

RADIANCE #27 for Website
(May and June, 2012)

Sacred Words

The Lotus Sutra is identical to Sakyamuni Buddha. Those who do not believe in the sutra, the Buddha would take Nirvana and never appear in front of them. However, those who believe in the sutra, the Buddha appear as if he were alive in this world even after his Nirvana.

Nichiren – *Shugo Kokka-Ron*

Store Front Temple

June 7th is the last day of the use permit for the place of worship at the current resident house. Before the deadline, we were able to get sub-lease of a store at 3385 South Jones Blvd. This is in the same shopping mall as *168 Market* on Spring Mountain and Jones. There are many restaurants and retail stores; therefore, we expect a lot of foot traffic.

We are planning to move the altar items sometime in June. Unfortunately, there is no kitchen and bedroom; therefore, the residential address is still 3920 Spencer Street, Las Vegas, NV 89119.

Cycle of Birth and Death in Lotus Sutra (part 2)

Rev. Shokai Kanai

(Continue from RADIANCE #26)

Do you believe in rebirth? The Lotus Sutra reveals many example of rebirth.

Chapter 12 reveals the relationship between Sakyamuni Buddha and his cousin Devadatta in their former lives:

“I remember that I became a king in a kalpa of the past. Although I was a king, I did not indulge in the pleasures of the five desires because I was seeking the Great Dharma. I rang a bell, and said loudly in all directions, ‘Who knows the Great Dharma? If anyone expounds the Dharma to me, I will become his servant.’ There was a seer called Ashita. He came to me and said, ‘I know the Wonderful Dharma. It is rare in the world. If you serve me well, I will expound the Dharma to you.”

(Lotus Sutra P.196)

“I collected firewood and the fruits of trees and grasses, and offered these things to him respectfully from time to time. I never felt tired in body and mind because I was thinking of the Wonderful Dharma.”

(Lotus Sutra P.196)

“Although I was the king of a great country, I sought the Dharma strenuously. I finally obtained the Dharma and became a Buddha.” *(Lotus Sutra P.197)*

“The Buddha said to the bhiksus: The king at that time was a previous life of me. The

seer at that time was a previous life of Devadatta. Devadatta was my teacher. He caused me to have loving-kindness, compassion, joy and impartiality.” (Lotus Sutra P.197)

Today, I am teaching the Lotus Sutra to you; however, according to Chapter 12, you might be my teacher in our previous lives. So I respect you all!

This is an important message for us to practice Wonderful Dharma (*Myo-Ho*). What the seer Ashita taught to the king was nothing but to serve him well. So the king became the servant of his master, and he collected firewood and fruits from trees and grasses, and offered these things to his master respectfully from time to time. Sometimes he became a chair for his teacher. He never felt tired in body and mind because he was thinking of the Wonderful Dharma. He sought the Great Dharma strenuously, and he finally obtained the Dharma and became a Buddha.

At your home, who is the person working hard like a servant? Who is the master at your home? I believe you do not need to collect firewood like the previous story, but who does cooking at home? Is that you, mother? Or you, father? Or are parents servants while children are masters but sometime behave like a servant?

In my family, I act like a master, but I cook, wash dishes, do laundry and go to shopping, too. So does my wife! Daily life is the way for the Bodhisattvas to attain Buddhahood.

It is important for you to serve Buddha, Nichiren Shonin, and the Gohonzon; however, everyone in your family must share the daily tasks at your home. Thus, chapter 21 states: **“Here the Buddha turned the wheel of the Dharma. Here the Buddha entered into Parinirvana.” (P.294)**

There are many more stories of previous lives of many people in the Lotus Sutra like in Chapter 20; **Never-Despising Bodhisattva was the previous existence of Sakyamuni Buddha.** The teaching of the Lotus Sutra tells us to look back into your past. It teaches us to improve day after day, even a tiny bit. Today should be better than yesterday. Tomorrow will be better than today. Our life is the continuation from the past, present, and future. Even if you were at the bottom today, no phenomena can last forever. “Everything is constantly changing.” So you will go up, you will change for the better.

Donation for a Statue of Gohonzon

The Kannon Temple of Nevada will move to a new location in a commercial zone in June. In commemorating this new move and the 5th Anniversary of the temple; we would like to enshrine a Nichiren Shu Gohonzon of Odaimoku Stupa with the Sakyamuni Buddha and Taho Buddha (Many Treasure Buddha) sitting side by side. This symbolizes that the Lotus Sutra preached by Sakyamuni Buddha is the most profound and backed by Many Treasures Buddha. The dimensions are 42”x30”x10”.



The cost for this Gohonzon is about \$33,000 plus packing and shipping fees. Rev. Shokai Kanai would like your support with a donation. As the statue will be enshrined forever, your name will be written with *sumi* ink and kept together with the statue.

Please use the enclosed form for the donation and write your names, address, and amount of donation with your prayers. So Rev. Kanai will pray for them at least one hundred days during morning service.

Please write a check payable to Nichiren Buddhist Kannon Temple of Nevada. In the note section, mark "For Gohonzon Statue".

My Trip to Japan (2012 NONA Pilgrimage)

By Tristan Moore (14)

My trip to Japan was a great adventure. I visited many temples. We were treated with great hospitality.

Seeing all the temples and exploring Japan was very interesting. We saw the rock cave and hut that Nichiren Shonin was exiled to at Izu Peninsula. We saw Nichiro Shonin's dungeon and many more things, but most of all I climbed Mount Shichimen.

When we climbed the mountain, it was pouring rain, and I was cold, wet and tired. Rev. Kanai and other ministers were chanting for me front and back. The rain finally stopped after six hours. One hour later I made it to the top, the clouds were parting, and a large beam of sunlight shone on the temple. As we chanted to the temple, monks and the people who went with us came out to watch as we walked in, they congratulated me.

I enjoyed the hot bath and the evening service. After the service, I crashed. Next morning we watched the sunrise from the foothill of Mt. Fuji. It was very beautiful. After the morning service, we were on our way, trekking through slippery ice and snow covered trail for about two hours, then it was normal ground. Then I stumbled into a store at the bottom, and I had finally made it five hours later.

I enjoyed a delicious lunch, and we were on our way to the hotel with hot springs. It took me twelve hours for the whole trip, seven hours up, five hours down. I learned that I can do almost anything and everything if I set my mind to it. I also learned that there is more to life than what I see in my video games, I learned that I should think on what I want to be, and who I want to be, although I don't know yet because I'm still young. This trip brought me one more step closer to finding out.

Thank you for your time. "Namu Myoho Renge Kyo." May the Dharma be with you always.

A Point of View

Sari changed to Blouse

Kumiko Kanai

After the 10th Anniversary Events of Ichinennji Temple in Penang, Malaysia last February, the members took the overseas ministers and me sightseeing and shopping around town. We stopped by a Buddhist altar fittings shop and also a sari fabric store.

The sari is popular in India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Burma, Malaysia, and Singapore. It is usually worn over a petticoat around the waist. A woman wraps her lower body with the cloth, then inserts the cloth into the petticoat worn with a short sleeve and low neck blouse, and is usually cropped at the midriff. The rest of the garment wraps her upper body from her shoulders.

I wished to buy a locally made sari because it can be worn regardless of a woman's height and size. I bought two pieces. One is a thin sari with navy blue georgettes and embroidery of golden flower and the other one has embroidery of lavender color georgettes.

Instead of wearing it as sari, I tried to sew it with sleeves making it into a Japanese style blouse. It turned out to be a wonderful blouse that nobody thought was actually a sari.

Next time when I visit Penang, I wish to show my blouse to the person who took me to the fabric store.

HELLO FROM JAPAN

Rev. Douglas Shoda Kanai

Spring may have come early in the States as I hear that winter was not as severe this year. Well for the eastern part of Japan and especially the area that I am located, spring finally arrived in mid-April. Usually the sight of cherry blossoms signifies that spring has arrived. This past winter was a cold one, so spring came a few weeks late. And since it is colder in the mountains than the city, the cherry blossoms did not sprout for another week or two after the city. So many of the city dwellers travelled to the countryside to take in the extended viewing of cherry blossoms and partake in the tradition of picnicking under the blossoms. Unfortunately the pink blossoms only lasted a week before falling, so time was critical in trying to capture the wonderful sights.

Starting in March, for chanting practice I went up to Myoken-san every day. There is a tradition there that "So-Yohon" is chanted completely twice, broken out into four different

sections. "So-Yohon" is selected chapters from the Lotus Sutra, namely Chapters 1 & 2 (only the beginning portion), all of Chapters 12, 16, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27 and 28. "Yokuroshu" (selected portions of Ch. 2, 3, 10, 11) is not chanted. Chanting starts promptly at 9 am and Chapters 1 through 25 are read. Then at 11am, Chapters 26 through 28, then back to Chapters 1 through 16 are read. After lunch, starting at 2pm, Chapters 21 through 28 are read. Then finally at 4pm, Chapters 27 and 28 are read. Chanting here is extremely fast as each service lasts at most 30 minutes including Odaimoku and invocation reading. It was hard to keep up at first but eventually I was able to chant with everyone. Also at certain times, chanting went at a slower pace so that I could read each character and become more familiar with "So-Yohon".

It is very important to read each kanji character perfectly as these are the words of the Buddha and any deviation from pronunciation may deviate from the intended meaning. In English, reading is straight forward; but in Japanese, there are many different characters and reading of those characters, thus different pronunciations has different meanings. This is very difficult for me as my mouth will not move to make the necessary vocalization.

I have to re-train myself in speaking Japanese without a western accent. For example, this character "令" in Romanized form is written as "ryō" of which I pronounce the "ō" as "oo" and with a flat, even tone. Well actually, the Romanized form should be read as "ryou" with the "ou" being more of a rounded tone. This small difference makes a big difference to all the other ministers chanting alongside me.

I also think that the Chanting Test for the 100 day Aragyō will be critical of how each of the characters is read. This then becomes a linguistic problem that I have to overcome as well as recognize all the different characters. Note that the kanji characters are old Chinese characters of which many are no longer used in current Japanese print, thus compounding the difficulty. Of the three versions of "So-Yohon" that I have, in some cases, all three have different characters representing the same meaning. So, I have relegated to sticking with one version and trying to learn from this in order not to add to the confusion. This is a daunting task as I will have to be able to read perfectly in a few short weeks. I am working hard and I know eventually everything will "click", just waiting for my "eureka" moment.

EVENTS

May

Morning Chanting (Everyone Welcome)	Daily 7:00 a.m.
Deity <i>Daikoku</i> Blessing	3 rd (Wed) 10:30 a.m.
Monthly Blessing Ceremony	6 th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.
Shodai-gyo (Chanting & Meditation)	13 th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.
Sunday English Service	20 th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.
Sunday Service	27 th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.

Study Class on Buddhism for beginners

Wednesdays 7:30 p.m.

June

Morning Chanting (Everyone Welcome)

Daily 7:00 a.m.

Monthly Blessing Ceremony

3rd (Sun) 10:30 a.m.

Shodai-gyo (Chanting & Meditation)

10th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.

Preparation for Moving to the new location

17th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.

Sunday Service at the new location

24th (Sun) 10:30 a.m. @ the New Location

Study Class on Buddhism for beginners

Wednesdays 7:30 p.m. (No Class on 13th)

Rev. Shokai Kanai will visit Japan from June 11th to 16th for World Ministers Meeting.