
LET US PRACTICE ODAIMOKU.

“Namu” means adoration. “Myoho Renge Kyo” is the formal title of the Lotus Sutra. So when we recite the Odaimoku, we can leave behind our own selfishness and unify with the Lotus Sutra, which is the Buddha himself. Therefore, through reciting the Odaimoku, we are able to receive the Buddha’s benevolence and approach Buddhahood. Even though Namu Myoho Renge Kyo is a short phrase, it contains the Buddha’s wisdom, awareness and compassion, and contains the same merit as the whole Lotus Sutra.

However, some people may wonder how it could be beneficial to them without knowing the teaching of the Lotus Sutra. A baby drinks milk and grows naturally without knowing why the milk is good. When you are sick, you take medicine prescribed by a doctor and get well even though you don’t know what the ingredients are.

RELIGION IS NOT NECESSARY IN THE REALM OF REASON, BUT IS IN THE REALM OF EXPERIENCE.

It is the state beyond explanation by words. Although we may explain the shape, color, and texture of a banana to someone who has never tasted one, we can never completely describe the exact taste. But if we show the same person a banana, peel off its skin and let him eat it, he can learn first-hand what a banana is. In the same way, we can be aware of the realm of faith through the experience. The Buddha’s teaching is not theory of life, but A WAY OF LIFE. Therefore, we should practice reciting Odaimoku as part of our experience of life. And we will open up a new world of faith.

It is ideal if you can face the Great Mandala, put your hands together in Gassho and chant Namu Myoho Renge Kyo. But since the Odaimoku contains all of the

Buddha’s wisdom and compassion, even while walking or working, whenever and wherever we recite Namu Myoho Renge Kyo, we will sense an “AWARENESS” of the “WISDOM” and “COMPASSION” of the Lord Buddha.

LET US HAVE FAITH IN THE
ODAIMOKU

Namu Myoho Renge Kyo.

LET US SINCERELY RECITE THE
ODAIMOKU

Namu Myoho Renge Kyo.

Your life will be revitalized. You will find a
bright, joyful and happy life.



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Odaimoku



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I understand that the followers of Nichiren Shu practice chanting

“Namu Myoho Renge Kyo”.

I am not familiar with that practice. Please explain what “Namu Myoho Renge Kyo” is, and how to practice.

A

“Namu Myoho Renge Kyo” is called the Odaimoku, literally, the “Sacred Title”. In Nichiren Shu, the practice of chanting the Odaimoku is the most fundamental and important practice in attaining Buddhahood.

NAMU MYOHO RENGE KYO AS AWARENESS OF THE LORD BUDDHA

Prince Siddhartha of the Śākya Clan made a long, profound search for the Ultimate Truth, and He finally attained Buddhahood through his great wisdom and experience. He then revealed His awareness of the supreme reality and taught the way to those of us who are suffering in this Saha World. If we follow His teaching sincerely and faithfully, we will have the same awareness which the Buddha experienced.

Nichiren Shōnin teaches:

“Śakyamuni Buddha’s merit of practicing the bodhisattva way leading to Buddhahood, as well as that of preaching and saving all living beings since His attainment of Buddhahood, are altogether contained in the five words of myo, ho, ren, ge, and kyo (Lotus Sutra of the Wonderful Dharma), and that consequently, when we uphold the five words, the merits which He accumulated before and after His attainment of Buddhahood are naturally transferred to us.”

(Kanjin Honzon-Sho)

NAMU MYOHO RENGE KYO AS WISDOM OF THE LORD BUDDHA

Buddha means the Enlightened One who has Perfect Wisdom. The Buddha revealed the Ultimate Truth to us as wisdom in the Odaimoku, Namu Myoho Renge Kyo. Therefore, Namu Myoho Renge Kyo is not different from the identity of the Lord Buddha.

NAMU MYOHO RENGE KYO AS COMPASSION OF THE LORD BUDDHA

The Odaimoku is the Buddha’s great compassion. It is warm and lively. When we recite Namu Myoho Renge Kyo, we will receive the great compassion of the Lord Buddha. Since we will be happy when we receive someone’s compassion, everyone who receives the Lord

Buddha’s great compassion will feel full of new power, physically and spiritually. We will not be afraid of anything whenever we face difficulty, and we will overcome it.

Nichiren Shōnin teaches:

“Namu Myoho Renge Kyo is not only the true spirit of the Lord Buddha, but the heart, body and teachings of the Lotus Sutra.”

(A Letter replying to Soya Nyudo)

ODAIMOKU IS THE ESSENCE OF THE LOTUS SUTRA

It is said that there are about 84,000 Buddhist scriptures in the compilation called Issai-Kyō (All Sutras) or Daizō-Kyō (Great Storage of Sutras). The Lotus Sutra is the sutra which unifies all of the other sutras and expounds the Ultimate Truth. In the Lotus Sutra, the Buddha revealed his origin as the Eternal Original Buddha. The Buddha says in the Sutra, “Once I vowed that I would cause all living beings to become exactly as I am.” That is, He tried to relieve us from suffering and make each of us like Him. Although we might think that it is difficult to be saved no matter how much we might wish it, we will be saved by the Lord Buddha, and can save others as well. This is His great compassion. And this great Truth is taught in the Lotus Sutra.

The Lotus Sutra is composed of 28 chapters, so it takes some time to read it through. It is also more difficult to understand than many of other sutras. In this modern society, called the Mappo Period, or Declining Latter Age of the Dharma, we are all so busy that we don’t take much time to read the Sutra. Nichiren Shōnin found the most important and sacred Dharma, which had been expounded by the Eternal Buddha in Ch. 16, “Duration of Life of the Tathagata”, and revealed it to us. This Dharma is the Odaimoku, Namu Myoho Renge Kyo, which has the same merit as reading and understanding the whole Lotus Sutra.