

**Guidance from Sixty-eighth High Priest Nichinyo Shonin
On the Occasion of the July Kosen-rufu Shodai Ceremony
July 5, 2020
Reception Hall, Head Temple Taisekiji**

On this occasion of the July Kosen-rufu Shodai Ceremony, conducted here today at the Head Temple, just as in the months of May and June, only the priests residing on the Head Temple grounds are participating, due to preventative measures we have taken because of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

I feel that at this very time, we must further strengthen our faith and achieve unity in the spirit of *itai doshin*, in order to overcome this crisis.

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) to Hojo Tokiyori, the all-powerful sovereign of Japan at the time.

In his treatise, 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. In light of what was stated in the sutras 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. Then, this entire threefold world will become the Buddha land. How could the Buddha land ever decline? All the lands in the ten directions will transform into treasure realms. How could a treasure realm ever fall to ruin? If the nation never declines and the land is indestructible, you will find safety and peace of mind. These are the very words that you must believe and revere.

(Gosho, p. 250; The Gosho of Nichiren Daishonin, vol. 2, p. 42)

He admonishes that in order to actualize the Buddha land, the people must sever their 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 this 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 High Sanctuary of the Essential Teaching, and the Daimoku 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).

Based on our reverence of the Daishonin’s true intention, I believe that the

members of all chapters must unite as one and make all-out efforts, and single-mindedly do shakubuku, in order to propagate true Buddhism throughout the entire world. We must do this, despite any obstacle or difficulty, as we aim toward the auspicious occasion of the 800th anniversary of the advent of our Founder, Nichiren Daishonin, which is finally just a year away.

The Daishonin teaches the following in the Gosho, *Questions and Answers on Embracing the Lotus Sutra* (Jimyo hokke mondo-sho):

I believe that embracing Myoho-Renge-Kyo, 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-Myoho-Renge-Kyo and encourage others to do the same. This will remain as your only memory from this present, human life. (*Gosho*, p. 300)

Furthermore, the Daishonin teaches in the Gosho, *Letter to Nanjo Hyo’e Shichiro* (Nanjo hyo’e shichiro dono-gosho) as follows:

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. (*Gosho*, p. 322)

The Daishonin also expounds in the Gosho, *On the Buddha’s Behavior* (Shuju onfurumai-gosho):

In the more than two thousand two hundred and twenty years since the Buddha’s passing, not even the likes of Mahakashyapa, Ananda, Ashvaghosha, Nagarjuna, Nanyue, Tiantai, Miaole, and Dengyo have propagated Myoho-Renge-Kyo. The five characters of Myoho-Renge-Kyo are the core of the Lotus Sutra and the origin of all Buddhas throughout the entire world. Upon seeing the signs that these five characters now must be propagated, I, Nichiren have set the precedent, today, at the beginning of the Latter Day of the Law. My disciples, you must follow one after another and become greater than Mahakashyapa or Ananda and, moreover, surpass even the Great Teacher Tiantai or Dengyo. (*Gosho*, p. 1057)

I sincerely pray that we will revere these golden words and powerfully advance forth, based on unity between the priesthood and laity in the spirit of *itai doshin*, as we aim toward our goal—the establishment of a membership of 800,000 Hokkeko believers—to commemorate the auspicious occasion of the 800th anniversary of the advent of our Founder, Nichiren Daishonin, which is approaching next year.