Daishonin expounds the following in the Gosho, *Letter to Nanjo Hyo’e Shichiro* (Nanjo hyo’e shichiro dono-gosho):

No matter what great merit one gains by performing good deeds; even if one transcribes the Lotus Sutra ten million times, and achieves the observation of the mind based on the principle of *ichinen sanzen* (three thousand realms in a single life-moment), should he fail to denounce the enemies of the Lotus Sutra, he will not be able to attain enlightenment.

For example, one may loyally serve the imperial court for ten to twenty years, but if he recognizes an enemy of the emperor and neither reports it nor personally feels enmity, all the services he has thus far offered will come to naught. Rather, he will be punished. (*Gosho*, p. 322)

We must deeply take to heart the following words in this passage: “should he fail to denounce the enemies of the Lotus Sutra, he will not be able to attain enlightenment.”

In particular, when we look at the chaotic condition of the world at home and abroad, I strongly feel that the members of all Hokkeko chapters must put their heart and soul into their practice, and courageously and bravely do shakubuku at any cost, in order to realize the Daishonin’s ideal—the establishment of the true Buddha land—described in the *Rissho ankoku-ron* (On Securing the Peace of the Land through the Propagation of True Buddhism).

In the *Gosho*, *A Comparison between the Lotus Sutra and Other Sutras* (Shokyo to hokekyo to nan-i no koto), The Daishonin teaches 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)

The root cause of the state of confusion and destruction—unusual occurrences in the heavens and natural disasters on earth, tragic incidents and accidents, wars and famine, politics in disarray, flagging economies, and so on—is solely due to the disorder of people’s ideas and religions. In other words, it is because people do not take faith in the true teaching but believe in erroneous teachings.

Thus, the Daishonin strictly admonishes us 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. (*Gosho*, p. 247)

Engraving these golden words into our hearts, we must be aware that saving many people who suffer the direst misfortune due to the poison of slander, and saving the nation, country, and the entire world is our primary responsibility as disciples and followers of the Bodhisattvas of the Earth. In order to achieve our goal of

establishing a membership of 800,000 Hokkeko believers, commemorating the 800th anniversary of the advent of our Founder Nichiren Daishonin, it is most essential that we step forward and do shakubuku, following the Daishonin's will: "One's life is insignificant while the Law is supreme. You should be willing to give your life to propagate the Law." We must know that it is the most precious mission given to the priesthood and laity of Nichiren Shoshu now.

The Daishonin teaches the following in the Gosho, *Questions and Answers between a Sage and a Foolish Man* (Shogu mondo-sho):

The world today is defiled with impurities. People's minds are distorted, filled with envy, and provisional and slanderous teachings abound. This makes it difficult for the true Law to be propagated. At such a time, it is of no use to practice the reading, reciting, and transcribing of sutras, or to contemplate, meditate, or discipline oneself. You simply must perform shakubuku. You should powerfully vanquish slanderous teachings and use the doctrines to censure erroneous teachings to the best of your ability.

(*Gosho*, p. 403)

I sincerely pray that each one of us will take to heart these golden words, and strive to do shakubuku to the best of one's ability, following the will of the Daishonin: "One's life is insignificant while the Law is supreme. You should be willing to give your life to propagate the Law." Then, each of us should follow through in our practice during the remaining four months with no regrets, based on the firm determination to achieve our goal of the establishment of a membership of 800,000 Hokkeko believers. With these efforts, I hope all the chapters will achieve this year's shakubuku goals without fail.