

SACRED WORDS

You (Abutsbo) asked me in your letter, the meaning of Many-Treasures Buddha's appearance riding in the treasure stupa from the underground in Chapter 11 of the Lotus Sutra.

I shall answer this for you. There is no treasure stupa except the men and women who take refuge in the Lotus Sutra in the Declining Latter Age of the Dharma. In other words the person who chants "Namu Myoho Renge Kyo" is the Many-Treasures Buddha. The Sacred Title of the Lotus Sutra is the treasure stupa. The treasure stupa is "Namu Myoho Renge Kyo." Your body is consisted of the five elements of universe such as soil, water, fire, air, and void. These five elements are the five letters of "Myo-Ho-Ren-Ge-Kyo." Therefore you are the treasure stupa, and the stupa is you, Abutusbo. You should not think anything else. ...

You may think that you made offerings to Many-Treasures Buddha, but actually you offered to yourself, because we have three aspects of Buddha (Dharma Buddha, Reward Buddha, and Manifestation Buddha). Please keep that in mind and chant "Namu Myoho Renge Kyo." The place you chant the Odaimoku is the place the treasure stupa exists.

Nichiren – "Letter to Abutsbo"

OBON MEMORIAL SERVICE

July 22, Sun, 10:30 a.m.

Obon Memorial Service originated during the time of Sakyamuni Buddha. One of his disciples, Maudgalyayana's mother was saved from suffering of starvation in hell caused by her selfish conduct in order to raise his lovely son.

Let us show our appreciation to the deceased parents, grandparents and all our ancestors. Please write your name and your ancestors' names or loved one's who passed away on the enclosed prayer form and return it to the Kannon Temple of Nevada with your donation. Or you may send a list of ancestors and your name with your donation to the Kannon Temple of Neva.

We will also pray for all victims of the Eastern Japan earthquake and tsunami disasters.

Enshrining the Statue of the One Stupa with Two Buddhas

Rev. Shokai Kanai

Reading RADIANCE No. 27, many people made contributions toward the statue of the one stupa with two Buddhas. I deeply appreciate them. I would like to explain why I want to enshrine the Gohonzon.

The statue signifies the treasure stupa that appeared from the underground in Chapter 11 of the Lotus Sutra. "Namu Myoho Renge Kyo" is written on the stupa. Two Buddhas are Sakyamuni on the left side of the stupa and Many-Treasures Buddha on the right side.

There are many names of Buddhas that appear in many different sutras, but Sakyamuni Buddha is the only one who appeared physically on this earth. All the other Buddhas are from other worlds or planets or imaginary Buddhas. There are many statues of Sakyamuni Buddha such as the state of a baby, meditating before his Enlightenment under the bodhi tree, Enlightened one, preaching, and Nirvana (physical death). None of these statues signifies the Buddha preaching the Lotus Sutra. It is only the statue of the one stupa and two Buddhas sitting side by side that signifies the time the Buddha revealing the Lotus Sutra.

Nichiren Shu respects only the Lotus Sutra, which is the highest true teaching of the Eternal Buddha. The members rely and place their trust in it. Most Buddhists and scholars think that Sakyamuni left the palace of Sakya Clan, sat under the bodhi tree to meditate and attained Enlightenment; however, the Buddha says in the sutra, "To tell the truth, it is many hundreds of thousands of billions of *nayutas* of *kalpas* since I became the Buddha." {Murano's translation, p. 241} This Buddha is called the Original Buddha, who reached Enlightenment far before the Big Bang, thus he is also call the Eternal Buddha. He is considered the source of all Buddhas. Physical Sakyamuni Buddha is one manifestation of the Original Buddha in order to show us that everyone can be a Buddha.

The Original Buddha transcends time and place; therefore, he is eternal and appears anywhere and anytime. He is with us. In the Lotus Sutra He teaches us, "Why we were born?" "Why we suffer?" "How we should live?"

For instance, what does it mean of “The Reality of All Things” revealed in Chapter 2? The teachings of the sutra are symbolized with a lotus flower which grows in a muddy pond, but is never soiled by the muddy water. In other words, this world of human beings is not like heaven without any worry or suffering, rather it is full of sufferings and turmoil just like muddy pond; however, we can bloom a beautiful flower by helping each other. This is the reality of this world.

The Lotus Sutra also teaches as follows:

“I would cause all living beings to become exactly as I am.” {Murano, P.37}

“There are many sufferings in this world. Only I can save all living beings.” {Murano, P.76}

“We have obtained innumerable treasures although we did not seek them.” {Murano, P.89}

“Having heard these teachings, they became peaceful in their present lives. In their future lives, they will have rebirths in good places.” {Murano, P.106}

“He should be considered to have appeared in the world of men out of his compassion towards all living beings.” {Murano, P.172}

“I am leaving this medicine here. Take it!” {Murano, P.245}

“They realized that the medicine had a good color, smell, and tasted. They took it, and were completely cured of the poison.” {Murano, P.245}

To take the medicine of good color, smell and taste means to chant “Namu Myoho Renge Kyo.” The teachings of the Lotus Sutra not only apply to humans but also other beings. It is not matter of belief but it is fact. In order to prove the truth, the treasure stupa appeared in Chapter 11, and Many-Treasures Buddha praised Sakyamuni Buddha in a loud voice:

“Excellent, excellent! You, Sakyamuni, have expounded to this great multitude the Sutra of the Lotus Sutra of the Wonderful Dharma. ... So it is, so it is. What you have expounded is all true.” {Murano P.181}

Thus, the statue of the One Stupa and Two Buddhas signifies that Sakyamuni Buddha preaches the Reality of All Things and Many-Treasures Buddha appears as proof of the truth. Nichiren Shonin told his disciple, Abutsubo, “The person who chants ‘Namu Myoho Renge Kyo’ is the Many-Treasures Buddha.” We must be peaceful and happy by chanting the Odaimoku. We are the people proving the true teachings of the Sutra. This is my real intention to enshrine the statue.

Please understand the enshrinement of this Gohonzon, and I sincerely request your contributions toward the fund. The other day a shipping company in Southern California called me regarding the delivery, which will be sometime August.

The cost of the statue is about \$33,000.

5th Anniversary of Kannon Temple of Nevada 2012 NONA Convention

Banquet: **Sep. 29 (Sat.) 6:30 p.m.**
 At Plaza Hotel 3rd Floor
 \$62/per person

Ceremony: **Sep. 30 (Sun.) 10:30 a.m.**
 At Plaza Hotel 3rd Floor

Luncheon: **Sep. 30 (Sun.) 11:30 a.m.**
 At Plaza Hotel 3rd Floor
 \$25/per person

Application Dead Line: Sep. 18th

Hotel Reservation Code:

SPNBK12

(Nichiren Buddhist or Kannon Temple)

9/27 & 9/30 =\$89. 9/28 & 9/29=\$149.

Call (800)634-6575

Discount Price Dead Line: August 28, 2012.

Store Front Temple

In the last newsletter, Rev. Shokai Kanai announced that the Kannon Temple of Nevada was able to sublease a store at 3385 South Jones Boulevard, so he planned to move the temple there in June.

However, he was overexcited and did not realize an important clause stipulated in the permit, "You will be required to comply with all conditions prior to the issuance of a building permit or a business license, which occurs first." He went to the County Building Department

with a floor plan and found out the plan must be drawn by a professional and also told that since the space has a capacity of over 15 people for worship, two toilets must be installed. A kind architect drew a floor plan with all the necessary requirements for free, but now a general constructor must draw another set of floor plans detailing plumbing, electricity, walls, etc. This process takes time and money.

There are many lease offices or stores in Las Vegas, but unfortunately they do not like to have religious groups coming in. We are blessed in having this location and the start of our future development. With your prayers and support, we can make this transition as quickly as possible.

A Point of View

IQ Curry

Kumiko Kanai

Day time temperature in Las Vegas is over 100 degree almost every day. It is too hot to go outside, so I spend my time indoors reading. I would like to share an article from a newspaper that a friend sent me.

Curry makes us have good appetite even in hot summer. According to a research done by scientists, our I.Q. will go up seven points. How do we analyze this data? Neuroscientist Kenichiro Mogi examined one group eating stew with curry and other group, stew without curry. With data collected from brain scans, the amount of cerebral blood flow at the prefrontal cortex increased with the group who ate curry stew. According to him the frontal lobe is a control tower. A researcher in America twelve years ago found that this area is activated when people try to solve harder questions.

With that in mind, Mr. Mogi tested the two groups to see how many questions were answered within a short period of time. He reached the conclusion that seven points of IQ went up for those who ate curry. But he warned that eating curry often does not mean you become smarter. Because Japanese youth in these days take the easy route, he tries to encourage them to eat curry and challenge themselves in doing something harder.

What do you think about this article? Those who do not like to eat curry, would you like take the challenge and eat curry from now on?

HELLO FROM JAPAN (3)

Rev. Douglas Shoda Kanai

As I left off in the last newsletter, I was in the process of studying chanting in order to pass a very important test. This test took place on June 15th. So, the day before the test, I took the bullet train to Tokyo and met with several Overseas Ministers who were in Tokyo for the 9th World Kaikyoshi Conference. I was glad to be able to meet everyone and finally be able to speak in English for the first time in six months! I really do not use English at all, only when I think and speak to little kids (there is a push now in Japan to teach English starting from kindergarten and upwards, the belief being that pronunciation would be better if started at a young age). I think being able to speak English, helped me relax a bit before the test.

As for the test, it was grueling; a very nerve-wracking experience. All first timers to Aragyō must pass this test in order to be considered. As this is a voluntary practice, there are certain criteria that must be met and the big one is chanting, since the majority of the hours spent each day will be chanting and done really, really fast. If I could not chant, then my time inside would be considerably harder and very uncomfortable. In order for this to not happen, the passing of the test is required. After what seemed like an eternity, I was given the go-ahead, I passed! I could not relax on the bullet train ride home as I thought about all the work done in the past six months that helped me accomplish this test. I reached the top of one arduous mountain, but now I see more mountains to climb. I would like to celebrate, but now there is even greater work to be done.

Now that I will likely be accepted to this year's Aragyō, there is much more to learn. There are several special prayers that need to be memorized. I could try to learn these once inside, but after talking with others who have gone through Aragyō, there is no time. Once the ascetic practice starts, there is no time to think, only to react. Chanting and prayers must become automatic, as if I could do it in my sleep. Even then, it might not be enough. I only have a few short months and must be ready to climb these mountains and summit many more, in order to be ready before I start my intense 100 day training on November 1st.

