

**Guidance from Sixty-eighth High Priest Nichinyo Shonin  
On the Occasion of the May Kōsen-rufu Shodai Ceremony  
May 6, 2012  
Reception Hall, Head Temple Taisekiji**

On this occasion of the May Kōsen-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 May already has arrived, and one third of this year has passed. I imagine that you are striving for the achievement of your shakubuku goals, day and night, based on unity between priesthood and laity in the spirit of *itai-dōshin*.

As I observe the recent condition of society, I can see that it has been in a constant state of chaos, both politically and economically, and natural disasters, such as heavy rains and earthquakes have been occurring continuously since the Great East Japan Earthquake last year. At a time like this, we must uphold the Daishonin's true intention expressed in the *Risshō ankoku-ron*, and work toward the realization of the great aspiration [of kōsen-rufu], by conducting shakubuku with unity between priesthood and laity in the spirit of *itai-dōshin*.

As you know already, in the *Risshō ankoku-ron* (On Securing the Peace of the Land through the Propagation of True Buddhism), Nichiren Daishonin clarified the primary cause of chaos in the world, such as adverse occurrences and the development of confusion in the minds of the people. He stated as follows:

All people have gone against the correct Law and become wholly devoted to evil doctrines.

*(Gosho, p. 234; The Gosho of Nichiren Daishonin, vol. 2, p. 3)*

In other words, the root cause of adversity, confusion, and distress absolutely is due to the inappropriate teachings of various heretical religions, including the Soka Gakkai, which denigrates the three treasures. Therefore, if we don't refute all slanderous teachings and take faith in the "supreme teaching of the one vehicle of the Lotus Sutra," we will not be able to establish true happiness and the peace of the land.

The “supreme teaching of the one vehicle of the Lotus Sutra” is not the surface meaning of the words of the Lotus Sutra. It is the great Law of Myoho-Renge-Kyo, hidden in the depths of the Life Span (*Juryō*; sixteenth) chapter of the Lotus Sutra, and it is also the Dai-Gohonzon of the High Sanctuary of the Essential Teaching of the Three Great Secret Laws.

However, in order for people all over the world to take faith in the Dai-Gohonzon of the High Sanctuary of the Essential Teaching, there is no way other than conducting shakubuku. Living beings in the Latter Day of the Law do not possess the seed of Buddhahood, and have done little to seek the Law themselves. Therefore, we actively must try to conduct shakubuku, in order to sow the seed of Myoho-Renge-Kyo.

In the Gosho, “On Attaining Enlightenment at the Initial Stage of Faith through the Lotus Sutra” (*“Hokke shoshin jōbutsu-shō”*), the Daishonin teaches the following about shakubuku in the Latter Day of the Law:

In the Latter Day of the Law, it is a matter of principle that we should firmly teach the five characters of the honorable title of the Lotus Sutra, whether or not it is suited to the capacities of ignorant common mortals. This is because in the past, when Shakyamuni Buddha was called Bodhisattva Never Disparaging (*Fukyō*), he propagated the Lotus Sutra. Yet, men and women, monks and nuns, didn’t embrace the Lotus Sutra. Bodhisattva Never Disparaging was spoken ill of and cursed, or beaten and exiled out of the country. Being targeted for numerous persecutions, he was detested and people held grudges against him. Yet, he remained undaunted. Instead, he strongly taught the Lotus Sutra to the people. This led him to become Shakyamuni Buddha.

(*Gosho*, p. 1315)

Because living beings in the Latter Day of the Law do not possess the seed of Buddhahood, they cannot be saved unless people conduct shakubuku, and sow the seed of the true cause of the mystic Law into their lives. Just like Bodhisattva Never Disparaging, no matter how people may speak ill of us or curse us; begrudge or beat us; and whether they listen or not or whether they have the capacity or not, we must steadfastly tell them, so they can hear the teaching of Myoho-Renge-Kyo. Sometimes we even need to activate a poison-drum relationship, by forcefully teaching the Law to

others. This way, they can form a relationship with Buddhism, and in the future, go on to attain Buddhahood through embracing Myoho-Renge-Kyo.

Bodhisattva Never Disparaging appeared during the Middle Day of the Law after the passing of Buddha Awesome Sound King (Ion'nō). He insisted that all living beings possess the Buddha nature, and he bowed in reverence to the people he met, reciting the words of the Twenty-Four-Character Lotus Sutra:

I have profound reverence for you, I would never dare treat you with disparagement or arrogance. Why? Because you are all practicing the bodhisattva way and are certain to attain Buddhahood.

*(Hokekyo, p. 500; The Lotus Sutra, Watson, pp. 266-267)*

Whether monk, nun, layman, or laywoman, all were repulsed by his practice of bowing to them in reverence. They persecuted him by speaking ill of him and cursing him, and they attacked him with staves, sticks, stones, and tiles. However, he never gave up and continuously conducted the practice of bowing in reverence.

Those who had persecuted Bodhisattva Never Disparaging fell into hell once, but later, he was able to save them through their reverse relationship formed by hearing the Lotus Sutra.

Bodhisattva Never Disparaging was Shakyamuni Buddha in one of his past existences.

The “Orally Transmitted Teachings” (*“Ongi kuden”*) states:

Although these twenty-four characters and the five characters of the mystic Law (*Myoho*) appear to be different, their meaning is identical.

*(Gosho, p.1777)*

Today, in the midst of the Latter Day of the Law, the five characters of Myoho-Renge-Kyo preached by the Daishonin and the twenty-four characters of the Lotus Sutra preached by Bodhisattva Never Disparaging are different in regard to the entity of the Law. However, in the aspect of practice, both teachings lead to enlightenment through the practice of sowing the seed, and the status of practitioner in both is that of the common mortal. Also, the teaching of the poison-drum relationship

and the benefits of the reverse relationship are the same, because both teachings are able to save those who slander the Law.

Thus, we can learn from the behavior of Bodhisattva Never Disparaging that shakubuku is the method of propagation in the Latter Day of the Law. Through the practice of shakubuku, we are able to save not only those that possess a positive relationship with the Law, but also common mortals who have a reverse relationship. We must engrave this point into our hearts. Each and every one of us must devote every effort toward this most compassionate practice for all living beings.

According to the doctrine expounded in the *Risshō ankoku-ron*, we will be able to change ourselves, change the world, and establish the Buddha land through our absolute trust in the Dai-Gohonzon and our practice of shakubuku—refuting heresy and revealing the truth.

In the *Risshō ankoku-ron*, the Daishonin states:

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)

We must let these golden words penetrate into our minds, so that we can understand deeply that shakubuku is the utmost way to break through today's difficult times, which are confused and disordered beyond all recognition. We must try to conduct shakubuku—refuting heresy and revealing the truth—without leaving a single person behind.

Today, we in Nichiren Shoshu are moving forward to achieve our goals for 2015 and 2021, with unity between priesthood and laity, in the spirit of *itai-doshin*. In order to accomplish these goals, we first must achieve what is directly in front of us, and that is our shakubuku goal for this year.

Thus, each chapter must accomplish this year's shakubuku goal in order to achieve the goal set forth for all the chapters. We should try to follow the behavior of Bodhisattva Never Disparaging in his practice of bowing in reverence and preaching to the people. Likewise, we must take action in shakubuku activities vigorously, without any fear of obstacles, based on the unity of priesthood and laity and in the spirit of *itai-doshin*. I would like to conclude today's address with my prayer that you will be able to exert yourselves to accomplish this year's goals.