

Propagation Lecture given in 2009 for the 750th Anniversary of Revealing the Truth and Upholding Justice through the Submission of the *Rissho ankoku-ron*

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Never Harbor Doubt that the Law will be Propagated Throughout Jambudvipa

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(Abridged)

On this occasion, I would like to extend my congratulations to all of you for having attended the Commemorative General Tozan of 500,000 members celebrating the 750th Anniversary of Revealing the Truth and Upholding Justice through the Submission of the *Rissho ankoku-ron*. By participating in these tozans, you were able to expiate negative karma from your infinite past while accumulating boundless fortune.

Now, I would like to discuss the lecture for today, “Do not Doubt that the Law will be Propagated throughout Jambudvipa [the whole world].” As many of you know, Nichiren Daishonin instructed us in “The Selection of the Time” (“*Senji-sho*”) as follows:

Can there be any doubt that, after this period described in the Sutra of the Great Assembly when “the pure Law will become obscured and lost,” the great pure Law of the Lotus Sutra will be spread far and wide [kosen-rufu] throughout Japan and all the other countries of Jambudvipa?

(*Gosho*, p. 843; *MW-1*, p. 550)

The Daishonin instructs us first in “The Selection of the Time,” which is included among his five most important writings, and in many other *Goshos* not to doubt that the pure Law, Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo, will spread far and wide throughout the world through kosen-rufu. Also, the Bodhisattva Medicine King (*Yakuo bosatsu*; twenty-third) chapter of the Lotus Sutra states the following:

After my passing, in the last five hundred years, propagate it extensively in Jambudvipa. Do not let it become extinct...

(*Hokekyo*, p. 539)

When we hear the golden words of the True Buddha Nichiren Daishonin and Shakyamuni, we must not take such instruction lightly. The Buddha instructs us not to doubt the fact that the Law will spread throughout the world. Therefore, you

should have deep conviction that kosen-rufu will be achieved and seriously think about what function you can serve in realizing this end. Then, you immediately should translate your thoughts into action. What is of paramount importance here is that you start to believe that kosen-rufu is, without a doubt, achievable and that realizing this objective is within our ability. To cite a recent example, the slogan for U.S. President Barack Obama during his campaign for the presidency, “Yes, we can,” shifted the consciousness of the citizens of the United States to institute change. This led to the election and inauguration of the first African-American U.S. president. His administration must repair one of the worst economic debacles in a hundred years, and it is being tasked with the rebirth of America.

A bird is not able to change the mechanism that enables it to fly. Likewise, the kangaroo is not able to change the manner in which it jumps. Human beings, however, are able to change their conscious thoughts and the way they conduct their lives. If you change your thoughts, your actions change. When your actions change, as a natural course, the results change. We were given the directives of accomplishing the Commemorative General Tozan of 500,000 members and the Great Assembly of 75,000 believers, and increasing the number of the bodhisattvas of the earth. We must have unwavering intent and take action. If each of the 500,000 believers who will make their pilgrimage to Taisekiji were to shakubuku one person each year, then the following year, we would be able to reach a million believers. Then the following year, we would reach two million believers. By the end of 2021, 6,750,000,000 of the world’s population would be able to chant Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo. Of course, this may be a possibility simply illustrated by numbers. Most people probably think that achieving worldwide kosen-rufu within the next 13 years would be difficult. However, “difficult” does not necessarily translate as “zero possibility.” If one decides that accomplishing such an objective is impossible, then even in a hundred years, it would be impossible. However, if there is even one individual who develops unwavering belief that kosen-rufu absolutely can be achieved in 13 years despite the odds, then through efforts based on *itai doshin*, we will increase the number of the bodhisattvas of the earth and definitely come one step closer to our objective.

The reason why there is such an urgency to advance kosen-rufu is due to the state of our planet, where we are experiencing abnormal weather conditions and an increase in calamities and crimes that were unthinkable in the past. For example, there was an incident where a food company knowingly was selling tainted rice to firms, sake brewers, and food ingredient wholesalers. It was distributed to hospitals and care homes and was used in school lunches. Again, there have been numerous incidents where food deliberately has been mislabeled in terms of its country of production, and expiration dates were tampered with. An alarming increase of food contamination incidents from imports has created a critical situation. We seem to have entered an era where artificial products have become widespread. The ultimate example of this is the counterfeit object of worship created by the Soka Gakkai. Again, there seem to be so many heinous crimes reported on a frequent basis, where

a parent has killed his toddler or a teenager has murdered his aging parents. At this rate, it certainly appears that Japan is on a fast trajectory toward collapse.

Now, why do these events continuously seem to take place, one after another? Perhaps the problems of society are rooted in one source. Such problems arise due to the lack of ethics or morality among Japanese citizens. Why has there been a deterioration of ethics in society? As you are all aware, it is because the majority of people in society have neither upheld nor practiced the true Law. Furthermore, even when individuals have practiced Nichiren Shoshu Buddhism, there are countless numbers of individuals who have deviated from correct practice and have instead supported the Soka Gakkai. In this manner, the poisons that arise from heretical or incorrect teachings that are not based on the Law of causality bring about rampant ignorance and stupidity in society. Widely held beliefs such as, “individuals who lie and cheat will benefit in the end” or “as long as you don’t get caught, you can get away with anything” permeate our society.

When such attitudes and beliefs drive the people’s behavior, these are the signs of decline in society. When the life force to practice the true Law correctly becomes weak, the “flavor of the Law,” which is the source of power for the guardian deities (*shoten zenjin*), is lessened. Then, their power to protect also is diminished. This causes the appearance of the three calamities and seven disasters [described in various sutras]. The current state of our world, where we are experiencing frequent calamities and abnormal weather conditions, is rooted in such slander.

The Lotus Sutra is the teaching that “reveals the truth while honestly discarding expedient means.” The Buddha himself taught us that in order to save the people, one must honestly discard the expedient means (Jpn. *hoben*). Based on his compassion, the Buddha discarded his expedient teachings, and he then revealed the true Law. The truth hidden in the depths of the Lotus Sutra refers to the Three Great Secret Laws. When anyone practices this correct Buddhism, he or she quite naturally will become an honest person. Moreover, societies and countries will become peaceful, just as the Daishonin taught in the *Rissho ankoku-ron*. [The Daishonin drafted this treatise to refute all erroneous sects and admonish all people to uphold the Three Great Secret Laws in order to secure the peace and stability of the land.]

Even though we are witnessing frequent occurrences of the three calamities and seven disasters, we, the disciples and followers of the True Buddha, Nichiren Daishonin, absolutely need not lament over such occurrences. The Daishonin teaches the following in a passage from “Great Evil and Great Good” (“*Daiaku daizen Goshō*”):

Great events do not have small omens. When great evil occurs, great good will follow. Since the worst slander already prevails throughout the country, the supreme true Law will spread without fail. What have any of you to regret?

(*Gosho*, p. 796; *MW-5*, p. 161)

He further states in the “Kalpa of Decrease” (“*Genko Gosho*”):

Great evil portends the arrival of great good. If all of Jambudvipa were to be thrown into chaos, there could be no doubt that [this sutra would] “be widely propagated throughout Jambudvipa.”

(*Gosho*, p. 926; *MW-6*, p. 139)

The Daishonin offers us words of encouragement, declaring that the actual occurrence of the three calamities and seven disasters is a portent that the Law will spread throughout Jambudvipa.

Now, I would like to talk about our fellow pioneering members who are proactively working toward kosen-rufu overseas. Presently, there are overseas members in more than 50 countries around the world, from neighboring Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, all the way to Europe, Africa, and North, Central and South America. Within 15 of these countries, there are 25 branch temples and propagation centers where there are resident priests who are working alongside the members, advancing kosen-rufu through shakubuku efforts. Just think about the time differences between all of these countries. Right now as I speak, in one of these countries, morning Gongyo is being recited, while in another country, evening Gongyo is being recited. In other words, Daimoku is being chanted continuously around the clock on this planet. Many of these overseas members have made pilgrimages to Taisekiji on the occasion of the Gotai-e [Oeshiki] Ceremony, the spring Airing of the Sacred Treasures (Omushibarai-e) Ceremony, and during other major anniversary celebrations. They come from various countries in order to make a pilgrimage to Taisekiji. I am sure many of you have seen the overseas members at the Head Temple in the past.

For overseas members, making a pilgrimage to see the Dai-Gohonzon of the High Sanctuary of the Essential Teaching, enshrined at the Head Temple, is their lifelong objective. Among many of these members, making the pilgrimage is likened to a dream within a dream. When one asks why, the first hurdle is the cost of travel. There are many impoverished countries, and one’s annual salary could easily be spent in one lump sum toward making the pilgrimage. Furthermore, even if one spent his entire lifetime savings to fulfill this one objective, there are a countless number of people who still could not make the trip. However, due to the fortune bestowed on members by the Dai-Gohonzon, impossibilities become possibilities, allowing many members the ability to realize their objective. Again, even if they saved enough money to make the pilgrimage, members may face tremendous obstacles from their family, who oftentimes don’t understand why someone would ever spend such an exorbitant amount of money to travel to Japan. Members will often face tremendous opposition by immediate family members, who insist on allocating such monies toward the family’s immediate needs.

Too often, the time required to travel to Japan from these countries is extremely long, up to 30 hours for members traveling from distant countries, so an overnight stay, or one-day pilgrimage becomes impossible. At minimum, a four or five-day stay becomes necessary, and when one considers roundtrip travel time, it often requires a one-week stay. In such a case, members have to request a leave of absence or extended vacation from their employers. Thus, you can see that many overseas members must overcome indescribable obstacles in order to make a tozan pilgrimage. They return home to their respective countries with profound gratitude, renewing their vows to propagate the Law in their countries. To practice Nichiren Shoshu Buddhism most definitely is not easy for overseas members.

For Japanese, it is challenging for us to pronounce foreign languages correctly. Similarly, there are many members who cannot recite Gongyo correctly. Imagine how difficult it is to practice Buddhism in countries where the culture, society, traditions, and ideas are completely different from Japan. However, despite these challenges, overseas members continue to increase. Why do you suppose this is? It is because the fortune of the Dai-Gohonzon is infinite. Overseas members, with extremely pure and unshakeable faith in the Dai-Gohonzon, have experienced tremendous and unfathomable fortune in their practice. The Daishonin teaches the following in “On Repaying Debts of Gratitude” (*“Ho’on-sho”*):

If Nichiren's compassion is truly great and encompassing, Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo will spread for ten thousand years and more, for all eternity, for it has the beneficial power to open the blind eyes of every living being in the country of Japan, and it blocks off the road that leads to the hell of incessant suffering.

(*Gosho*, p. 1036; *MW-4*, p. 272)

In “Letter to Myomitsu Shonin” (*“Myomitsu shonin goshoku”*) the Daishonin states:

...the more one praises the blessings of the Lotus Sutra, the more his blessings will increase.

(*Gosho*, p. 969; *MW-5*, p. 189)

In other words, when one upholds and practices with pure faith, never doubting the immeasurable fortune that comes from the Dai-Gohonzon, the True Buddha, then this will result in the practitioner receiving even more benefits. Therefore, overseas members who have practiced with extremely pure faith have experienced fortune that is deeply mystical. For example, as I mentioned before, members have been able to make the pilgrimage to Taisekiji despite impossible odds. Incurable illnesses have been overcome, and great protection has been received during accidents and calamities. There are countless experiences by members who have received great benefit. Due to these innumerable benefits that

overseas members have received, they have overcome language barriers and seemingly insurmountable obstacles, resulting in many new members receiving Gojukai everyday, immersing themselves in faith, practice, and study.

When one asks how these overseas members look at Japanese members, there was an experience by a British member in the Sept. 16, 2008, edition of the *Daibyaku-ho* that I would like to cite. This member stated, “All Japanese Hokkeko members must truly understand what great fortune it is to have been born in Japan where the True Buddha Nichiren Daishonin was born and where Taisekiji resides. You must be so grateful that there are branch temples in every region throughout Japan. Japanese members have accumulated a lot of experience in practice compared to the members in England, so there is a feeling of kinship. If there were no Hokkeko members and priests who had overcome various obstacles and persecutions, we would not have been able to encounter true Buddhism. We are so grateful to you for this.”

Other overseas members have made comments such as, “in my next lifetime, I want to be born in Japan. Then, I can go on tozan everyday or even every month.” Other members have stated, “I envy the Japanese members, since they are able to read the Goshō in Japanese and listen to the High Priest’s guidance directly without translation.” So, such comments reflect that many overseas members look to Japanese members with great respect.

Japan is the country of the mystic Law where the High Sanctuary of True Buddhism exists, as illustrated in the following passage from “On the Three Great Secret Laws” (*Sandai hiho-sho*):

Not only shall this be the High Sanctuary where the people of the three nations and the whole world repent and eradicate their sins, it shall also be the High Sanctuary where Bonten, Taishaku, and the other heavenly deities descend from the heavens to worship.

(*Goshō*, p. 1595)

Japan is the center from which kosen-rufu will spread throughout the world. For all of you who reside in Japan, this refers to each and every one of you. I would like to ask you to consider deeply the fact that you were born in the country of the mystic Law (*Myōhō*) and truly appreciate the fortune derived from being able to practice. Also, I would like to ask you to rise to the occasion to meet the expectations of the overseas members. The Sixty-eighth High Priest Nichinyō Shonin gave us the following guidance during the previous kick-off meeting:

Through shakubuku, you are able to bring forth happiness and true world peace for humanity. Today, due to the poisons of slander, society is rapidly deteriorating. What is of utmost importance is that we advance in our efforts to do shakubuku. This is because the concrete method to actualize the ideal outlined in the *Risshō ankoku-ron* is in fact, shakubuku.

(Dai-Nichiren, February 2009)

Let us successfully realize this guidance and complete the Commemorative General Tozan of 500,000 members and General Assembly of 75,000 members. I pray for your excellent health and for your success in all matters.