

## Happiness in This World



**T**HERE is no true happiness for human beings other than chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. The sutra reads, "... where living beings enjoy themselves at ease."<sup>1</sup> How could this passage mean anything but the boundless joy of the Law? Surely you are included among the "living beings." "Where" means Jambudvīpa, and Japan lies within Jambudvīpa. Could "enjoy themselves at ease" mean anything but that both our bodies and minds, lives and environments, are entities of three thousand realms in a single moment of life and Buddhas of limitless joy?<sup>2</sup> There is no true happiness other than upholding faith in the Lotus Sutra. This is what is meant by "peace and security in their present existence and good circumstances in future existences."<sup>3</sup> Though worldly troubles may

arise, never let them disturb you. No one can avoid problems, not even sages or worthies.

Drink sake only at home with your wife, and chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. Suffer what there is to suffer, enjoy what there is to enjoy. Regard both suffering and joy as facts of life, and continue chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, no matter what happens. How could this be anything other than the boundless joy of the Law? Strengthen your power of faith more than ever.

With my deep respect,  
 Nichiren

The twenty-seventh day of the sixth month in the second year of Kenji (1276), cyclical sign *hinoe-ne*

Reply to Shijo Kingo



### Background

In the third month of 1275, about one year before this letter was written, Nichiren Daishonin warned Shijo Kingo, his loyal samurai follower who was an early convert, that as a practitioner of the Lotus Sutra he must be prepared to meet further difficulties and hardships.

In the present work, the Daishonin explains the nature of true happiness. It lies, he says, in chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. Suffering is unavoidable, he adds, encouraging Shijo Kingo to "regard both suffering and joy as facts of life, and continue chanting Nam-

myoho-rengo-kyo, no matter what happens.” The Daishonin emphasizes that this is the way to experience “the

boundless joy of the Law,” or the state of Buddhahood.

## Notes

1. Lotus Sutra, chap. 16. The full passage reads, “This, my land, remains safe and tranquil, constantly filled with heavenly and human beings. The halls and pavilions in its gardens and groves are adorned with various kinds of gems. Jeweled trees abound in

flowers and fruit where living beings enjoy themselves at ease.”

2. “The Buddha of limitless joy” is the eternal Buddha who derives limitless joy from the Law.

3. Lotus Sutra, chap. 5.

