

The Opening of the Eyes (Kaimoku-shō)

Although I, Nichiren, and my disciples may face various difficulties, we will naturally reach the world of Buddhahood, as long as we do not harbor doubts. Do not doubt that the heavens will protect you. Do not be discouraged because your life is not easy and secure in this lifetime. Though I have taught this to my disciples day and night, many of them, raising doubts, abandon their faith. Those with weak faith always forget what they have promised when the crucial moment comes. (Gosho, p. 574)

Explanation

Although my disciples and I may face numerous difficulties, as long as we do not have doubts in our hearts, we will naturally attain Buddhahood. We must not harbor doubts thinking that heaven does not lend us protection. We must not be discouraged because life is not easy and comfortable. I have taught this morning and evening to my disciples, but they still harbor doubts and renounce their faith. Foolish people tend to forget their promises when the crucial moment arrives.

Explanation of the Major Terms

- **Reach the world of Buddhahood:** To achieve the life condition of enlightenment.
- **The heavens will protect you:** “Heavens” here refers to the guardian deities (*shoten zenjin*), such as Mahabrahman (Jpn. Daibon-tenno), Shakra Devanam Indra (Jpn. Taishaku-ten) and Surya (Jpn. Dainittenno). These guardian deities will protect the votaries of the Lotus Sutra, without fail, as it is written in the Peaceful Practices (*Anrakugyō*; fourteenth) chapter of the Lotus Sutra: “The heavenly beings day and night will for the sake of the Law constantly guard and protect them.” (*Hokekyo*, p. 396; *Lotus Sutra*, Watson, p. 206)
- **Those with weak faith:** Foolish people whose faith is not strong and consistent.
- **Always forget:** The common, habitual attitude or reaction. Here, it refers to the common reaction of those with weak faith, which is to forget their promise.
- **Crucial moment:** An essential moment; a very important time.

Background and Summary

This Gosho was written in the second month of the ninth year of Bun’ei (1272), approximately four months into the Daishonin’s exile to Sado. The Daishonin was 51 years of age, and he wrote this Gosho at Tsukahara in Sado. It was addressed to all of his disciples, with Shijō Kingo as their main representative. Together with *The True Object of Worship* (Kanjin no honzon-shō), this Gosho is an important writing. It is categorized as one of the five major writings of the Daishonin.

This Gosho begins by using the fivefold comparison to evaluate the superiority, inferiority, shallowness, and profundity of the sutras. Then, it clearly reveals that the Daishonin is, in fact, the True Buddha of the Latter Day of the Law, who possesses the three virtues (*santoku*) of sovereign, teacher, and parent. For this reason, *The Opening of the Eyes* is considered to be the document that reveals the Object of Worship in terms of the Person (*nin-honzon*).

Prior to the passage we are studying, the Daishonin states in this Gosho that, when votaries of the Lotus Sutra who propagate true Buddhism encounter obstacles, they are “thoroughly expiating the karmic

offenses from their past, in the form of lighter karmic effects, due to protecting the Law in this lifetime.” (*Gosho*, p. 573, Summarized) Thus, he revealed the “benefits of lessening one’s karmic retribution” (*tenju kyoju no riyaku*).

Then, in the passage we are studying, the Daishonin instructs us that, regardless of the various difficulties we may encounter, if we believe in the mystic Law (*Myōhō*) without any doubts and continue to practice, we can achieve enlightenment in our present form without fail.

Reference from Gosho passages and High Priest guidance

Guidance from High Priest Nichinyo Shonin

Here, the Daishonin is instructing us that it is absolutely imperative that we uphold faith without any doubts, in order to attain enlightenment. The phrase “faith without any doubts” (*mugi wasshin*) literally means “having no doubts is known as faith.” It signifies absolute faith and conviction in the Dai-Gohonzon. (*Gosho yomon*, vol. 1, p. 263)

The Orally Transmitted Teachings (Ongi kuden)

This character *faith* is the sharp sword that can cut through fundamental darkness. Faith means to have no doubt and is the sword that can sever all doubts and delusions. (*Gosho*, p. 1737)

Guidance from High Priest Nikken Shonin

What is meant by “what they have promised”? It is the promise that we made, when we became the disciples of the Daishonin, to discard—from our current lives until we attain Buddhahood—the erroneous doctrines of the provisional sects and their leaders, who preach the pre-Lotus Sutra and theoretical teaching—and to uphold the truth of the true master of the true Buddhism of the Essential Teaching of the Lotus Sutra. (*Dainichiren*, July 1997)

Guidance from High Priest Nichinyo Shonin

In the *Gosho*, *The Merit of Offering* (Ueno-dono gohenji), the Daishonin states: “Naturally, a promise must be kept.” (*Gosho*, p. 825; *The Gosho of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 11) Furthermore, in *The Opening of the Eyes* (Kaimoku-shō), he writes: “Those with weak faith always forget what they have promised when the crucial moment comes.” (*Gosho*, p. 574)

In fact, the establishment of a Hokkeko organization of 800,000 believers on the occasion of the 800th anniversary of the birth of our founder Nichiren Daishonin is a matter that we firmly promised the Gohonzon. When we keep our promise to the three treasures, we will be able to truly repay our debt of gratitude to the Buddha. As a result, we will be able to establish unshakable happiness in our lives. (*Dainichiren*, February 2019 issue)

Shakubuku is actual practice and not a theoretical exercise. There are no secret formulae for shakubuku that will absolutely guarantee a successful outcome. Therefore, the first order of things is for us to stand up and move. Then, we must charge forward and do shakubuku....It is most important to move and do shakubuku without fearing failure. (*Dainichiren*, May 2019)