

**SIGN POSTS: Faith Illuminates**  
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**The sun dispels darkness, no matter how deep. A woman's heart may be likened to darkness, and the Lotus Sutra to the sun. (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 2 [2nd ed.], p. 194)**

Reading this letter, at first I asked myself: "What does Nichiren Daishonin mean by 'A woman's heart may be likened to darkness'?" I know I have "darkness" in my life, but is it inherent in my being a woman? I asked a learned, studious friend about this. And he reminded me that the Daishonin championed women, even radically (for his time) promoting the idea that a woman could attain Buddhahood — without having to be reborn as a man! This analogy must have been especially encouraging to Nichigen-nyo, to whom the letter was written. It is still very encouraging today.

"The sun dispels darkness, no matter how deep." Here Nichiren unequivocally confirms that through faith in the Lotus Sutra, we can accomplish anything — no matter what the obstacles. Reading this I reflected on my faith and the times when I sometimes have doubts.

During low points, I have felt that although I have achieved many great breakthroughs, there still are those areas that maybe will never change. I think (consciously or unconsciously), "Chanting's great and works for all sorts of things, but maybe it just doesn't work for that." I also ask myself, "Is this what 'immutable karma' means?"

In light of this passage and other letters Nichiren wrote, we know that even immutable karma can be changed. Whether we can overcome seemingly impossible obstacles depends not on the depth of our negative karma but on our ability to conjure up strong, courageous faith to face the things that cause us to suffer. As SGI President Ikeda has said, "From the moment we chant daimoku with a deep and powerful resolve, the sun begins to rise in our hearts."

I tell myself, with a renewed sense of determination, that it *is* possible to "dispel the darkness" in *this* woman's heart.

**WT**