

To My Friends of Each Division Engaged in Our Shared Struggle—Part 3 [of 6]

The Many Treasures Group—Your Brilliant Contributions Will Shine in the History of Kosen-rufu

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Hello everyone, welcome to the November study Podcast.

Congratulations to the great success of the “Shine as the Rainbow of Hope” Youth Festivals last month and the October commemorative district meetings commemorating the 60th anniversary of SGI President Ikeda’s first visit to Canada, October 11-13, 1960 as part of his first trip for worldwide kosen-rufu in October 1960!

President Ikeda’s lecture for this month’s study is the lecture series To My Friends of Each Division Engaged in Our Shared Struggle—Part 3, The Many Treasures Group—Your Brilliant Contributions Will Shine in the History of Kosen-rufu. This lecture is dedicated especially to the Many Treasure Group who are members 65 years and older.

SGI Canada development from no membership in 1960 to more than 10,000 current membership is a remarkable achievement by all members in unity with Sensei and surmounted difficulties in their lives to open up kosen rufu in Canada. Some of the members from the earlier years of practice are now in the Many Treasures Group and they continue their fighting spirit contributing to the Canadian kosen rufu movement without retreat. In the lecture today, Sensei is explaining the importance of The Many Treasures Group.

Now Sensei’s lecture!

President Ikeda continues to pray, day after day and month after month, for the good health, long life, and happiness of these men and women who have made outstanding contributions that will shine in the history of kosen-rufu. The pioneer members are truly

treasures of Soka.

Many Treasures Group are imparting courage and conviction to our younger members, good fortune and benefit to their families and loved ones, and hope to future generations. They have advanced kosen-rufu while surmounting countless obstacles and changing karma into mission. There is no doubt that their lives will shine eternally as “wonderful stories without compare”. In this lecture, Sensei has explored two Goshō passages with the Many Treasures Group.

The first Goshō passage is from the letter titled “On the Treasure Tower” to his disciple Abutsu-bo. In it, he reveals that Abutsu-bo’s life is a supremely noble treasure tower.

It is the treasure tower adorned with the seven kinds of treasures—hearing the correct teaching, believing it, keeping the precepts, engaging in meditation, practicing assiduously, renouncing one’s attachments, and reflecting on oneself. You [Abutsu-bo] may think you offered gifts to the treasure tower of the Thus Come One Many Treasures, but that is not so. You offered them to yourself. You, yourself, are a Thus Come One [a Buddha] who is originally enlightened and endowed with the three bodies. You should chant Nam-myōhō-renge-kyō with this conviction. Then the place where you chant daimoku will become the dwelling place of the treasure tower. The [“Treasure Tower” (11th) chapter of the Lotus Sutra] reads, “If there is any place where the Lotus Sutra is preached, then my treasure tower will come forth and appear in that spot” [cf. LSOC11, 210]. (WND-1, 299–300; “On the Treasure Tower”)

In the 11th chapter of the Lotus Sutra “The Emergence of the Treasure Tower”, a tower suddenly rises out of the earth and stands suspended in the air. It is a colossal, magnificent tower adorned with seven kinds of precious materials, such as gold, silver, and lapis lazuli. Inside the tower is Many Treasures Buddha, who affirms that everything Shakyamuni Buddha has taught is true.

In the passage, the Daishonin teaches that the treasure tower is nothing other than our own lives, and the seven precious materials symbolize our own essential brilliance. These “seven kinds of treasures” represent the seven indispensable elements of Buddhist practice. Today, these seven indispensable elements of Buddhist practice serve as

guidelines for our human revolution—our inner transformation—and are all inherent in our daily Soka Gakkai activities.

The members of the Many Treasures Group will continue to advance with a fresh spirit and live out their golden years triumphantly and without a single regret. They have the mission of demonstrating that an aging society is a society imbued with happiness, and that a maturing society is a fulfilled society. Shakyamuni taught that those who cherish the elderly attain an increase in life, beauty, happiness, and strength.

In society today, as the average life span increases, we are seeing a steady rise in the number of issues relating to aging, sickness, and death. But regardless of circumstances, the “treasures of the heart” that we have accumulated through connecting our lives with the Mystic Law and the realm of kosen-rufu can never be destroyed. They are forever indestructible and adorn our lives lifetime after lifetime.

Those who embrace the Mystic Law are changing poison into medicine and accumulating good fortune that will flow on to their descendants for generations to come. In the final chapter of our lives, our wealth in terms of “treasures of the heart” is unshakable proof of our good fortune; it signals that we have established a state of genuine absolute happiness.

The Daishonin is stressing the importance of each of us chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo with the deep conviction that we are the treasure tower, we are a Buddha. “The place where you chant daimoku [Nam-myoho-renge-kyo] will become the dwelling place of the treasure tower”, writes the Daishonin. the place where we are right now is the treasure land.

What is important is that we continue taking action to realize the Daishonin’s ideal of “establishing the correct teaching for the peace of the land.” Let us keep striving to positively transform our environment firmly convinced that the place where we are right now is the Land of Eternally Tranquil Light.

The 2nd Goshō passage from the “Letter to Niike” reads,

**Be diligent in developing your faith until the last moment of your life.
Otherwise you will have regrets. (WND-1, 1027; “Letter to Niike”)**

True faith means remaining steadfast in our Buddhist practice until the very end. We must not feel that we have done enough and can take a break in our “journey of faith.” We must never abandon our faith altogether.

The spirit of the Buddha is to strive with unflagging determination to keep going to the last moment. With that spirit, each step we take will be a step toward triumph in the final accounting of our lives. Let us remain active and energetic no matter what our age, and continue to encourage and support each other, and cheer one another on. This will cause boundless joy, fulfillment, and good fortune to well forth in our lives. Mr. Makiguchi started practicing Nichiren Buddhism at the age of 57, and he continued to energetically share the practice and proclaim its greatness to others well into his 60s and 70s.

In “Letter to Niike,” the Daishonin points out to his disciple Niike that if he ends the 12-day journey it takes to get from Kamakura to Kyoto a day early, he will not be able to reach his destination. He also encourages Niike to seek out a “good friend” who has gained a profound understanding of the Lotus Sutra and to continue his “journey of faith”.

President Ikeda teaches that to attain Buddhahood in this lifetime and help others do the same, we need to strive wholeheartedly in faith while living out our lives together with the Soka Gakkai. The key is to continue seeking the way, challenging ourselves, and giving our all. This explains why it is essential that we practice with the spirit of striving even one more day. With pure and steadfast faith, we can bring our lives and our efforts for kosen-rufu to a magnificent completion.

Although we may not be as mobile as we age, we can encourage others over the phone or in writing. We can chant for their happiness and victory. The Many Treasures Group members presence is a great source of inspiration.

The purpose of our Buddhist practice is to attain indestructible happiness, no matter what. It enables us to continue our eternal journey experiencing joy in both life and death.

The Mystic Law is “the great lantern that illuminates the long night of the sufferings of birth and death”. Our efforts for kosen-rufu day after day guarantee us an unsurpassed life state, and we will enjoy “peace and security in [our] present existence and good

circumstances in future existences”, as well as “perpetual youth and eternal life”. It also assures us that we will continue our mission for kosen-rufu, “constantly being reborn in various Buddha lands together with our mentor”.

As a conclusion, it is important for us to continue our mission of kosen-rufu and enable everyone to attain Buddhahood in this lifetime! This month provides us a golden opportunity for us to reflect upon our mission and practice as we will be commemorating the 90th anniversary of the Soka Gakkai founding on November 18th, 1930. The three eternal presidents have opened the worldwide path of kosen rufu. It is vital for us to continue with the noble mission and enable everyone to attain their Buddhahood in this lifetime.

Thanks very much