

## RISSHO ANKOKU RON<sup>1</sup>

*(On Securing the Peace of the Land Through the Propagation of True Buddhism)*

The Host exclaimed with delight: As the proverb says, the dove has changed into a hawk, the sparrow into a clam! How gratifying! You have transformed yourself through your association with me, and like the bramble growing in the hemp field, you have learned to stand up straight! If you will truly give consideration to the troubles I have been describing and put entire faith in these words of mine, then the winds will blow gently, the waves will be calm, and in no time at all we will enjoy bountiful harvests.

But a person's heart may change with the times, and the nature of a thing may alter with its surroundings. Just as the moon on the water will be tossed about by the waves, or the soldiers in the vanguard will be cowed by the swords of the enemy, so, although at this moment you may say you believe in my words, I fear that later you will forget them completely.

Now if we wish first of all to bring security to the nation and to pray for our present and future lives, then we must hasten to examine and consider the situation and take measures as soon as possible to remedy it.

Why do I say this? Because, of the seven types of disasters described in the passage from the Yakushi Sutra that I have cited earlier, five have already occurred. Only two have yet to appear, the "calamity of invasion from foreign lands" and the "calamity of revolt within one's own domain." And of the three calamities mentioned in the passage from the Daijuku Sutra, two have already made their appearance. Only one remains, the "disaster of warfare."

The different types of disaster and calamity enumerated in the Konkomyo Sutra have arisen one after the other. Only that described as "bandits and marauders from other regions invading and plundering the nation" has yet to materialize. This is the only trouble that has not yet come. And of the seven calamities listed in the Ninno sutra, six are now upon us in full force. Only one has not yet appeared, the calamity that occurs "when enemies rise up on all four sides and invade the nation."

Moreover, as the Ninno Sutra says, "When a nation becomes disordered, it is the spirits which first show signs of rampancy. Because these spirits become rampant, all the people of the nation become disordered."

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<sup>1</sup> *The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, Vol. II; *Gosho Zenshu* p. 17.

Now if we examine the present situation carefully in the light of this passage, we will see that the various spirits have for some time been rampant, and many of the people have perished. If the first predicted misfortune in the sutra has already occurred, as is obvious, then how can we doubt that the later disasters will follow? If, in punishment for the evil doctrines that are upheld, the troubles that have yet to appear should fall upon us one after the other, then it will be too late to act, will it not?

Emperors and kings have their foundation in the state and bring peace and order to the age; ministers and commoners hold possession of their fields and gardens and supply the needs of the world. But if bandits come from other regions to invade the nation, or if revolt breaks out within the domain and people's lands are seized and plundered, how can there be anything but terror and confusion? If the nation is destroyed and families are wiped out, then where can one flee for safety? If you care anything about your personal security, you should first of all pray for order and tranquility throughout the four quarters of the land, should you not?

It seems to me that, when people are in this world, they all fear what their lot may be in the life to come. So is it that some of them put their faith in heretical teachings, or pay honor to those who slander the Law. It distresses me that they should be so confused about right and wrong, and at the same time I feel pity that, having embraced Buddhism, they should have chosen the wrong kind. With the power of faith that is in their hearts, why must they vainly give credence to heretical doctrines? If they do not shake off these delusions that they cling to but continue to harbor false ideas, then they will quickly leave the world of the living and fall into the hell of incessant suffering.

Thus the Daijuku Sutra says: "Though the ruler of a state may have for countless existences in the past practiced the giving of alms, observed the precepts and abided by the principles of wisdom, if he sees that my Law, the Dharma of the Buddha, is in danger of perishing and stands idly by without doing anything to protect it, then all the inestimable store of good causes that he has accumulated through the practices just mentioned will be entirely wiped out.... Before long, the ruler will fall gravely ill, and after his life has come to an end, he will be reborn in one of the major hells.... And the same fate will befall the ruler's consort, his heir, the high ministers of the state, the lords of cities, the village heads and generals, the magistrates of districts, and the government officials."

The Ninno Sutra states: "If a man destroys the teachings of the Buddha, he will have no filial sons, no harmony with his close relatives, and no aid from the

heavenly deities. Disease and evil spirits will come day after day to torment him, disasters will descend on him incessantly, and misfortunes will dog him wherever he goes. And when he dies, he will fall into one of the three realms of Hell, Hunger or Animality. Even if he should be reborn as a human being, he will be destined to become a slave in the army. Retribution will follow as an echo follows a sound or a shadow follows a form. A person writing at night may put out the lamp, but the words he has written will still remain. It is the same with the destiny we create for ourselves in the threefold world."

The second volume of the Lotus Sutra says: "One who refuses to take faith in this sutra and instead slanders it.... After he dies, he will fall into the hell of incessant suffering." And in the Fukyo chapter in the seventh volume, it says: "For a thousand aeons they dwelt in the hell of incessant suffering and underwent great pain and torment."

In the Nirvana Sutra we read: "If a man separates himself from good friends, refuses to listen to the True Law and instead embraces evil teachings, then as a result he will sink down into the hell of incessant suffering, where he will experience indescribable torment."

When we examine this wide variety of sutras, we find that they all stress how grave a matter it is to slander the Law. How pitiful, that all men should go out of the gate of the True Law and enter so deep into the prison of these perverse dogmas! How stupid, that they should fall one after another into the snares of these evil doctrines, and remain for so long entangled in this net of slanderous teachings! They lose their way in these mists and miasmas, and sink down amid the raging flames of hell. How they must grieve! How they must suffer!

Therefore you must quickly reform the tenets that you hold in your heart and embrace the one true vehicle, the single good doctrine of the Lotus Sutra. If you do so, then the threefold world will all become the Buddha land, and how could a Buddha land ever decline? The regions in the ten directions will all become treasure realms, and how could a treasure realm ever suffer harm? If you live in a country that knows no decline or diminution, in a land that suffers no harm or disruption, then your body will find peace and security and your mind will be calm and untroubled. You must believe my words, heed what I say!

The guest said: Since it concerns both this life and the lives to come, who could fail to be cautious in a matter such as this? Who could fail to agree with you? Now when I examine the passages you have cited from the sutras we see exactly what the Buddha has said, I realize that slandering is a very grave

offense indeed, that violating the Law is in truth a terrible sin. I have put all my faith in one Buddha alone, Amida, and rejected all the other Buddhas. I have honored the three Pure Land sutras and set aside the other sutras. But this was not due to any distorted ideas of my own conception. I was simply obeying the words of the eminent men of the past. And the same is true of all the other persons in the ten directions who follow the Pure Land teachings.

But now I realize that to do so means to exhaust oneself in futile efforts in this life, and to fall into the hell of incessant suffering in the life to come. The texts you have cited are perfectly clear on this point and their arguments are detailed--they leave no room for doubt. With your kind instruction to guide me, I have been able bit by bit to dispel the ignorance from my mind.

Now I hope we may set about as quickly as possible taking measures to deal with these slanders against the Law and to bring peace to the world without delay, thus insuring that I may live in safety in this life and enjoy good fortune in the life to come. But it is not enough that I alone should accept and have faith in your words--we must see to it that others as well are warned of their errors!

