

SEOGE

Question: Why does the Shoshin-kai do a longer Gongyo?

Rev. Hirota: Over eighty years ago, when the Soka Gakkai formed, they asked Taiseki-ji to abbreviate the Hoben (2nd) chapter of the Lotus Sutra. They felt it was too long. That is how the shortened form came about. It is important to recite the entire Hoben chapter because that is the original form of Gongyo that Nichiren Daishonin, Second High Priest Nikko Shonin, and Third High Priest Nichimoku Shonin recited.

世 雄 不 可 量。
Se- o- fu- ka- ryō.

諸 天 及 世 人。
Sho- ten gyu se- nin.

一 切 衆 生 類。
Is[^]sai shu- jō rui.

無 能 知 佛 者。
Mu- nō chi- bus[^]sha.

佛 力 無 所 畏。
Bur[^]riki mu- sho- i-

解 脫 諸 三 昧。
Ge- das[^]sho- san mai.

First few lines of Seoge

Se-o-ge is the extended portion of the Hoben (2nd) chapter of the Lotus Sutra, following the *jūnyoze* (*Nyo ze so...*). About one third of the Shoshin-kai recite it. At my temple, Sanbo-in, we recite *Se-o-ge* because Nichiren Daishonin did it. We try to practice as closely as we can to the way the Daishonin practiced. While I cannot force anyone to recite the *se-o-ge*, this is the way we do Gongyo at Sanbo-in, and I encourage others to do the same, and hope that you will.

The *se-o-ge* section of the Hoben chapter reveals the one great reason why all Buddhas appear in the world. That is to cause all living beings to open their eyes to the Buddha-wisdom, to show all living beings the Buddha-wisdom, to cause all living beings to understand the Buddha-wisdom, and to cause all living beings to enter into the way of Buddha-wisdom. It is for this reason that we recite the extended Hoben.

The reason we don't recite the entire Hoben chapter is because the remainder of the chapter is a verse section that repeats the teaching revealed in the previous section.

GOSHOS SUPPORTING THE RECITATION OF *SEOGE*

The Recitation of the Hoben and Juryo Chapters (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, Vol. Six, p. 10; *Gosho Zenshu* p. 1201): "Therefore, for your regular recitation, I recommend that you practice reading the prose section of the Hoben and Juryo chapters."

Reply to Soya Nyudo (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, Vol. Five, p. 163; *Gosho Zenshu* p. 1025): "I have written out the prose section of the Hoben chapter for you. You should recite it together with the *Jigage*, which I sent you earlier."

Errors of the Eight Schools (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, Vol. II, p. 420; *Gosho Zenshu* p. 155): "The Lotus Sutra states: (This passage is the concise replacement of the three vehicles with the one vehicle. The Buddha himself is speaking.) 'This reality consists of the appearance, nature, entity, power, influence, internal cause, relation, latent effect, manifest effect, and their consistency from beginning to end.'"

And it further says: "The Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, appear in the world for one great reason alone. . . .The Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, wish to open the door of Buddha wisdom to all living beings."

Repaying Debts of Gratitude (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, Vol. Four, pp. 261-262; *Gosho Zenshu* p. 301):

"Question: Of the twenty-eight chapters of the Lotus Sutra, which is the heart, which is the most essential?"

Answer: Some would say that each chapter is essential to the matter that it deals with. Some would contend that the *Hoben* and *Juryo* chapters are the heart, others that the *Hoben* alone is the heart, or that the *Juryo* alone is the heart. Some would say that the passage, 'to awaken in all beings the Buddha wisdom, to reveal it, to let all beings know it and enter into it,' is the heart, others that the 'true entity' is the heart."