

## 6 The Daishonin Established the 'Object of Worship Never Known Before'

*Joju jinjin. Mi-zo-u ho.*

**He has realized the Law that is profound and never known before,... (LS2, 23–24)**

### All People Are Entities of the Mystic Law

ACCORDING to this passage, the Mystic Law in which we believe is the supreme teaching that has “never been known before.” When I read these words, I feel as though the dawn were spreading before my eyes.

In the past, Shakyamuni served countless Buddhas and carried out an immeasurable number of religious practices. This passage says that as a result of his arduous practice for enlightenment over a period of countless kalpas, he “has realized the Law that is profound and never known before.”

T'ien-t'ai explains that “profound” means “reaching the very foundation of enlightenment.” And “never known before” indicates that until then, no one had known of this Law, and that Shakyamuni himself hadn't known of it until he attained enlightenment.

It was therefore certainly beyond the ken of the people of the nine worlds, including the people of the two vehicles and the bodhisattvas. That's why a little later in “Expedient Means” Shakyamuni says, “[The true entity of all phenomena] can only be understood and shared between Buddhas” (LS2, 24). In other words, it is a Law that can only be comprehended by Buddhas.

### The Lotus Sutra Makes Public the 'Secret Teaching' for Attaining Buddhahood

THE Lotus Sutra is the teaching that reveals this “Law ... never known before,” this Law that “can only be understood and shared between Buddhas.”

The pre-Lotus Sutra teachings were all expounded “according to others' minds” (*zuitai*), that is, according to the capacities of the people of the nine worlds. For the people of the nine worlds, therefore, the Lotus Sutra is a teaching they have never before heard; and in this sense, too, it is a Law “never known before.”

The Lotus Sutra makes public to all people the “secret teaching” “understood and shared [only] between Buddhas” that has never been known before. A genuine “secret teaching” is not something kept to oneself, hidden from others and used to create an aura of mystery or to appropriate authority to oneself.

The Nikken sect's authoritarianism is evidence that they totally fail to understand the heart of the Lotus Sutra.

When the proper “time” arrives, a genuine “secret teaching” should be expounded vociferously and spread to cure the ills of all humankind and its brilliant force thus proven. That is the purpose of this “secret teaching,” of this “Law that is profound

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and never known before.”

In many Goshos, Nichiren Daishonin refers to the Gohonzon of the Three Great Secret Laws as a “great mandala that has never before been known.” In one place, he says: “Even in the Lotus Sutra Shakyamuni only revealed it (the Gohonzon) in the ‘Life Span’ chapter; and in the ‘Supernatural Powers’ (Jinriki) chapter he entrusted it to the Bodhisattvas of the Earth” (MW-3, 64–65).

In another place, he states:

After the Buddha’s death, in the two thousand years of the Former and Middle Days of the Law, not even the term “object of worship of the essential teaching” was mentioned, let alone the object itself being inscribed.... T’ien-t’ai, Miao-lo and Dengyo ... never expounded it.... Nichiren was the first to inscribe this great mandala (MW-1, 211).

Nichiren Daishonin bestowed upon all people of the Latter Day of the Law the great “secret teaching” known only to Buddhas in the form of the “object of worship that has never before been known.” And toward that end he underwent great persecutions.

It is important to bear in mind the Daishonin’s immense compassion as revealed by his actions to spread this teaching. And for the same reason, it is important to practice faith based on a profound sense of gratitude and joy.

The “Law that is profound and never known before” manifests in our lives when we have ardent faith in the “great mandala that has never before been known.”

### **Advance With the Pride of Bodhisattvas of the Earth Creating a New Dawn of Human History**

PRESIDENT Toda explained the passage “He has realized the Law that is profound and never known before,” as follows: “This refers to the establishment of the Dai-Gohonzon of the Buddhism of sowing in Nichiren Daishonin’s own life.”

The “Law that is profound and never known before” does not exist somewhere else. It manifests in the living bodies, the actual lives of us [who embrace the Gohonzon]. In the well-known Goshō “On the Treasure Tower,” the Daishonin says, “Those who chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, irrespective of social status, are themselves Treasure Tower and likewise they themselves are Taho Buddha” (MW-1, 30).

We should erect the Treasure Tower of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo within our lives, he is saying. This is the spirit that imbues the passage “He has realized the Law that is profound and never known before.”

Not only Shakyamuni, but all people can awaken to the “Law that is profound and never known before.” All people can establish the Treasure Tower in their lives and shine brilliantly as entities of the Treasure Tower. In time, the earth will teem with countless shining Treasure Towers of life. From the standpoint of the Daishonin’s Buddhism, this will constitute the actual proof of the passage “He

has realized the Law that is profound and never known before.” We are opening an unprecedented dawn in human history by means of the great and unprecedented Mystic Law.

Because it is a teaching never known before, votaries and courageous Bodhisattvas of the Earth never known before must appear in order to spread it. President Toda said, “We are members of the Soka Gakkai family, Bodhisattvas of the Earth, who have emerged from the earth to accomplish the unprecedented widespread propagation of the Law.” We have inherited President Toda’s spirit and are striving to carry out this “practice never known before.”

Please be confident that in advancing this “unprecedented movement of kosen-rufu,” we will receive immeasurable and boundless good fortune and blessings, the likes of which have never been known before.

### **The SGI Puts the Daishonin’s Intention Into Practice**

*Zui gi sho setsu. Ishu nange.*

**...and [he] preaches [this Law] in accordance with what is appropriate, yet his intention is difficult to understand. (LS2, 24)**

IN this passage, Shakyamuni explains why the “door to the wisdom” of the Buddhas is difficult to understand and difficult to enter.

Shakyamuni indicates that the pre-Lotus Sutra teachings were expounded according to the various capacities of the people of the nine worlds, and that he has not yet explained his intention—that is, the Buddha’s true intention in expounding his teaching—and that no one has yet comprehended it.

It is no simple matter to directly expound the “Law that is profound and never known before,” which the Buddha has attained as the result of bold practice. That’s because the difference in level of understanding between the Buddha and other beings is so great.

Even were the Buddha to expound the true teaching, should the people’s understanding be incomplete, there would be the danger they would develop doubt, destroy the Law and fall into the three evil paths of existence.

Shakyamuni, immediately after attaining the Way beneath the Bodhi tree, at first hesitated to expound the Law. However, he realized that unless he expounded his teaching right then and there, people would be forever locked in the darkness of delusion. Herein lay the inner conflict of Shakyamuni, who pioneered the Way for the enlightenment of all human beings. Overcoming his dilemma, he began to expound the Law.

So that people could gain a correct and unerring understanding of the Law, Shakyamuni, exercising every ounce of his wisdom, continuously pondered how he could convey his enlightenment to as many people as possible. He taxed his ingenuity. Such was Shak-yamuni’s compassion. Wisdom is born of compassion.

The teachings for people of the three vehicles (of Learning, Realization and Bodhisattva) certainly were set forth according to the people’s various capacities.

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The Buddha expounded the way of the voice-hearers, the way of the *pratyekabuddhas*, and the way of the bodhisattvas, tailoring each teaching to the understanding of each of these groups. In this way, he enabled them to arrive at the “door to the wisdom” of the Buddhas. This was the expedient purpose of the provisional teachings that preceded the Lotus Sutra.

In this passage, Shakyamuni says that he “preaches it in accordance with what is appropriate.” In other words, he expounds the Law in accordance with what is appropriate to the capacities of the people.

The Buddha’s true intention was always to expound the supreme vehicle of Buddhahood, the path for all people to become Buddhas. However, the voice-hearers and the *pratyekabuddhas* do not understand this. Having grown attached to provisional teachings, they fail to understand that the Buddha’s true intention is to enable all people without exception to become Buddhas. They do not comprehend the true teaching that makes all people Buddhas. This is the meaning of “his intention is difficult to understand.”

Needless to say, the Buddha did not go out of his way to make his preaching difficult to understand. Rather, the Buddha’s intention is difficult to understand because of the disbelief and the attachments of those who receive his teaching.

When people’s hearts are closed, they cannot readily accept even sound reasoning. This suggests just how fearful is attachment to mistaken ideas. Such attachment can destroy a person’s life.

In fact, the three powerful enemies persecute the Lotus Sutra’s votaries precisely because, failing to understand the heart of the Lotus Sutra (“his intention is difficult to understand”), they remain attached to provisional teachings. The sutra says, “The evil monks of that muddied age, failing to understand the Buddha’s expedient means, how he preaches the Law in accordance with what is appropriate, will confront us with foul language.” (LS13, 195)

Evil priests of the muddied Latter Day of the Law, failing to understand that the teachings expounded before the Lotus Sutra are all “expedient means” taught “in accordance with what is appropriate,” become attached to these shallow teachings. As a result, they bear malice toward and persecute the votaries of the Lotus Sutra, who refute the teachings they uphold.

Those who fail to understand and who distort the Buddha’s true intention will persecute those who practice exactly as the Buddha taught. And in any age, the former will be numerous and the latter few.

## **The Shout of Justice, the Victory of the True Teaching**

IN a polluted and evil society, those who persecute the votaries of the Lotus Sutra will spread malicious rumors and try to turn public opinion against the votaries. And they will seek to drive off people of justice.

Since this is a muddied world of such inverted proprieties, we need to raise the cry of truth and justice persistently. We must win and show proof of the correct teaching.

After the Daishonin died, his correct teaching was protected because Nikko

Shonin stood up alone. Had Nikko Shonin remained silent, then no doubt a history of the “justice of the five senior priests” would have emerged. Instead, Nikko Shonin strictly refuted the erroneous teachings of the five senior priests.

The five senior priests did not understand the Daishonin’s “intention,” the true intention of the original Buddha. The Daishonin’s sole intention was to accomplish the widespread propagation of the object of worship of the Three Great Secret Laws and enable all people of the Latter Day of the Law to become happy.

The five senior priests lost sight of the spirit of the Daishonin, who revealed the Three Great Secret Laws. Nikko Sho-nin alone followed and served the Daishonin continually, endured persecutions together with him and boldly developed propagation of his teaching in strict accordance with the mentor’s instructions. Because he struggled at one in spirit with the mentor, he understood the Daishonin’s intention.

You can tell whether the spirit of the mentor has been handed down correctly by looking at the conduct of the disciple. No matter how people may claim to uphold the Three Great Secret Laws, if they are not taking action for kosen-rufu out of the desire for the happiness of all people, then we can only conclude that they have lost sight of the Daishonin’s intention.

Seven hundred years after the Daishonin’s struggle to spread the teaching in the face of persecution, when his spirit was truly on the verge of becoming extinguished, the Soka Gakkai appeared. The Soka Gakkai is a body that has directly inherited his true teaching and that advances in accord with his will and decree.

The SGI, which is directly connected to the Daishonin, and which thoroughly bases itself on the Gohonzon and the Gosho, is the only body of harmoniously united believers who are correctly passing on what the Daishonin intended.

As glorious “verifiers of the correct teaching,” let us speak out for kosen-rufu with lofty pride and dignity and with golden eloquence, not begrudging our voices.

### **‘If We Do Not Harbor Doubts in Our Hearts’ We Can Definitely Attain the Summit of Happiness**

PRESIDENT Toda explained the meaning of the line “his intention is difficult to understand” as it applies to our practice:

Whereas the Buddha sees what is to come, for us the future is totally dark, and we can only see what has already passed. For this reason, it is difficult for us to awaken to the heart of the Gohonzon. It is enough that we believe wholeheartedly in the Gohonzon, no matter what. If we do so, then we will definitely receive benefit. It is no good if we start doubting along the way.

He is discussing the ultimate meaning of faith. Firm faith in the Gohonzon leads to the highest “wisdom.” This is the principle of “substituting faith for wisdom.”

Nichiren Daishonin's intent is to enable all people to become Buddhas. Therefore, it is impossible that those who embrace his Buddhism throughout their lives could fail to realize true happiness.

In the course of our practice, however, various things arise on account of the negative causes and tendencies in our own lives. There may be times when we think, "What did I do to deserve this?" But we should not be swayed every time some such phenomena arise; for it is already certain that we will become happy in the end. We should regard everything that happens to us in our practice to reach the destination of happiness as our training. If we do so, then later on we will see the profound "meaning" and "intention" underlying each of these phenomena.

The Daishonin says, "If we do not harbor doubts in our hearts, we will as a matter of course attain Buddhahood" (MW-2 [2nd ed.], 180). Those who avoid succumbing to doubts no matter what happens are winners in faith. They are people who truly understand the Daishonin's intention. □