

The New Human Revolution, Volume 6, Chapter 5
Young Eagles
BY HO GOKU – ILLUSTRATED BY KENICHIRO UCHIDA

Translation of parts 20–21 of the ‘Young Eagles’ chapter, as printed in the *Seikyo Shimbun*, the Soka Gakkai’s daily newspaper. Ho Goku is the pen name of Daisaku Ikeda, who appears in the novel as Shin’ichi Yamamoto. The events take place in 1962.

In these installments, President Yamamoto continues his lecture to students on the ‘Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings.’ While giving a detailed background on certain passages of the Goshō, he emphasizes that halfhearted Buddhist study won’t do anyone any good.

Though all the students at Shin’ichi Yamamoto’s lecture had had a hard time understanding this passage when they studied it on their own, they found themselves gradually coming to grasp its intent as they listened to his explanation.

“However,” Shin’ichi continued, “when we enter the essential teaching of the Lotus Sutra, the True Cause, True Effect and True Land — when, where and how Shakyamuni originally became a Buddha — are elucidated. In other words, when, in the essential teaching, the principle of a life-moment possessing 3,000 realms is expounded in terms of Shakyamuni’s life and deeds, the means of attaining Buddhahood are revealed. That is why the phrase “revealed in the essential teaching” appears next to “the responsive wisdom of truth.”

“From the perspective of the Daishonin’s Buddhism, though, both the unchanging entity of truth of the theoretical teaching and the responsive wisdom of truth of the essential teaching of Shakyamuni’s Lotus Sutra are still merely concepts, merely theoretical teachings. That is because even the essential teaching of Shakyamuni’s Lotus Sutra cannot lead living beings to enlightenment today in the Latter Day of the Law.

“If we were to liken Nichiren Daishonin and the Gohonzon of the Three Great Secret Laws of the Latter Day to buildings, then the 28 chapters of the Lotus Sutra could be likened to the architect’s plan or blueprint. A plan is needed to build a house, but in the end it is not the blueprint but the house itself that is important.

“In ‘The True Object of Worship,’ the Daishonin writes: ‘Shakyamuni’s practices and the virtues he consequently attained are all contained within the single phrase, Myōhō-enge-kyō. If we believe in that phrase, we shall naturally be granted the same benefits as he was’ (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 64). The practice that led to Shakyamuni’s attainment of Buddhahood and the virtues he accrued as a Buddha are all contained in the five characters of Myōhō-enge-kyō. That is, in the Gohonzon. Accordingly, if we chant daimoku with faith in the Gohonzon, we will receive all the virtues that the Buddha received. That is why, when the Daishonin says, ‘Devotion is Nam-myōhō-enge-kyō itself’ (*Goshō Zenshu*, p. 708), he is proclaiming that to attain true, absolute happiness, we must devote our lives to the Gohonzon.

“Next, let us turn to the passage ‘A commentary says, “Both the unchanging and the responsive are encompassed in a life-moment; one tranquil and the other illuminating”’ (*Goshō Zenshu*, p. 708). The commentaries that the Daishonin cites in his writings are interpretations of passages from the sutras expounded by Shakyamuni Buddha by such great Buddhist teachers as T’ien-t’ai of China and Dengyo of Japan. In addition to such commentaries on the sutras, the Daishonin cites philosophical treatises on principles contained in the sutras by such Buddhist scholars as Ashvaghosha, Nagarjuna and Vasubandhu. The ‘Treatise on the Sutra of the Perfection of Wisdom’ and the ‘Treatise on the Ten Stages’ are examples of such works [both are by Nagarjuna].

“As part of your preparation for our lectures on the Orally Transmitted Teachings, I want you to look carefully into all the passages quoted therein from sutras, commentaries and philosophical treatises, as well as what comes before and after the quoted sections. You won’t be able to understand the Orally Transmitted Teachings correctly unless you do. In my studies of the Goshō, I have always referred directly back to the original text of any quoted scripture or work.”

In this way, Shin’ichi instructed his students on the basics of Buddhist study.

Shin’ichi continued emphatically: “I want you to make ‘Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings’ the inspiration and the model for your faith, your thinking and your way of living for the rest of your lives. That is why I want you to study it thoroughly and delve into its meaning. When you dig a well, you have to keep digging until you hit a source of water, or else you’ll have dug in vain. Buddhist study is the same. Halfhearted study has no power to advance your faith.

“From our next meeting on, I want each of you to look up all the passages from sutras, commentaries, and philosophical treatises mentioned in the text. From now on, my lectures will be based on the assumption that you have done that, and that you understand them all, OK?”

All present indicated their unanimous agreement and resolve to comply with Shin’ichi’s request. With that, Shin’ichi began to lecture on the passage that reads, “A commentary says, ‘Both the unchanging and the responsive are encompassed in a life-moment; one tranquil and the other illuminating’ (*Goshō Zenshu*, p. 708).

“‘The unchanging and the responsive’ again refers to the unchanging entity of truth and the responsive wisdom of truth,” he said. “*Life moment* means life as it exists at each moment. *Tranquil* means a condition in which the mind is calm and serene — the static aspect of life. On the other hand, *illuminating* means the shining forth of the light of wisdom — the dynamic aspect of life. In other words, both the unchanging entity of truth and the responsive wisdom of truth are contained within Myōhō-rensō-kyō, the entity of a life-moment possessing 3,000 realms, and within our lives at each moment.

“For example, we identify water by the molecular formula H₂O. If we regard that as the unchanging entity of truth, then the way water changes in response to different circumstances — for instance, taking the form of ice, cold or hot water, or steam — represents the responsive wisdom of truth.”

At just that moment, Shin’ichi happened to catch the gaze of a serious-looking, bespectacled young man sitting in the second row — Kaoru Tahara, a student in the Economics Department of Tokyo University. Shin’ichi decided to use Tahara as his next example.

“Here we have a human being known as Kaoru Tahara,” he started. “Now he is here listening to this lecture, but at other times he also rides trains, eats and sleeps. He suffers, he feels anger, he experiences sadness and joy. But whatever he may be doing or feeling, he remains the same Tahara. There is an integrity to his being, or ‘law,’ that makes him who he is. This is also the unchanging entity of truth. His many different life activities, meanwhile, are the responsive wisdom of truth.

“The unchanging entity of truth and responsive wisdom of truth are simultaneously inherent in all things. This is the reality of life. And this is what is meant by the phrase ‘Both the unchanging and the responsive are encompassed in a life-moment; one tranquil and the other illuminating.’ Our mission is to bring forth the brilliance of our inner wisdom and, in accord with this principle of the Mystic Law, to create happiness and peace for all humanity.”

(To be continued)

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