

Shed the Mystic Law's Light on Each Person

The following article by SGI Deputy President Einosuke Akiya appears in the January 1997 Daibyakurenge, the Soka Gakkai study journal.

The “Emerging From the Earth” (15th) chapter of the Lotus Sutra describes the world trembling and splitting open and countless Bodhisattvas of the Earth coming up out of the ground. These hitherto unknown bodhisattvas suddenly appear in all parts of the world.

Society today has become deadlocked in all areas, and suffering plagues the lives of many. People's hearts are closed tight, as though walled off behind barriers of rock, and they are assailed by a sense of powerlessness.

At the same time, those in power display a shocking recklessness. Conditions today mirror those of the Daishonin's day; it is a “time of trouble, when there is little that ordinary people can do” (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 6, p. 281). This is truly the strife-ridden *saha* world that the sutras describe. But because of this state of affairs, there is great potential for kosen-rufu — in every sphere of society.

With the dawn of the 21st century just ahead, SGI members, as Bodhisattvas of the Earth, have now appeared in all parts of the world and are vigorously and cheerfully developing kosen-rufu in a synchronous global advance. It is the discussion meeting and one-on-one dialogue that have and will continue to call forth these bodhisattvas. When we gain people's understanding through dialogue, our circle of human relations becomes the driving force for the expansion of kosen-rufu.

Based on this principle, we, the members of the SGI, have stood up shoulder to shoulder in unity. And with the struggles of the successive presidents as our fundamental spirit, from one person to the next we have forged bonds of united struggle for kosen-rufu. The emergence of courageous Bodhisattvas of the Earth on a global scale represents the sum total of these efforts.

The SGI movement in every respect begins with treasuring the individual. Everything begins with the human revolution of a single person, and this causes a ripple effect that reaches countless others.

Everyone has the right to become happy. Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism is the Buddhism of the sun; its light shines equally on all. The “Acceleration” chapter of *The New Human Revolution* describes the dramatic transformation of an impoverished, war-torn community in Fukuoka, Japan. The people in the area were living in the shadows of Japanese society and had been ignored and forgotten by the government. Yet they realized happiness through the light of the Mystic Law.

At the start of the Ceremony in the Air described in the “Emergence of the Treasure Tower” (11th) chapter of the Lotus Sutra, there is a scene where the people in the assembly, gazing up at Shakyamuni and Many Treasures Buddha seated side-by-side high above in the Treasure Tower, express the wish to join these Buddhas in the sky. Shakyamuni immediately uses his transcendental powers to lift the members of the assembly into the air (*The Lotus Sutra*, trans. by Burton Watson, p. 176). Interpreting this passage, Nichiren Daishonin teaches that all people can participate in the Ceremony in the Air and manifest “the enlightened nature they inherently possess” (MW-1, 212). The great power of the Mystic Law illuminates the lives of all people without exception.

In another letter, the Daishonin says that the “Treasure Tower” chapter “exists within the body” of each person (MW-5, 273–74). In other words, each person is the Treasure Tower.

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Our movement to encourage others with the spirit to treasure each individual is, in a sense, a movement to expand the Ceremony in the Air, to fill the world with Treasure Towers.

Because this is such a polluted age, those who embrace solid conviction and belief shine all the more. In the SGI's commitment to treasuring the individual, many leading thinkers and people of conscience find cause for hope that society will overcome its present stagnation in the 21st century.

From the standpoint of the 10,000 years and more of the Latter Day of the Law, we are still in the pioneering stage. Our long march has only just begun. Now, once again, each embodying the spirit of the SGI, let us hoist high the tricolor flag of victory, glory and peace and joyfully raise our voices in song. During the coming Year of Advancement Toward the New Century, while encouraging one another, let us work to build an age of the people through conducting steadfast, grass-roots dialogue.

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