

Attaining Buddhahood as ourselves.

If you wish to free yourself from the sufferings of birth and death you have endured since time without beginning and to attain without fail unsurpassed enlightenment in this lifetime, you must perceive the mystic truth that is originally inherent in all living beings. This truth is Myoho-Renge-Kyo. Chanting Myoho-Renge-Kyo will therefore enable you to grasp the mystic truth innate in all life. ¹

On Attaining Buddhahood in this Lifetime, WND, p3

What does a life of profound meaning consist of? What is true happiness? The Buddhism of Nichiren Daishonin is a teaching of hope that allows us to build an indestructible and unsurpassable state of happiness and a life of supreme value, while we help and inspire others to do the same.

Everybody possesses the potential to attain Buddhahood; what is more, every person can become a Buddha just as he or she is, and we are assured of attaining this goal in the course of this lifetime. The Buddhism of Nichiren Daishonin

clearly shows the splendid path to enlightenment.

The profound teaching of attaining Buddhahood in this lifetime was a revolutionary concept which radically changed the prevailing Buddhist thinking at that time.

Furthermore, it continues to shine in this day and age, as a principle capable of vigorously transforming the times and opening a brilliant future for the modern world in the 21st century.

On Attaining Buddhahood in this Lifetime is an important writing

which clarifies the foundation, theory and practice of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism.

The practice of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo is the basis of all the teachings that the Daishonin expounded in the course of his life. Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, unlike the other Buddhist schools of his time, did not consist in venerating a specific deity or Buddha. The Daishonin established the means by which all people could attain Buddhahood – the ideal of the Lotus Sutra – by introducing the practice of chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, which allows us to activate our inherent Buddha nature and manifest it as the life state of Buddhahood.

When we chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, we are proclaiming the name of our Buddha nature and the Buddha nature of others, and making it emerge. When our faith wins over our inner doubt and illusion, the power of our inherent

1) "On Attaining Buddhahood in this Lifetime." The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin, p.3.



Buddha nature is activated through the resonant vibration of our daimoku and it spontaneously manifests in our life.

The idea of “attaining Buddhahood in this lifetime” refers to an ordinary person who, in the course of his life, becomes enlightened. What this means, by extension, is that he can do so without being anything other than the person he is. In this sense, “attaining Buddhahood in this lifetime” means “attaining Buddhahood in one’s present form”; which is the focus of Buddhahood stated in the Lotus Sutra, exemplified in the “Devadatta” (12th) Chap-

ter with the example of the Dragon King’s Daughter.²

Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism clarifies that it is in this present lifetime, as human beings, that is the right time to make attaining Buddhahood in one’s present form a reality, as revealed in the Lotus Sutra. This clarified its profound teaching on the attainment of Buddhahood in this lifetime.

Taking the cultivation of rice as an analogy, the Daishonin states that some grains ripen early while others take longer; however they all eventually germinate within a year

and are ready to be harvested. In this way, it explains that the practitioners of the Lotus Sutra will, without fail, attain Buddhahood in this lifetime.

In On Attaining Buddhahood in this Lifetime, the Daishonin clearly explains that nobody can manifest enlightenment without carrying out a profound change in one’s own life; that’s to say, without transforming one’s spiritual disposition and one’s attitude of mind.

At the same time, the Daishonin warns us that if we look outside ourselves for the Mystic Law, no

2) In the “Devadatta” chapter (12th) of the Lotus Sutra, the eight year old daughter of the Dragon King, Sagara, conceived the desire to attain enlightenment when she heard Bodhisattva Manjushri preach the Lotus Sutra. She presented a gem to Shakyamuni as an offering and instantly completes

bodhisattva practice to perfection. Then, she appears in a territory in the South called the Impeccable World, where she manifests the Buddha state without having to change her physical dragon form; in this land she dedicates her life to preaching the Lotus Sutra to all beings who live there.

matter how much daimoku we might chant, we won't be able to attain Buddhahood; on the contrary, our Buddhist practice will only become an "endless, painful austerity." He says clearly: "Nevertheless, even though you chant and believe in Myoho-rence-kyo, if you think the Law is outside yourself, you are embracing not the Mystic Law but an inferior teaching."

The Daishonin explains that the key to chanting daimoku is to arouse deep faith and he declares that, when we do so, we can polish and perfect our life and manifest an enlightened state.

In the Daishonin's Buddhism, attaining Buddhahood doesn't mean starting out on an endlessly long journey until we radiate light like a supernatural, divine Buddha; on the contrary, it consists of carrying out a profound transformation within ourselves. We can win in life and reveal our full potential only when we win over our inner limitations and negativity. Only then will we be able to enjoy a truly, profound satisfaction in life.

