

### 3 Immeasurable Meanings Derive From the One Law

*Niji seson. Ju sanmai. Anjo ni ki. Go sharihotsu. Sho-but<sup>chi</sup>-e. Jinjin muryo. Go chi-e mon. Nange nannyu. Issai sho-mon. Hyaku-shi-but<sup>su</sup>. Sho fu no chi.*

**At that time the World-Honored One calmly arose from his samadhi and addressed Shariputra, saying: “The wisdom of the Buddhas is infinitely profound and immeasurable. The door to this wisdom is difficult to understand and difficult to enter. Not one of the voice-hearers or pratyekabuddhas is able to comprehend it. (LS2, 23)**

AT the outset of “Expedient Means,” Shakyamuni arises serenely from *samadhi* and begins expounding the teaching of the Lotus Sutra. *Samadhi*, or meditative concentration, means to focus one’s mind on one point so that it becomes perfectly tranquil and still like a clear mirror, and thereby enter a state of inner serenity. Shakyamuni enters *samadhi* early in the “Introduction,” the first chapter of the sutra, and continues meditating throughout the chapter.

Even though the sutra speaks of Shakyamuni entering *samadhi*, or meditative concentration, this does not mean that in the Latter Day of the Law people should seclude themselves in mountains and forests and practice sitting meditation or contemplation. Nichiren Daishonin, who struggled in the very midst of society to enable all people to attain supreme enlightenment, rejects such practices as not suited to the time.

Needless to say, in the present age *samadhi* or “meditative concentration” means doing gongyo and chanting daimoku. We do not, however, carry out this practice of “meditative concentration” secluded in mountains and forests. Rather, on the foundation of our practice of gongyo and daimoku, each day we polish our lives, draw forth infinite wisdom and courage, and go out into society. This is the discipline we are carrying out.

Contemplation or meditation for its own sake is absurd. In the Vimalakirti Sutra, Shakyamuni clearly explains that true meditation is not solitary contemplation beneath a tree but playing an active role in society while embracing the truth.

Mahatma Gandhi, to someone who urged that he pursue a life of meditation, is said to have remarked that he felt no need to withdraw to a cave for that purpose. He carried the cave with him, he said, wherever he went. This episode is characteristic of Gandhi, who devoted his life to taking action and practicing among the people.

Buddhism is not a religion that closes its eyes to people’s suffering; it is a teaching that opens people’s eyes. Therefore, Buddhism is the path that enables people to become happy. To turn away our eyes from the contradictions of society and rid ourselves of all worldly thoughts is not the way of Buddhist practice.

The true spirit of meditation lies in manifesting our innate wisdom in society and resolutely struggling for the happiness of ourselves and others, and to construct a

better society.

## The Daishonin Stood Up for All Humankind

THE specific type of *samadhi* Shakyamuni entered is termed “meditation on the truth that immeasurable meanings derive from the one Law.” This Law from which immeasurable meanings derive is the foundation of all teachings. Thus the Muryogi Sutra reads, “Immeasurable meanings are born from a single Law.” Shakyamuni expounded the Lotus Sutra from the standpoint of this great truth to which he had become enlightened.

Nichiren Daishonin clarified that this “single Law” is Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. He revealed this fundamental Law of the universe for all people and expressed it so that anyone can practice it. He expounded it for the sake of the entire world and for all humanity.

Nichiren Daishonin stood up to expound the Law of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo for the happiness of all people. This is what the phrase “calmly arose from his *samadhi*” signifies in terms of its implicit meaning.

In practical terms from our own standpoint, “immeasurable meanings are born from a single Law” means precisely that by believing in and embracing the Mystic Law, we can acquire the Buddha’s infinite wisdom. By doing gongyo and chanting daimoku, we cause our lives to shine with supreme wisdom and advance along the path of genuine victory in life. Each day, starting from the prime point of life, we can refresh our vitality.

Therefore, please be confident that SGI members who pray with the determination, “I will fight again today,” “I will do my best tomorrow, too,” and who stand up for kosen-rufu in society are themselves practicing “calmly arising from *samadhi*” each morning and evening.

## The ‘Unsolicited and Spontaneous Teaching’

SHAKYAMUNI, having arisen from *samadhi*, spontaneously begins to expound the Lotus Sutra without anyone first requesting him to do so. This manner of preaching, where the Buddha expounds the Law on his own initiative without any question having been put to him, is termed the “unsolicited and spontaneous teaching.”

The doctrine Shakyamuni spontaneously and serenely begins to expound is so profound that his disciples could not have imagined it, let alone have asked him to teach it. In this, we see the outpouring of wisdom and compassion that impelled Shakyamuni to expound the Lotus Sutra.

It is of profound significance that Shakyamuni employs the “unsolicited and spontaneous teaching” format as he begins to expound the Lotus Sutra. All sutras other than the Lotus are provisional teachings expounded “according to others’ minds” (*zuitai*), that is, according to the capacity of his listeners; and as such do not represent the Buddha’s true intention. By contrast, the Lotus Sutra is described as “according with [the Buddha’s] own mind” (*zuijii*), because in this

sutra Shakyamuni reveals the truth directly, in accordance with his own enlightenment.

The Daishonin's declaration of the establishment of the Buddhism of the Latter Day of the Law is another instance of "unsolicited and spontaneous teaching." With regard to establishing his teaching, the Daishonin says: "If I speak out, I am fully aware that I will have to contend with the three obstacles and the four devils" (MW-2 [2nd ed.], 95). He knew, in other words, that if he spread the Mystic Law, he was certain to encounter persecution.

Nonetheless, without being asked by anyone, he began to expound the teaching of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. In his lifetime struggles, the Daishonin was carrying out the practice of *zuijii*.

In terms of our own practice, *zuijii* indicates the spontaneous spirit to praise the Mystic Law out of profound recognition of its greatness, no matter what anyone might say. Such admiration for the Mystic Law is the essential reason we recite the sutra during gongyo.

*Zuijii* also indicates the attitude of "propagating the Law to the full extent of one's ability," the irrepressible desire to teach and explain to others even a single word or phrase. By contrast, if you talk about the Mystic Law because you have been told to do so, or in the belief that it will make others think highly of you, then you are following the practice of *zuitai*, or acting "according to others' minds."

Broadly speaking, the "unsolicited and spontaneous teaching" and the practice of *zuijii* indicate autonomous and self-motivated action. It does not matter if your words are plain, or if you are not a talented speaker; what is important is to pray earnestly with the determination for others to become happy and to tell others candidly about the greatness of Buddhism—with conviction and in your own words. This is the spirit of the Lotus Sutra, and the spirit of the Soka Gakkai.

### **The Buddha Seeks To Enable All People To Attain the Same Enlightened State of Life**

SHAKYAMUNI starts out by telling Shariputra: "The wisdom of the Buddhas is infinitely profound and immeasurable. The door to this wisdom is difficult to understand and difficult to enter. Not one of the voice-hearers or *pratyekabuddhas* is able to comprehend it." This statement extols the great wisdom of the Buddha.

The "wisdom of the Buddhas" is the wisdom that shines like a sun within the Buddha. Shakyamuni praises this wisdom as being "infinitely profound and immeasurable." He calls the Buddha's wisdom "infinitely profound" because it penetrates down to the truth that is the very foundation of life. The Buddha's wisdom is said to be "immeasurable" because its light broadly illuminates all things.

The wisdom of the Buddhas profoundly and broadly illuminates and reveals life in its entirety. Therefore, the Buddha's state of life is said to be "expansive and profound." Likening the Buddha's state of life to a great tree or a mighty river, T'ien-t'ai says: "The deeper the roots, the more prolific the branches. The

farther the source, the longer the stream” (MW-4, 272).

Shakyamuni is not praising the wisdom of the Buddhas to say that the Buddha alone is great. In fact, it is just the opposite; his purpose is to encourage others. In effect, he is saying: “Therefore, all of you, too, should make this same great wisdom of the Buddha shine in your own lives and become happy.”

Wisdom is the path to happiness. Money, skill at “getting by” in the world, status—none of these can enable us to overcome the fundamental sufferings of birth, old age, sickness and death. The only way is to cultivate the wisdom with which our lives are inherently endowed.

The purpose of the Lotus Sutra is to enable all people to cultivate supreme wisdom in their hearts and advance along the great path of indestructible happiness. The Daishonin says, “The treasures of the heart are the most valuable of all” (MW-2 [2nd ed.], 238). That is why Shakyamuni starts out by extolling the wisdom of the Buddhas, which is the supreme wisdom.

The next passage reads, “The door to this wisdom is difficult to understand and difficult to enter.” Here Shakyamuni again praises the Buddha wisdom but from a slightly different perspective.

The “door to this wisdom” is the door to the realm of Buddha wisdom. The various teachings Shakyamuni expounded were means for enabling people to enter the realm of this wisdom. Prior to the Lotus Sutra, he had expounded various teachings in accordance with his listeners’ diverse capacities. At different times, for example, he taught that life is suffering; that nothing is constant; that happiness lies in extinguishing all desires; and that people should seek to awaken to the principle of dependent origination.

In this way, Shakyamuni, exercising the wisdom of the Buddha, expounded teachings that matched the various capacities of the people. However, these individual teachings did not represent the Buddha’s true purpose. The purpose of his teaching, rather, lay in enabling all people to enter the path of wisdom, the path for becoming a Buddha.

This purpose of the Buddha cannot be understood by the wisdom of people of the two vehicles of Learning (voice-hearers) and Realization (*pratyekabuddhas*). Even though such people may understand the contents of his teaching, they cannot fathom his reason for expounding it.

Their very satisfaction with individual teachings that explained life’s impermanence or the need to eradicate desires prevented them from entering the realm of the wisdom of the Buddha who had expounded these doctrines. They reached the gate, as it were, and then stopped. Therefore, Shakyamuni says this wisdom is “difficult to understand and difficult to enter.”

### **Regard Suffering and Joy As Facts of Life**

IN the foregoing, I have discussed the literal or surface meaning of this passage. President Toda explained this passage from the standpoint of its implicit meaning as follows:

The line, "The wisdom of the Buddhas is infinitely profound and immeasurable" means that the wisdom of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo is infinitely profound and immeasurable. The passage, "The door to this wisdom is difficult to understand and difficult to enter," refers to the "door of faith" in the Gohonzon. By substituting faith for wisdom, we can enter the "door to this wisdom." This door is "difficult to understand and difficult to enter."

As the Daishonin indicates where he says, "'Wisdom' means Nam-myoho-renge-kyo" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 725), Nam-myoho-renge-kyo contains the infinitely profound and immeasurable wisdom of the Buddhas in its entirety. And the door to enter the wisdom of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo is the "door of faith." Thus the Daishonin says, "'Door' means faith" (*Ibid.*, p. 715).

If we believe in the Gohonzon and exert ourselves in practice and study as the Daishonin teaches, then, in accordance with the principle of "substituting faith for wisdom," we can develop a state of life of supreme happiness. This is what it means to enter the "door of faith," to advance along the path of attaining Buddhahood in this lifetime.

However, carrying through with faith becomes difficult when we encounter waves of adversity in life. At such times, people may forget that faith is the "door of wisdom." Instead, filled with complaint, they are tossed about helplessly on the rough seas. Or again, they may fear suffering and give themselves over to lives of pleasure and ease. In this sense, as well, the "door of faith" is difficult to understand and difficult to enter.

For precisely this reason, the Daishonin says, "Regard both suffering and joy as facts of life and continue chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo" (MW-1, 161).

Nam-myoho-renge-kyo is the wellspring of the wisdom of all Buddhas. And gongyo is a "ceremony of *kuon ganjo*" in which we return to the very foundation of our lives and draw wisdom from the great ocean of the world of Buddhahood. □