

## WHY SHOULD WE PRAY ABOUT THE TEMPLE ISSUE?

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The real victory for the SGI in the temple issue is when our organization has educated as many people as possible about the difference between the SGI and Nichiren Shoshu — about what Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism actually teaches. To accomplish this education, strong daimoku backing us up is necessary.

We already pray for this victory every day, every time that we do morning gongyo: In the fourth prayer, we pray for the development of the SGI and for our organization to accomplish kosen-rufu, the global propagation of the Daishonin’s teachings. The SGI’s success in temple issue-related education is a crucial step in this kosen-rufu progress. How is that? The priesthood has attempted to alter the Daishonin’s Buddhism, a religion that offers the greatest hope to the world’s people, presenting it as something it’s not. Nichiren Shoshu’s version plays on people’s inferiority complexes, reinforcing their self-doubt, telling them that priestly intervention is essential to their becoming happy. This directly conflicts with the Daishonin’s assertions that we only attain Buddhahood through our own efforts in faith.

Since the temple’s version still has the potential to confuse many more people than it already has, it is a problem for the kosen-rufu movement.

Chanting daimoku for the SGI to be victorious is something concrete that any of us can do, anywhere, at any time, toward a solution. And it’s something very important for us to do — in fact, the fundamental determinant of victory in the temple issue, as in all our challenges, will be daimoku.

This year, the youth division’s 10 billion “Victorious America” daimoku campaign has inspired many of us to chant more seriously about this issue. We should have confidence that all of this daimoku *is* going to make a difference. As the Daishonin says in “Reply to Kyo’o”: “Muster your faith and pray to the Gohonzon. Then what is there that cannot be achieved?” (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 120). When we keep chanting about the temple issue with this spirit, the cornerstone for victory is being laid.

Finally, because chanting about the temple issue is such an essential part of our larger effort for kosen-rufu, we should know that we are sure to benefit from doing so. SGI President Ikeda has recently said that “Buddhism is a battle. Everything is a battle. This is the essence of Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism. Unless we fight to ensure the success of our kosen-rufu movement, no benefit will be forthcoming.” We should have no doubt that great benefit lies in being part of the SGI’s education efforts; daimoku can be a starting place for each of us to participate.

*Three in a series*

Title: Why Should We Pray About The Temple Issue?

Subject: World Tribune 04/30/99 n.3240 p.2 WT990430p02

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Keywords: About Answers Farr Issue Jeff Pray Priesthood Questions Should Temple Tribune World