

STANDS TO REASON: Source of All the Trouble

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Rather than offering up ten thousand prayers for remedy, it would be better simply to outlaw this one evil [doctrine] that is the source of all the trouble! (“Rissho ankoku ron,” *The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 2 [2nd ed.], p. 20)

The “Rissho ankoku ron,” written in 1260, was the first of three major warnings that Nichiren Daishonin gave to the Kamakura government. (The title refers to securing the peace of the land through the propagation of this Buddhism, *rissho ankoku*.) This treatise was the Daishonin’s first explanation of why the country was not secure, why it was falling apart, and that the distortion of Buddhism was the underlying cause — “the one evil [doctrine]” of the distorted Pure Land school.

Hojo Tokiyori, the retired regent and de factor ruler to whom the Daishonin sent this, rejected the warning and continued to place his faith in the Pure Land teachings. As it turned out, Tokiyori and the Kamakura government never would listen.

But the “Rissho ankoku ron” has lived on as the Daishonin’s leading statement on what happens to a country that’s unconcerned with the slander of the Buddhist Law. The work also clarifies what fostering Buddhism can do for a society — namely, save it from disaster.

The Daishonin often makes the point that in the midst of religious confusion, we should focus on countering slander. In the “Rissho ankoku ron,” he says that the how-to isn’t throwing theories or strategies around but finding that “one evil doctrine” and tirelessly pointing it out. The SGI has done exactly this in stating explicitly that it is Nikken’s rewriting of the Daishonin’s Buddhism (so that it’s all about following whatever he says) that is the “source of all the trouble.”

Nikken is responsible for destroying the Grand Main Temple (Sho-Hondo) — for disregarding the millions of members’ sincere contributions to this monument. Nikken has been the driving force behind the whole temple issue from the very start. He has been right at the head of the excommunicating, the tearing down, the slandering. He’s the source.

The Daishonin says that “if the source is muddy, the stream will not flow clear” (MW-6, 98), exactly the reasoning that the SGI has employed in spotlighting Nikken’s actions, his base motivation, as where all the trouble begins.

The principle of outlawing the one evil doctrine is such that if we do our part to sound the warning, everything else we’re trying to achieve will fall into place. If the SGI sounds the warning about Nikken’s dangerous teachings, the Daishonin would say, the SGI has to open up, progress, expand.

The SGI looked at the horror of what the head temple had become under Nikken’s tutelage and didn’t hesitate in calling it by its name: evil. (I know that people sometimes have a problem with this word, but the Daishonin certainly called evil by its name. And as SGI President Ikeda says, “Evil is evil.” What else can we call it?)

Pointing out the evil of Nikken’s leadership, we have a great opportunity to protect Buddhism, to save people and to contribute to the SGI’s future.

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