Vice President Tsuji’s Guidance Bring Forth Many Immeasurable Benefits

The following is the text of guidance given by Soka Gakkai Vice President Takehisa Tsuji to the participants in the youth division summer training course at the Soka Gakkai Headquarters in Tokyo, on July 26, 1987.

Through the Seikyo Shimbun, I read all the beautiful guidance that President Ikeda gave to you when he was in Miami in February. I know that you are already familiar with the basics of Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism, but I am going to talk to you for a period of about one hour in order to help you deepen your faith and conviction toward the law of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo - to really make it your own.

The chandelier in this room is very, very beautiful, isn't it? It's possible to see the beautiful light from this beautiful chandelier because we have been able to manifest the law of electricity in the form of electricity. The law of electricity itself - although it exists in the air in the atmosphere in which we live - is not visible. The law of electricity is a law which exists worldwide - it is a worldwide, international law. However, it took a man by the name of Edison to invent the light bulb, enabling us to manifest electricity in the manner we are using it right now.

Before Edison invented the light bulb, people used candles and other simple light sources. Many people found out that electricity was convenient and it provided a better means of light. The law of electricity - in the form of the light bulb - was dispersed throughout the world; therefore, we can light the way for global kosen-rufu.

We also have the phenomenon of electromagnetic waves which exist in the air. These, too, are invisible, just like the law of electricity that I was talking about; and a man by the name of Bell invented an apparatus called the telephone, which utilized electromagnetic waves. In Japan, where there was no telephone, people had to communicate by means of messenger on horseback, and people had to travel back and forth over long distances to convey messages. After Bell came up with his invention, the telephone was “propagated” or distributed throughout the world. People everywhere are now using it, and in Japan almost every single home now has a telephone. In a sense, this telephone could be called a kind of wave.

It is only about 100 years since the telephone was invented by Bell, but, similarly, like the law of electricity and the phenomenon of electromagnetic waves, there exists another law in our environment and our universe - what we call a law of life. The Gohonzon is actually a crystallization or an embodiment of this law of life that exists throughout the universe. Just as Edison manifested the law of electricity in the light bulb, Nichiren Daishonin found or was enlightened to the existence of the law of life in the universe and he embodied it in the form of the Gohonzon. Edison invented the light bulb around 100 years ago, but it has been 700 years since Nichiren Daishonin first inscribed the Gohonzon.

Although you may see it manifested in the light bulb and the telephone, the law of electricity does not enable you to overcome disease. It does not enable you to calm hysterics and, for most problems, it will not give you a solution. But, if you know the law of life or if you have something that embodies the law of life, you will be able to overcome disease and you will be able to change your karma.

People understood quickly that the light bulb was very convenient and its use became widespread throughout the world. Now everybody is using the light bulb in various forms and shapes. Although it is true that Nam-myoho-renge-kyo is the law of life that
enables people to solve many kinds of problems in their lives, people have not really understood why Nam-myoho-renge-kyo is even more important or even better than having light bulbs in their homes. Nearly 700 years ago, Nichiren Daishonin was trying to convince people of the importance of the law of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo.

For those who opposed the practice or could not understand what Nichiren Daishonin meant or doubted the validity of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, it's comparable to their having been told that the telephone would be very convenient, and then responding that they don't need the telephone and wouldn't use it, choosing instead to walk many, many miles in order to communicate with other people.

The light bulb invented by Edison is now being produced and utilized by many, many people throughout the world, but during Nichiren Daishonin's lifetime, there was only a handful of people who were practicing. Nichiren Daishonin was very sorry that people didn't understand the validity of the law of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, and would have to suffer from disease or poverty or from the various kinds of problems that were occurring in their lives.

Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism is actually like the sun which sheds light upon the entire world. It sheds light on every single tree and plant that exists on this earth - cherishing it and treasuring every single living thing which exists on this earth. Chanting to the Gohonzon, which is the embodiment of the law of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, is like turning on the switch to that sunshine. If you turn the switch on, you'll see Nam-myoho-renge-kyo start to work. The way to switch it on is by chanting to the Gohonzon. And when you're not chanting to the Gohonzon, you are switching it off.

The fact is that the state of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo exists in every single one of us. There are other kinds of states of life which exist within us as well, for example, the state of hysterics and the state of joy. When you chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, when you pray to the Gohonzon, the state of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo - the highest state of life - is brought up from within you.

Let's say somebody tells you a lie. The state of anger may arise inside and you will feel very angry at the person who told the lie. If that state of anger did not exist in you, you would never be angry. Because it exists, you experience it.

You've seen Mount Fuji, right? When people see Mount Fuji on a very clear day, they all feel joyful to see such a beautiful mountain. Again, that's because they themselves have that state of joy inside. It's not that Mount Fuji is creating the joy; it's because they have that state of joy within themselves. When you make a connection to that beautiful mountain which you see externally, you feel joy in yourself. The same is true when you see beautiful scenery in Hawaii, Miami or Niagara Falls. If you see something beautiful, you feel joy because that state of joy is in yourself. Scenery does not have the capacity to say anything, to say, "I am beautiful." You enjoy the scenery because you have a state of joy within yourself.

Let's say you see a crocodile. The crocodile itself is a fierce animal, but you feel very scared because you have that state of fear inside you. If you don't have that state of fear in you, no matter how fierce an animal you see, you will not be scared. Let's say there is a panda, a very cute panda. You feel that it is cute and you feel very good because it seems very amicable. You find yourself experiencing many states of life when you see different kinds of animals at the zoo.
Another good example is enjoying music. When you hear beautiful music - say from a record you feel very joyous. You hear the beautiful music and you have the state of mind that the music you are listening to is beautiful. You make a connection with the music through your ears.

When you see beautiful scenery like Mount Fuji, you make a connection to your inner joy through your eyes.

When you are chanting to the Gohonzon, the Gohonzon itself is an embodiment of the environment of Nam-myoho-RENGe-kyo, the law of life. Although the Gohonzon exists outside of you, when you are chanting, that same state of life exists in yourself. You are able to bring forth Nam-myoho-RENGe-kyo, the same type of life as embodied in the Gohonzon, from within you through your gongyo and daimoku. It is as though Gohonzon were the invisible form of Nam-myoho-RENGe-kyo and you yourself are the invisible form of Nam-myoho-RENGe-kyo. You can't see it in yourself but you can see it embodied in the Gohonzon. Therefore, when you chant to the Gohonzon, it's similar to connecting yourself to Nam-myoho-RENGe-kyo with a wire. Actually, you can communicate with the Gohonzon like two people on a wireless (two-way radio) - in other words, you can become one with the Gohonzon.

Let's say there is just a terrible lightning storm. Now, because the human body also has electricity inside, when lightning strikes you, you make a connection with the lightning and you may be electrocuted. On the other hand, when you connect with the Gohonzon it's just the opposite - you get rejuvenated.

A connection can also exist between human beings. Let's say there is a man and a woman who connect with each other by falling in love. Each likes something about the other and that causes them to want to start dating each other. Nichiren Daishonin said that when you chant to the Gohonzon, you should actually chant as though you are with your boyfriend or girlfriend, because when you feel like you really need the boyfriend or girlfriend, you really seek to be with that person. When you chant to the Gohonzon or when you do gongyo with that kind of attitude, with that state of emotion, you get a much stronger effect. That is what is meant by the phrase "yearning to see the Buddha."

Also, Nichiren Daishonin said, when you chant to the Gohonzon, do it so that you'll be able to bring forth that profound state of life from within you. The Daishonin says that when you chant you should try to let the state of Nam-myoho-RENGe-kyo emerge from the depths of your life, and, as you slowly and very carefully chant Nam-myoho-RENGe-kyo, let each of the daimoku that you are chanting circulate throughout your body, even through your bones and your bone marrow.

When the circulation of Nam-myoho-RENGe-kyo reaches your stomach, you can, for example, get rid of ulcers and stomach disease. When it reaches your lungs or your chest, you can get rid of those diseases which inhabit your lungs or your heart. When you are able to circulate Nam-myoho-RENGe-kyo all the way to your head, you can even cure brain cancer. You can circulate Nam-myoho-RENGe-kyo to any part of your body that is diseased, and get rid of the disease.

Nichiren Daishonin also says that you should try to chant Nam-myoho-RENGe-kyo in
the same manner in which you would wash your face - in other words, when you try to wash it as clean as possible. When you chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, it is just like cleansing yourself, cleansing every single part of your body.

If you have rheumatism in your hands or feet, and if you are able to bring forth Nam-myoho-renge-kyo from within yourself, let it emerge from the depths of your life and let it circulate to the tip of your hands or feet and your rheumatism can be cured.

I just explained one aspect of the practice, which is trying to let Nam-myoho-renge-kyo emerge from within yourself and let every single part of your body absorb the force of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. But, in addition to letting the law of life emerge from within your own life, you must also make efforts to propagate it throughout your environment, or, on a larger scale, throughout the world.

Jigyo means to practice for yourself. Keta involves other people, or your environment - doing shakubuku. A member named Yoshio is also a famous sumo wrestler who won eight fights in a row. He told me that the reason he was able to win eight in a row was because once when he was chanting he remembered this guidance that I just shared with you - to try to chant so that he could let Nam-myoho-renge-kyo circulate throughout his body, letting every single part of his body absorb the force of power of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. When he really felt that he was chanting in this way, he was able to win eight fights in a row.

Although this sumo wrestler wasn't one to read or study much, he was able to remember my guidance, put it into practice and really feel from the depths of his heart that he was tapping Nam-myoho-renge-kyo in himself. He called me the night after he won his eighth fight in a row. He called me very late in the evening to tell me that this had happened, and thanked me for the fact that it was because of this guidance that he was able to win.

So, when you chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, it is just like having a fire engine. Let's say a fire breaks out and somebody calls the fire department. When they get the call, the fire engines immediately go to the spot where the fire is burning and try to extinguish it.

When you chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, it's just like a fire engine trying to extinguish whatever problems or sufferings you are encountering. Sometimes we call it "faith like water;" right? It's like extinguishing with the water whatever problems you are encountering. When you are really chanting and you are really happy that you are practicing this faith, then many, many fire engines will come to get rid of the fire that is burning in your life. However, when you are just chanting along, not really happy, or you are complaining about your practice, then maybe only one fire truck will come out.

I think when you are extremely angry, every single part of you experiences the state of anger. Again, it's the same when you chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. Then, what happens is that the state of Buddhahood fills your life. That is why you feel extreme joy. So when you chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, what happens is that Nam-myoho-renge-kyo is absorbed throughout your body and circulates throughout your body, and you enter the state of Buddhahood.
In the Gosho it states that we are all children of the Buddha. Also, it says that our bodies themselves are equivalent to Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. For example, our head is equivalent to myo, and our throat to ho. Our chest is equivalent to ren, and our stomachs to ge. Our hands and feet are equivalent to kyo. That is why the Gosho says that when you chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, your entire body itself becomes a tower of Myoho-renge-kyo.

The most essential thing for us to understand is that our entire body is actually the environment of Myoho-renge-kyo and contains the power of Myoho-renge-kyo. By chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, it enables you to become the tower of Myoho-renge-kyo. So, when we say Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, nam is a word which signifies respect for the Gohonzon. Chanting daimoku, we are also beseeching the Gohonzon to enable us to become this tower of Myoho-renge-kyo. So, when you are able to make yourself, in reality, this tower of Myoho-renge-kyo by circulating Nam-myoho-renge-kyo throughout your body, you will be able to overcome any problem that you have within your body.

When you are doing gongyo, try to remember the passage of the Gosho which says that you yourself are the tower of Myoho-renge-kyo. Bearing this passage in mind, when you're chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo to the Gohonzon, you should try to cleanse your head, your throat, your chest, your stomach, your hands and feet, indeed every single part of your body. Continue to chant and chant to the Gohonzon, trying to cleanse every single part of your body as much as possible. At the same time keep chanting and thanking the Gohonzon for being able to do this.

In the Lotus Sutra it says mai ji sa ze nen, meaning:

This is my constant thought: how can I cause all living beings to gain entry to the highest Way and quickly attain Buddhahood.

In other words, it means to teach people that they do have Nam-myoho-renge-kyo in themselves. Now, when you're doing gongyo, what you are doing is - as I've been trying to explain to you - trying to let Nam-myoho-renge-kyo emerge from the depths of your life and circulate that Nam-myoho-renge-kyo throughout your body. You are trying to cleanse every single part of your body with every single daimoku you chant. Actually, you are trying to polish yourself or cleanse yourself internally.

There is already a way to help you polish yourself on the outside, by putting on cosmetics. But, the Soka Gakkai organization enables you both to clean and polish and train yourself within and also externally.

Nam-myoho-renge-kyo is all-powerful. That's why, when you are able to get Nam-myoho-renge-kyo to circulate, to reach every single part of your body, you are able to overcome any misdeed you have done or problems you have in your life; not only does it enable you to overcome disease or problems within your life, but when you are able to fill your entire life with Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, it will become a magnet to attract all kinds of good fortune.
You must remember, though, that you chant to the Gohonzon to be able to accumulate good fortune and to overcome problems for the purpose of kosen-rufu. You should chant to the Gohonzon that you would like to become a really fortunate person and so forth, because you would like to devote yourself for the cause of kosen-rufu. When you do that, you will see that the Gohonzon answers your prayers.

For example, let's say you want your business to become successful. When you chant to the Gohonzon that for the sake of kosen-rufu, you want your business to become very successful, then the Gohonzon will answer your prayers.

The other day I met a nine-year-old boy from Yokohama who had a brain tumor. He came to me to seek guidance. His parents took him to a hospital and the doctors said that he could not be operated on, that if they tried to operate on his brain he would probably become a living vegetable. The doctors said just to let him do anything he would like since there was no way to cure him.

Because the parents were told that the boy's condition was hopeless, they came to the headquarters to receive my guidance. I told them that doctors and medical science are not the ultimate solution. What is supreme is Myoho-renge-kyo. I told the mother that before anything, she should bear in mind that it was her karma to have a child in such a condition. I told her to really promise and pledge to the Gohonzon that she would devote herself entirely to kosen-rufu and spend every minute of her time for kosen-rufu. Based on that pledge, I told her to chant to the Gohonzon so that she would be able to change the karma that she has with her child. I also told her to chant and pledge to the Gohonzon, from today, that if this child is cured and recovers from this brain tumor, that she would take full responsibility to foster the child so that when he gets better he will devote his own life to the cause of kosen-rufu.

I told her, before she makes her prayer to the Gohonzon, to pledge herself to kosen-rufu first. I told her that when she makes he pledge, she should promise to really devote herself to the fullest, even to the extent that she is going to exert herself for the many generations of her family before her that did not practice.

I also told her that, together with her husband, they should try to chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo in front of the Gohonzon, like a missile, trying to direct or communicate all the Nam-myoho-renge-kyo to the child. I had them read, reread and remember the Gosho passage saying that the head is myo and the other parts are also Myoho-renge-kyo, and I told them that they should do this as though they were trying to bathe or cleanse that tumor that exists in their son's brain. When you bathe, you just do it externally, but when you chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, what you are trying to do is cleanse yourself internally.

After I finished my guidance, the mother immediately started to put it into
practice. As she was going home from the headquarters, she strove to chant daimoku. She went back home and told her husband about the guidance that she had received, and together they started to chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, telling themselves the head is myo of Myoho-renge-kyo. They continued to chant and chant and chant, and even the boy's grandparents started to do the same chanting together like they were shooting daimoku into the brain tumor that existed in the boy's head. The child himself also started to chant, believing that his head was myo of Myoho-renge-kyo, and after just one month the brain tumor was gone.

I myself was very surprised. Just as a doctor experiments by using many kinds of drugs and so forth to cure various diseases, I am also in a position of trying to see how the chanting of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo works on different people with different kinds of diseases. However, I can say that I am truly putting my entire life into giving guidance, and that fact in itself determines whether the person who comes to receive my guidance gets cured or solves his problem.

A women's division member living in Hachioji, near Soka University, had both breast cancer and uterine cancer and she experienced a lot of pain. I told this lady to do the same thing, that is, to get daimoku circulating first of all, and to remember, as it says in the Gosho, that her chest is the ren of Myoho-renge-kyo. I told her to chant as if Nam-myoho-renge-kyo was like a knife or a bulldozer or something that would carve out the tumors in her breast and uterus. I told her that if she was able to do that for one week straight, she would see some kind of result. I told her to carve out the tumors from both of the places that she had cancer, to get them out of her entire body. After she did so— that is, one week afterwards— for ten days she had some kind of bloody excretion. At the end of the ten days, she found out that she was rid of both of her cancers.

These examples show that the Mystic Law is far more supreme than the workings of medicine. Therefore, please bear in mind that when you are chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, you are trying to do it so that you can get rid of any kind of disease that exists within your life.

For fifteen years, the seventy-one-year-old mother of a prefecture chief had a bent back. She was hunchbacked. I told her that she should chant to circulate daimoku in her body and even let her bone marrow absorb Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. I told her to chant every single daimoku very carefully, and, as the Gosho says, to chant as though she were eating the most delicious food in the world. She tried this and as she chanted Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, again remembering the Gosho passage which says our entire body is the law of Myoho-renge-kyo, she started to feel immense joy inside. She also started to feel overwhelming appreciation toward the Gohonzon. The experience woke her up to the fact that even someone as humble as she considered herself to be had the potential, and was able, to achieve the state of Buddhahood.

At the peak of her feeling of joy she went to sleep. The next morning, when she awoke, she found that her back was straight. She couldn't believe that this actually happened. She thought maybe she was dreaming and went around her house telling everybody: "It must be a dream, it must be a dream." Yet, it was really true that she was now walking with her back straight and normal.

She also had another problem. One of her legs was three centimeters shorter than
the other one. Sometime later, after her backbone straightened, she found that her leg grew the three centimeters, and she was able to walk normally, like before.

As the mother of a prefecture chief, she had been practicing for a long time and doing gongyo continually, but the problem was that she had been complaining to the Gohonzon about why she had not been able to have a straight back after practicing for so many years.

One problem was that she felt that the Gohonzon was separate from herself. She felt that the Gohonzon existed outside herself, and she was chanting to the Gohonzon like a beggar. It's similar to the concept of Christianity - with the Gohonzon like a God outside of you, and you asking God for something. Because the grandmother had this perspective, she was not really getting the amount of benefit that she should have been getting.

Likewise, when you are chanting to the Gohonzon as if you are separate from the Gohonzon - in other words, asking an external object for help and assistance and so forth - you will see that you do not get your answer or that you do not get as much benefit as you should. It is like having a barrier between yourself and the Gohonzon; you won't get what you need because it is blocked. If you chant to the Gohonzon with the proper attitude that I've explained to you, it is like removing all barriers and the results are immediate. Through tears of joy, the woman related her story in front of 2,000 members. There was a district leader, named Izumi, who was there in the audience and he was so impressed that he went back home and told his wife. When Izumi's wife heard about the prefecture chief's mother's experience, she was very impressed.

The wife had been having some hearing problems for maybe half a year. From the very moment she heard her husband's account the old woman's great experience, she was able to regain her hearing. This was due to her tremendous state of joy she experienced upon hearing of the great power of Nam-myoho-ренге-kyo.

In addition, there was a grandmother living with the Izumi's. She had been in an accident twenty years earlier and one of her legs was six centimeters shorter than the other, which caused her some walking problems. She heard the experience of the prefecture chief's mother as well as her daughter-in-law's experience about regaining her hearing, and from that very moment, because of her own sense of joy, was able to gradually have those six centimeters of her leg grow back again.

So you see, people who have not even directly heard the guidance, but who have heard experiences of people who have been positively affected by it... because they felt tremendous joy they were immediately able to experience benefit in their own lives.

In May, a new temple opened. I went there on behalf of President Ikeda, and these two grandmothers came up to me to tell me their great experiences.

If you just try to force yourself to chant daimoku when you don't really feel like chanting, you are the loser. You just lose the many benefits you truly can receive when you chant with joy. It is a reality that within yourself you have the same Nam-myoho-ренге-kyo as embodied in the Gohonzon. However, it is very difficult to understand that point, although it is really true.
If you chant as though the Gohonzon is God, asking God for something—if you continue to have that kind of attitude—you will see that you do not get as much benefit as you can. But you have to remember that you are not actually equivalent to the Gohonzon. You are not the Gohonzon. The Gohonzon's wisdom is immense and boundless and immeasurable, but we say that through our practice to the Gohonzon we are able to receive the immense benefit which is embodied in the Gohonzon.

Let's say you fly from Los Angeles to Narita, and it takes about ten hours. The pilot knows how to fly the plane to Narita Airport.

Although the passengers do not know the particulars of flying, they feel confident that the pilot will get them safely there. Now, the pilot and the plane themselves are sort of like the Gohonzon. The Gohonzon is all-knowing, wise and so forth. You are able to get to your destination because the pilot is trained to fly you there. The point I am trying to make today is that we are not the Gohonzon itself, but through our practice to the Gohonzon we are able to bring forth the same Nam-myoho-renge-kyo within our lives and receive the many, many immeasurable benefits that are embodied in the Gohonzon.

Here is an experience from an NSA member. Three years ago, I was in San Francisco with the priests, and a woman arrived from New York. She flew about five hours to San Francisco to receive my guidance. This person had breast cancer. I gave her guidance to chant to circulate daimoku through her body, remembering the Gosho passage saying that one's entire body, including the breast, is Myoho-renge-kyo. I told her that before she goes to the doctor and goes through an operation, for three weeks she should try to chant in the manner that I had told her.

The woman wholeheartedly understood the point that I was making through my guidance, and that very day she went back and tried to chant in the way that I had told her. That very night, after she did that, she touched her breast and could not find the lump. For three weeks, she continued to chant as I had told her. When she finally went to the doctor, he confirmed that she did not have breast cancer.

There are people who see benefits immediately. But, I think for the majority of people, it takes a longer amount of time—maybe five, ten or even twenty years—to really understand wholeheartedly about the power and the validity of the Gohonzon.

I have been practicing nearly forty-seven years, and now after so many experiences I feel that, whatever happens in my life, or whatever happens to any person who comes to seek my advice, I can without any hesitation tell them what they should do immediately. I am very, very grateful to the successive presidents of the Soka Gakkai, and to the Soka Gakkai organization, which enables me to achieve this state of life. Out of appreciation, I am fully determined to devote myself every moment to the cause of kosen-rufu.

As I said in the beginning part of my lecture, people throughout the world began to use electricity through the invention of the light bulb and by other means. In the same way, through the introduction of the teaching of the law of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo on this earth, we are trying to propagate this law of Nam-myoho-renge-
kyo throughout the world in order to achieve and realize world peace, while avoiding the use of nuclear weapons. This is our mission. This is the mission that we have as Japanese - and the mission that you have as Americans. This is the mission that every member has throughout the world - to try to propagate Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism so that we will be able to see, in every nation, the end of nuclear weapons.

We must bear in mind that we need patience when we work toward that direction. The first step we must take is to bring forth Nam-myoho-reng-kyo in our lives by circulating Nam-myoho-reng-kyo in our bodies and even cleansing our blood. By doing so, we can develop strong, profound and deep faith - in other words, make a nuclear explosion of faith happen within us.

It is not enough to have small explosions happening in a large number of people. What is important is to have large explosions happening in even a handful of people. In other words, having a lot of people with deep faith is not enough. We should have a corps of people who develop strong and unshakable faith. That is why I want to encourage all of you who are going to be our central leaders of American kosen-rufu. I hope that you are able to understand what I said today, and I hope you will be able to strongly deepen your faith and receive as many benefits as possible and advance forward in your kosen-rufu movement in your country.