

No. 15 (May, 2010)

SACRED WORDS

Anyone who keeps reads and recites this sutra, and understands the meanings of it, will be given helping hands by one thousand Buddhas immediately after his present life. He will be fearless. He will not fall into any evil region. He will be reborn in the Tusita Heaven. There he will go to Maitreya Bodhisattva who, adorned with the thirty-two marks, will be surrounded by great Bodhisattvas, and attended on by hundreds of thousands of billions of goddesses.

The Lotus Sutra Chapter 28

One Million Times Odaimoku Chanting

By Rev. Shokai Kanai

“I have a short temper.” “I get upset very easily.” “I am selfish.” “I am forgetful.” “I sometimes do not follow the rule.” “I am lazy.” If any of these statements are true, I recommend that you chant “Namu Myo-ho Ren-ge Kyo” many times every day.

On April 1, I declared to chant the Odaimoku one million times, together with your help. After I called several members to help start this pronouncement, the count of chanting the Odaimoku has already reached 17,000 times by April 28.

There are many benefits that you will receive when you chant the Odaimoku. You will be grateful to offer, will follow the rules and laws, will be patient, will continue to endeavor, will have a calm mind and periodically will have wisdom.

To chant the Odaimoku is an act of gratitude to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. It is also an offering to your deceased loved ones. The best gift to them is the offering of Odaimoku. They will attain Nirvana and reach the Buddha Land by listening to your chanting. In return you will attain Buddhahood, too.

“Namu Myo-ho Ren-ge Kyo” is your vow to follow the Buddha Dharma, the constitution of the country and the rules of whichever society you belong to. Even if you do not know the benefits, when you chant the Odaimoku, you naturally follow the community rules, family rules and universal laws little by little. What this means is that you will naturally harmonize yourself with nature and the rules of your community. A good example is traffic rules, you naturally follow the signals and obey the signs.

When you chant the Odaimoku thousand times a day every day, you will realize that you are less angry and less upset. You will be more patient, which will make this society a much safer place.

In order to chant for hundreds or thousands times a day for many days and months, you need patience and effort. This effort will make you have more endeavored in your study and work.

When you chant more often, your mind will become calmer and you prefer to be in a quiet place rather than noisy places.

When your mind is calm, you will have better understanding and remember what you need to do. While you chant, you often get some inspiration or remember what you have forgotten.

This chanting can be done by anyone regardless of your faith. Please mark the count you did every day on the enclosed card. I recommend you to use a counter. You can find one anywhere. When you have chanted over 10,000 times, send the pink sheet back to the Kannon Temple of Nevada. Rev. Kanai will send you a certificate with a picture of Kannon Bodhisattva on a lotus petal. The first certificate will be credit card size, so put it in your wallet as an amulet and after that he will send a larger size to be kept in your *Butsudan* or family shrine. Later, at the time when you leave this material world, place it in the casket as a token to go to the Buddha Land.

GIVING

Rev. Shoda Douglas Kanai

Recently, I had an opportunity to move on to another career path. Though this move was sudden and unexpected, the reaction from my fellow co-workers amazed me. They were all upset because they would miss me but also because they would miss my presence. Sometimes you do not know how much of an impact you make until you are gone. I knew I was helpful but not to the extent shown. Every day I would listen to them and give advice. Sometimes they just needed someone to talk to or have someone listen to them. Every time they left my office, they felt better. Now, with me gone, they are lost and uncertain. It was very difficult to leave these wonderful relationships where I could continue to engage in great conversation. But it was time to move on and possibly help other people.

Being a minister affords me the chance to listen and visit many people. Over the last weekend in April, I traveled to Salt Lake City, Utah for a solemn occasion. Salt Lake City was where I was born. The last time I visited was over 25 years ago on a family trip. The city has changed and was very unrecognizable. Though I did not recall many faces

and names, everyone knew who I was and could not believe that I was grown up. I was delighted by how their faces lit up when they recalled stories of when I was just a young boy. I was touched by their appreciation, as well as they appreciated me coming to Salt Lake City.

These two events caused me to wonder, how much of an impact one can make on other people's lives? What joy could one bring to them? Sometimes one does not know how much of an impact or how nice they are until they leave or have introspection. One helps others because they just do. It is not because I am a minister or in an elevated position.

The Lotus Sutra states that we are all Bodhisattvas, who along with working on our own salvation also help others find salvation too. So think about all the relationships you have, good and bad, recent and old. Are you making an impact in their lives? Are you giving advice? Are you teaching them? Are you learning from them? Bring joy, touch other people's hearts. This action is "Giving" which is the first of the Six Paramitas followed by Bodhisattvas. Help others and you will be on your way in obtaining Buddhahood.

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