

Living every day of this year to the full

“Life is the most precious of all treasures. Even one extra day of life is worth more than ten million ryo of gold...”

“On Prolonging One’s Life’s Span. The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin, page 955

At the beginning of this year Daisaku Ikeda encouraged us to fight vigorously until the last day of 2010; he urged us to create our own history of human revolution in our life together with him. What is important, as indicated in the Gosho paragraph above, is to draw out the greatest value from each day of our life.

To share this spirit of the oneness of mentor and disciple and to create value every day requires us to have a solid base in our life. In this respect, Nichiren Daishonin writes:

“The rice plant flowers and bears grain, but its spirit remains in the soil. This is the reason the stalk sprouts to flower and bear grain once again. The blessings that Nichiren obtains from propagating the Lotus Sutra will always return to Dozen-Bo [his teacher]. How sublime!” (1)

Small seeds, such as those of rice, can develop into large plants thanks to the earth which sustains it.

In other writings, Nichiren also emphasizes the principle of the oneness of mentor and disciple, from the essential perspective of faith, which is expressed through prayer and sharing the same spirit or attitude as the mentor. We can glean the same message from the following extract:

“No matter how earnestly Nichiren prays for you, if you lack faith, it will be like trying to set fire to wet tinder.” (2)

On the other hand, in a letter sent from Minobu to the lay nun Senni-chi, who lived on the island of Sado, the Daishonin praises her constant seeking spirit towards the teachings, despite the huge distance that separates them physically:

“Though you remain in Sado, your heart has come to this province [...] It is the heart that is important.” (3)

He warmly encourages her, saying that although she lives very far away, her heart has reached him because they both share a profound bond. The sincerity of the heart is what matters, he explains. In this passage, “It is the heart that matters”; “heart” can also be read as “the determination to share the same heart as the mentor”.

1) “Flowering and Bearing Grain”, p.909 of the Writings of Nichiren Daishonin

2) The Strategy of the Lotus Sutra, p.1000-1001 of the Wri-

tings of Nichiren Daishonin

3) “The Drum at the Gate of Thunder” p.949 of the Writings of Nichiren Daishonin

Making a great vow for Kosen-rufu

In the Gosho, Nichiren Daishonin wrote for future generations:

“My wish is that all my disciples make a great vow.” (4)

This great vow, ultimately, refers to each person’s commitment to kosen-rufu, that’s to say, the great desire of the Buddha for every human being to manifest his or her Buddhahood.

The realization of the great vow to achieve kosen-rufu lies in continuing a dialogue with the person in front of us and transmitting the greatness of the Mystic Law from the heart, which is the key to genuine happiness.

Daisaku Ikeda, president of the SGI, encourages us to pray with the spirit to never be defeated and, at the same time, to maintain our commitment to create world peace. The courage that results from this kind of prayer is what will allow us to break the shell of our limitations, overcome our obstacles and win over the negative functions which stop us from building a happy life condition.

Daisaku Ikeda also expresses his most ardent desire that each person can enjoy and spread the deep and absolute joy that comes from dedi-



4) “The Dragon Gate” page 1003 of the Writings of Nichiren Daishonin



cating our life to world peace and the happiness of all humanity.

The “great vow” of Buddhism can only become a reality through the constant challenge of engaging with society and doing whatever is necessary to inspire and encourage everyone we know.

Constantly advancing with perseverance

“Strengthen your faith day by day and month after month. Should you slacken in your resolve even a bit, devils will take advantage.” (5)

Persevering is absolutely essential to attaining Buddhahood in this existence. The Daishonin says:

“To accept is easy; to continue is difficult. But Buddhahood lies in continuing faith.” (6)

Maintaining a constant practice is an important aspect for achieving Buddhahood. This type of practice will allow us to overcome our own apathy and defeat each and every obstacle and negative function, manifesting the courage of a lion king.

Lastly, the second president of Soka Gakkai, Josei Toda, taught that it was a supreme honour for a human being to be born at such a significant time and leave behind an historic and valuable legacy in his wake.

This year, the 80th anniversary of the Soka Gakkai, gives us a wonderful opportunity to completely renew ourselves and, with a totally revitalized determination, open the doors towards victory in life each day until the 31st of December of this year.

5) “On Persecution Befalling the Sage” p.997 of the Writings of Nichiren Daishonin

(6) “The Difficulty of Sustaining Faith” p.471 of the Writings of Nichiren Daishonin