

- 1) Even though we are able to chant Namu Myoho Renge Kyo, easily, we should realize that it is the very essence of the Eternal Buddha.

We should receive the Daimoku as the master of the Buddha's of the ten directions and as the mother of all the Buddha's of the past, present and future (the 3 Ages). It represents the field only the Eternal Buddha had gained by his unsurpassed merits, so it can not be explained by human words, nor be imagined by human thoughts (Myo the wonderfulness). Even great Bodhisattvas could not presume what it is. How are we able to do that then?

- 2) The way to explain the Wonderful Dharma of the Daimoku (the Wonderful Dharma = the Daimoku) by our words or the way to imagine it by our thoughts would be closed and unsuccessful. We should not perceive it through our minds, rather should try to believe it by our hearts.

Through this belief in the Wonderful Dharma, our founder, the Bodhisattva Nichiren, received the Daimoku in the Treasure Tower on Mt. Sacred Eagle by the Eternal Buddha. Then he realized that his existence came in the Age of Degeneration as the Buddha's messenger; as the manifestation of the Original Disciple. That is why he emphasized and recommended mainly the power of belief to people (the 4 kinds of devotes).

- 3) Hearing the teachings of Nichiren Shonin, the superior ones (like great Bodhisattvas) would be able to unite with the Dharma World immediately. The commons (or most of us) would need strenuous practice to enter there, and the rest would just be able to become related to it. And there would be some who would even try to reject it.

Nevertheless, in spite of these differences of the ways to receive the Wonderful Dharma, all people of the different levels are able to meet the just one essence. That is the teaching of Namu Myoho Renge Kyo. And that is the great way, which had been revealed by our founder, the Bodhisattva Nichiren.

And if one could reach enlightenment immediately just after hearing the teachings, they might not need practice (like a great Bodhisattva). That may be true. Yet in order to achieve the unsurpassed enlightenment, the most of us need strenuous practice through chanting the name of the Wonderful Dharma, the Daimoku, from the bottom of our hearts.

- 4) The way to chant the Daimoku is as follows.

First of all, when we chant the Daimoku, we should think that the Wonderful Dharma harmoniously contains the whole 3,000 Realms, and that in chanting it, there is no difference between the subject and the object. (The Daimoku transcends the self. We are not chanting it independently)

Just by ourselves or by our will, yet we are not forced to chant it by some external causes as well. To chant the Daimoku goes beyond our internal causes and the environmental ones.) That is, the cause of chanting it and the reality of chanting it, the philosophy of chanting it and the reality of chanting it; is united.

- 5) According to the standpoint of the 3,000 Realms in one thought, when we have the mind of Hell like hatred, the whole Dharma World becomes Hell. On the contrary, when we have the mind of the Buddha, the whole Dharma World becomes the Buddha's Land. We should try to live in that Buddha's Land as long as possible, holding the mind of the Buddha, and actually this mind lays our minds of chanting Namu Myoho Renge Kyo.

- 6) So when we think of the Daimoku even briefly, we could unite with the Dharma World immediately, and when we chant it even just one time, our bodies become the bodies of the Buddha's of the past, present and future. All the Buddha's of the ten directions would rejoice through hearing our chanting, and all the gods and dragons would respect us. Every time chanting the Daimoku, Namu Myoho Renge Kyo, we should think of that way, we should believe in that way, and should never have doubt on it even a bit.

- 7) Leaving the judgment and the tastes of the self, and leaving the consideration and guessing of the self, we should make our minds straight like an arrow and smooth like a whetstone. Do not think about the past. Do not think about the future. But just chant Namu Myoho Renge Kyo at the present moment. From a moment to the next, we should continue to chant it and concentrate on chanting it, coming with chanting the Daimoku and going with chanting it, coming with concentrating on it and going with concentrating on it, while thinking that when we chant the Daimoku for a moment, we are Buddha's for a moment; that when we chant it for a day, we are Buddha's for a day; and that when we chant it for million years. we are Buddha's for million years.

- 8) When you are chanting the Daimoku, if your mind is distracted with worldly thoughts, you should immediately concentrate again on chanting it (while becoming aware that your mind has worldly thoughts now), and try to keep your mind and body pure in order not to let yourself become negligent. Or in case you did wrongful deeds of body, speech or mind (the 3 Conducts), first of all, we should repent of them deeply, thinking that the Buddha would never do such things, and next, chant the Daimoku body and soul, trying to distribute your merits of the chanting towards the whole Dharma World. Then, if you could succeed chanting it continuously body and soul; the power of the Dharma, the power of the Buddha and the power of your faith would be united together, and those powers secretly give you the unsurpassed merits, which make your trouble disappear naturally, and in the result, you would be startled to suddenly become aware of the indescribable freedom and harmony of the wonderful integration of all the 3,000 realms.

These ways to chant the Daimoku are the very essence within the essence of the chanting and the very simplicity within the simplicity of pronouncing it. We should now that this way of chanting the Daimoku is the thoroughly wonderful and mysterious gate.

- 9) Although we are in the Age of Degeneration, now we have been able to receive this Wonderful Dharma. It would be impossible to fleet it if we might not have made the wonderful causes to meet it in our previous lives. (To be able to meet the Daimoku is actually to have some connection with the Eternal Buddha's in our previous lives.) Cherishing this precious opportunity, we should endeavor and practice it in order to gain the vast merits of Enlightenment. And do not take it easy. Do not waste this slight-but-mysterious relation we have with the Wonderful Dharma.
- 10) At the same time, we should fully pay attention to not thinking that chanting the Daimoku eliminates the sin of the wrong deeds; because in reality one thought you may have equals the 3,000 Realms. That is, one thought represents the whole world. This is the standpoint of the 3,000 realms in one passing thought. So one wrongful thought makes the world go wrong, and one correct thought makes the world go in right way. Chanting the Daimoku with a wrongful thought is like making the nectar become the poison.
- 11) Nichiren Shonin said, "The point of becoming Buddha's is to chant the Daimoku, Namu Myoho Renge Kyo without ego, arrogance, partiality, and attachment."

Also he said, "Without deep faith, one would suffer more in the next life, having the appearance of Hell at passing away, and that there should be no one but himself to be blamed." If you want to become enlightened, think over and over these words of our founder.

- 12) At this point, you may ask if there would really be some merits or good effects; even if one does not understand the essence of the Wonderful Dharma 110 matter how hard he tries

Again, Nichiren Shonin said, "Although a baby did not notice the taste of his mother's milk, it raises him naturally. Most of us do not know the complicated prescription of some medicines, but they actually heal us." Just to imagine salted pickles even stops thirsty. When such superficial examples in the world are able to have some effects on us, how could we guess the immeasurable power of the Wonderful Dharma?

- 13) Even if the practitioner could not understand its significance, the 4 wonderful virtues of the Buddha; Permanency, Peace, Independency and Purity, would converge on his mind and the power of the 4 virtues would support him. We should realize that one does not maintain the Dharma, but the Dharma maintains him (one of the Four Dependence). To chant Namu Myoho Renge Kyo is like getting on the ship to go to the other shore. Even rejecting this Wonderful Dharma has more merits than just to make offerings to the Buddha's statues, so how huge the merits of believing in it cannot be described. We should continue to keep this Wonderful Dharma while chanting Namu Myoho Renge Kyo. And when you are at the tiller of Buddhist practice, while getting on the ship of the one Buddha vehicle; it would not take a long time to reach the port of the Buddha's Land.

We are truly blessed to be able to endeavor at this living time.

(General interpretation made by Kanshin Mochida, May 25, 2003)



A SUMMARY OF NICHIREN BUDDHISM

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