

**SIGN POSTS: Protecting the Heart of the Lotus Sutra**  
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**It is due to the blessings obtained by protecting the Law that one can diminish in this lifetime his suffering and retribution. (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 40)**

Today Nichiren Shoshu priests call the Gohonzon issued by the SGI “counterfeit,” “the SGI’s own invention,” “a grave slander,” “cause for the damnation to the hell of incessant suffering” and so on. The priesthood claims that the source of the Gohonzon’s power lies in the high priest. But I find no basis for this claim in Nichiren Daishonin’s writings. If the role of the high priest is so important, why didn’t the Daishonin tell us? Instead, he repeatedly stresses faith dedicated to kosen-rufu as the source of benefit.

The Gohonzon embodies the essential principle and ideal of the Lotus Sutra, so President Toda called it “the Lotus Sutra of the Latter Day.” If the Gohonzon issued by the SGI is a genuine Gohonzon, then the priesthood is committing a serious slander of the Gohonzon, that is, the Lotus Sutra of the Latter Day, or simply the Law. In this sense, at no time in the history of Buddhism has the heart of the Lotus Sutra been attacked so maliciously and vehemently as in the present day. Despite such slander, many SGI members are voluntarily exchanging the Nikken-transcribed Gohonzon for what the priesthood calls counterfeit. Their act of exchanging the Gohonzon shows their profound confidence in the Lotus Sutra of the Latter Day, which has been recently calumniated so severely, and their benefit proves its validity. In short, these SGI members are protecting the heart of the Lotus Sutra.

In the above passage, the Daishonin explains that by protecting the Law people can most profoundly change their negative karma. There is no doubt that these SGI members are thus fundamentally changing their negative karma. This is “the blessings obtained by protecting the Law.”

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