

Lecture in Praise of Nichiren Daishonin
July 2011, Oko Lecture

The Fusion of Objective Reality and Subjective Wisdom and the Benefits of Those New to Faith

In the Goshō, “The Crucial Elements for Attaining Enlightenment” (“*Soya dono-gohenji*”), the Daishonin wrote:

The path to Buddhahood exists only within the two principles of objective reality (*kyō*) and subjective wisdom (*chi*). Objective reality refers to the entity of all phenomena in the universe, and subjective wisdom signifies the manifestation of this entity in the life of an individual. Thus, when the reality is boundless and deep, the wisdom, like water, will flow forth ceaselessly. When one achieves the fusion of reality and wisdom, he will attain enlightenment in his present form.

(*Goshō*, p. 1038)

Here, the Daishonin teaches us that we can attain enlightenment in our present form (*sokushin jobutsu*) when we achieve the fusion of objective reality and subjective wisdom (*kyōchi myōgō*). Regarding this, our Honorable Retired High Priest Nikken Shonin stated the following:

As true priests and lay believers of Nichiren Shoshu, we must uphold the Gohonzon as the True Buddha who enables us to fuse with the objective reality and subjective wisdom of his life condition of Buddhahood. By so doing, we are able to open our own enlightened state. Such is the way things ought to be.

(*Dai-Nichiren*, 583-73)

In other words, the Gohonzon represents the objective reality (*kyō*), and we must chant Daimoku based on the subjective wisdom (*chi*) characterized by our single-minded faith. Then, we can achieve the fusion of objective reality and subjective wisdom (*kyōchi myōgō*).

In most religions, there is an object of worship. Various denominations differ according to what the believers uphold as their object of worship. Therefore, it is extremely important to carefully select the object of worship that we choose to uphold.

Nichiren Daishonin revealed the true object of worship for the salvation of all mankind in the Latter Day of the Law. This fundamental object of worship is none other

than the Dai-Gohonzon, inscribed on the 12th day of the tenth month of the second year of Koan (1279), which is enshrined in the Hoando at Head Temple Taisekiji in the Fuji region.

The following passage is from the Goshō, “Reply to Kyo’o” (“*Kyo’o dono go-henji*”):

I, Nichiren, with sumi, have inscribed the Gohonzon by infusing my life into it. So believe in it. The will of the Buddha lies in the Lotus Sutra, but my essential spirit is none other than Nam-Myōhō-Renge-Kyō.

(*Goshō*, p. 685)

Thus, the Dai-Gohonzon is the embodiment of the essential spirit of the True Buddha. Furthermore, the successive High Priests inherit the Lifeblood Heritage of the Law entrusted to a single person from Nichiren Daishonin. They have transcribed the Gohonzon and enabled us to enshrine it in our homes. The power of the Buddha and the power of the Law are inherent in the Gohonzon. We believe in the Gohonzon and perform our Buddhist practice, based on our powers of faith and practice.

Therefore, we must uphold the Gohonzon as the true objective reality, chant Nam-Myōhō-Renge-Kyō, and activate our powers of faith and practice. By so doing, we can achieve the fusion of objective reality and subjective wisdom, which will enable us to gain vast and infinite benefits and accumulate good karma. Then, as a matter of course, we can overcome all hardships and suffering and attain enlightenment in our present form.

There may be individuals who feel that, even if the Gohonzon is the correct object of worship, they only can receive benefits and attain enlightenment after completing prolonged periods of Buddhist practice. However, Nichiren Daishonin’s true Buddhism of the sowing, hidden in the depths of the sutra, enables all practitioners to attain tremendous benefits, even if they are new to the faith.

Nichiren Daishonin stated the following in his Goshō, “The Real Aspect of the Gohonzon” (“*Nichinyō gozen-gohenji*”):

It is of foremost importance to chant Nam-Myōhō-Renge-Kyō and attain Buddhahood. But, all depends on the strength of your faith. The foundation of true Buddhism is faith.

(*Goshō*, p. 1388)

The benefits that we receive from believing in the Gohonzon and chanting Daimoku are vast and limitless. The enormity of those benefits does not depend on how long we have embraced Buddhism or how much academic knowledge we have of Buddhist principles. It is solely dependent on the strength of our faith. Therefore, even a new believer is able to achieve benefits and accumulate good karma. High Priest Nichinyō Shonin stated the following about the benefits that can be attained by those who are new to the faith:

We all have heard about the benefits achieved by those who are new to the faith. An individual is introduced to true Buddhism through shakubuku and receives the Gohonzon. He chants sincere Daimoku. When he is told that this Gohonzon is absolute, he honestly accepts it and sincerely chants Daimoku. Then, he finds that he truly receives benefits....Even an individual who embraced true Buddhism for the first time just yesterday is able to truly resolve all his problems if he maintains purity and sincerity and upholds faith that is free from doubt. Such are the wonderful benefits of the Gohonzon.

(Dai-Nichiren, 773-35)

I heard a story about a believer in Sri Lanka who was ready to receive Gojukai and formally accept true Buddhism. He brought several new guests to the Gojukai ceremony. As a person new to this faith, he could not have had extensive knowledge about the principles of true Buddhism. However, he was genuinely happy that he was able to encounter the Gohonzon, and he chanted Daimoku with doubt-free faith. His sincere spirit was transmitted directly to the Gohonzon and, as a result, he has been amassing benefits and good karma. Moreover, he has been continuing to do shakubuku by simply telling people about the wonderful benefits that he has received.

Nichiren Daishonin teaches the following in the Goshō, “On the Transmission of the Three Great Secret Laws” (*“Sandai hiho bonjo ji”*):

Now, in the Latter Day of the Law, the Daimoku that Nichiren chants is different from that of previous ages. It is the Nam-Myōhō-Renge-Kyō of the practice for oneself and the practice for others.

(Goshō, p. 1594)

Regarding this passage, High Priest Nichinyō Shonin stated the following:

The Daimoku in the practice for oneself refers to chanting Daimoku, and the Daimoku in the practice for others represents doing shakubuku. Daimoku and shakubuku constitute a singular practice. Indeed, Daimoku based on pure faith is the wellspring for shakubuku.

(Dai-Nichiren, 768-44)

Thus, our High Priest instructs us that assiduously chanting Daimoku and doing shakubuku are the essential source of our faith and practice.

We must not be satisfied simply by chanting for ourselves. We must chant Daimoku to be able to successfully do shakubuku. Let’s do shakubuku by telling others about our happiness and our experiences.

We must lead the people of the world to happiness through the true Buddhism of Nichiren Daishonin. To do this, let us advance toward 2015, the year commemorating

the 770th Anniversary of the birth of our Second High Priest Nikko Shonin. First and foremost, let us proceed with great devotion to achieve, without fail, the immediate shakubuku goal for our Hokkeko chapter this year.