

## King Rinda



I HAVE received the two sacks of parched rice you sent. Rice may seem like a very small thing, yet it is what sustains human life. And the Buddha says that life is something that cannot be purchased even for the price of an entire major world system.

Rice is what sustains life. It is like the oil that sustains the life of the lamp. The Lotus Sutra is a lamp, and its votary is the oil that sustains it. Or again, the lay supporters are the oil that sustains the lamp of the votary.

Among all the hundred flavors, the flavor of cow's milk is the finest. The seventh volume of the Nirvana Sutra says, "Of all flavors, the finest is that of milk." When milk is treated, it becomes cream, and when cream is treated, it eventually becomes ghee. Of the five flavors represented by this process, ghee is the finest.

If we employ these five flavors as similes for the various Buddhist teachings, we might say that the three thousand volumes of the Confucian school and the eighteen major scriptures of Brahmanism correspond to the flavors of ordinary foods. In comparison to these, even the Agama sutras are like the flavor of ghee.

[Among all the Buddhist teachings] the Agama sutras may be compared to the flavor of milk; the Meditation and the other sutras of the Correct and

Equal period may be compared to the flavor of cream; the Wisdom sutras may be compared to the flavor of curdled milk; the Flower Garland Sutra may be compared to the flavor of butter; and the Immeasurable Meanings, Lotus, and Nirvana sutras may be compared to the flavor of ghee.

Again, if the Nirvana Sutra is compared to the flavor of ghee, then the Lotus Sutra may be compared to a lord who rules over the five flavors. Thus the Great Teacher Miao-lo stated: "If we discuss the matter from the point of view of the doctrines taught, then the Lotus Sutra stands as the true lord of all the teachings, since it alone preaches 'opening the provisional and revealing the distant.' This is the reason that it alone is permitted the word *myō*, or 'wonderful' [in its title]." He also said, "Therefore, we understand that the Lotus Sutra is the true lord of the ghee."<sup>2</sup>

These passages of commentary point out quite rightly that the Lotus Sutra is not to be included among the five flavors. The main import of these passages is that the five flavors serve to nourish life, but life itself is lord over all the five flavors.

The T'ien-t'ai school puts forth two views on this matter. The first is that the Flower Garland, Correct and Equal, Wisdom, Nirvana, and Lotus

sutras are all comparable to the flavor of ghee. This view would seem to be based on the opinion that the sutras preached previous to the Lotus Sutra and the Lotus Sutra itself are similar in nature. The scholars of the world are familiar only with this particular view, and are not familiar with the doctrine that the Lotus Sutra is the lord of the five flavors. Hence they are deceived and led astray by the other schools of Buddhism.

The view that, although the Lotus and other sutras differ with regard to whether or not they open up and incorporate the expedient means, they all represent the perfect teaching<sup>3</sup>—this is a doctrine that reflects the meaning of the theoretical teaching. However, the view that the various sutras mentioned above correspond to the five flavors, while the Lotus Sutra represents the lord of the five flavors—this is a doctrine that reflects the essential teaching. This doctrine was touched upon by T'ien-t'ai and Miao-lo in their writings, but it was not clearly enunciated. This is why there are few scholars who are aware of it.

In the passage of commentary by Miao-lo quoted above, the words "If we discuss the matter from the point of view of the doctrines taught" refer to the daimoku, or title, of the Lotus Sutra, which is what is meant by "the doctrines taught." The words "opening the provisional" correspond to the character *ge* in the five-character daimoku, Myoho-rence-kyo. The words "revealing the distant" correspond to the character *ren* in the five-character daimoku. The words "it alone is permitted the word *myo*" correspond to the character *myo*. And the words "This is the reason" refer to the fact that, when we speak of the Lotus Sutra as the essence of the lifetime teachings of the Buddha, we have in mind the daimoku of the Lotus Sutra. Therefore, one should understand that the daimoku of the Lotus Sutra repre-

sents the soul of all the sutras; it represents the eye of all the sutras.

The Lotus Sutra should by rights be employed in eye-opening ceremonies to ensure their effectiveness. But instead of that, the Mahavairochana and other sutras are employed in eye-opening ceremonies for all the various wooden or painted images of Buddhas. As a result, none of the Buddha images in the temples and pagodas of Japan, though their forms resemble that of the Buddha, are really Buddhas in mind. Rather they have the minds of ordinary beings who live in the nine worlds. The custom of revering ignorant teachers as though they were wise men began with this.

Such practices simply waste the funds of the nation; they do not produce effective prayers. On the contrary, the Buddhas are thereby transformed; they turn into devils and demons. This is what is causing distress to the ruler of the nation and the common people.

And now, because the votary of the Lotus Sutra and his lay supporters have appeared, people behave like the many kinds of ordinary beasts who hate the lion king, or like the plants and trees that tremble before the icy wind. But I will put that aside for now.

Why is the Lotus Sutra superior to other sutras? Why is it beneficial for living beings?

To illustrate, the plants and trees have the earth as their mother, the sky as their father, the sweet rains as their food, the wind as their spirit, and the sun and moon as their wet nurses, and in this way they grow to maturity, bring forth flowers, and bear fruit. In the same manner, all living beings have the true aspect [of all phenomena] as their earth, the aspect-free nature<sup>4</sup> as their sky, the one vehicle as their sweet rain, and the pronouncement that the Lotus Sutra is foremost among all the sutras that the Buddha preached, now preaches, or will preach,<sup>5</sup> as their great

wind. "Adorned with the power of meditation and wisdom"<sup>6</sup> as their sun and moon, they nurture the blessings of perfect enlightenment, put forth the flowers of great pity and great compassion, and bear the fruit of peaceful Buddhahood. Such is the way that all living beings are nourished.

Then again, all living beings sustain life through the things they eat. There are many kinds of food. Some beings feed on dirt, some feed on water, some eat fire, and some eat wind. The insect called *kalakula* feeds on wind, while the creature called a mole feeds on dirt. Then there are some demons that eat human skin and flesh, bone and marrow, some that eat urine and dung, some that eat lives, and some that eat voices. There are fish that eat stones, and there is the *baku*<sup>7</sup> beast that eats iron. And the deities of the earth, the heavenly deities, the dragon gods, the gods of the sun and moon, the heavenly kings *Shakra* and *Brahma*, the beings of the two vehicles, the *bodhisattvas*, and the *Buddhas* taste and savor the Buddhist Law and make it their body and spirit.

Let me give another example. Once in the past there lived a great ruler named King Rinda, a worthy monarch who ruled over the entire land of *Jambudvīpa*. Now what was it that this king lived on? When he heard the sound of white horses neighing, his body would be nourished and thrive, and rested and serene in body and mind, he would rule over his kingdom. This occurred in the same way that the creatures called frogs listen to the cries of their mothers and are thus enabled to grow; that the autumn bush clover blooms when it hears the crying of the deer; that the ivory plant puts forth buds when it hears the sound of thunder; or that the pomegranate flourishes when it encounters a stone.

This being the case, King Rinda had gathered together and kept in his care a

number of white horses. And because these white horses would neigh only when they caught sight of white swans, he also gathered together a number of white swans, which he also kept in his care. As a result, not only did the king himself enjoy peace and tranquillity, but the hundreds of officials and the thousands of attendants who served him also prospered. Throughout the realm, the wind and rain came in their proper season, and other countries bowed their heads in submission. This situation continued for a number of years.

But, perhaps because of an error in his rule, or perhaps because the rewards accruing from his karma were exhausted, the thousands and ten thousands of white swans suddenly disappeared, and the countless white horses ceased their neighing. And because the king could no longer hear the neighing of the white horses, he was like a flower that wilts or the moon in eclipse. His skin changed color, his strength waned away, his six sense organs grew dull and clouded, and he became like a senile old man. His consort, too, became old and feeble. The hundreds of officials and the thousands of attendants lamented, not knowing what to do. The skies clouded over, the earth trembled, great winds and droughts appeared, and famines and pestilence occurred, until so many persons had died that their flesh piled up in mounds and their bones were like heaps of tiles. Moreover, the country was beset by attacks from other nations.

At this time the king, lamenting over what to do, concluded that the only recourse was to pray to the *Buddhas* and gods. From times past there had been believers in the non-Buddhist teachings in the kingdom, and they were numerous in many regions of the land. There were also many people who honored the teachings of the *Buddha* and regarded them as a treasure of the state. The king, declaring that he would honor the

teachings of whichever group was successful at attracting the white swans and causing the white horses to neigh, first commanded the non-Buddhist believers to try the effectiveness of their teachings. But though they carried out their efforts over several days, not a single white swan appeared, and the white horses failed to neigh.

Then the king ordered the non-Buddhists to cease their prayers and the Buddhists to make the attempt with theirs. At that time there was a young monk known as Bodhisattva Ashvaghosha, or Horse Neigh. When he was summoned before the king, he said, "If Your Majesty will abolish the erroneous doctrines of the non-Buddhists throughout the kingdom and work to spread the teachings of the Buddha, it will be easy enough to make the horses neigh!"

The king issued an edict that this should be done. Then Bodhisattva Ashvaghosha addressed prayers to the Buddhas of the three existences and the ten directions, whereupon a white swan immediately appeared. When the white horses caught sight of the white swan, they whinnied in a single voice. No sooner had the king heard the single neigh of the horses than he opened his eyes. As two white swans, and then hundreds and thousands of them appeared, the hundreds and thousands of white horses were instantly filled with joy and began neighing. The king's complexion was restored to its original state, like the sun reemerging from an eclipse, and the strength of his body and the perceptive powers of his mind became many hundreds and thousands of times greater than they had been before. The consort was overjoyed, the great ministers and high officials took courage, the common people pressed their palms together in reverence, and the other countries bowed their heads.

The situation in the world today is no different from this. The period dur-

ing the seven reigns of the heavenly deities and the five reigns of the earthly deities, that is, the first twelve reigns in Japanese history, was like the kalpa of formation. The power of good fortune and the power derived from the keeping of the precepts that had been accumulated in previous existences were such that, although the people of the time made no great effort toward goodness, the country was still well governed, and people lived long lives.

Then came the period of human sovereigns. During the first twenty-nine reigns, the power derived from observing the precepts in past existences began to weaken. Government affairs proceeded poorly, and for the first time the country was visited by the three calamities and seven disasters. But because the texts describing how the Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors of antiquity had governed the world were introduced from China, these could be used in paying honor to the gods and overcoming the calamities and disasters that beset the nation.

When Emperor Kimmei, the thirtieth human sovereign, came to the throne, the power derived from good fortune and the observance of the precepts in past existences had further weakened in the country. There appeared many people whose minds were dominated by evil. Good minds were weakened, and evil minds prevailed. The teachings of the Confucian texts were so ineffectual, and the weight of people's offenses was so great, that as a result the Confucian texts were abandoned, and people turned instead to the Buddhist scriptures.

For example, Moriya paid honor to numerous gods who had appeared during the seven reigns of the heavenly deities and the five reigns of the earthly deities, praying that the Buddhist teachings would not spread, and that the Confucian texts would be honored as they had been before. Prince Sho-

toku, on the other hand, took Shakyamuni Buddha, the lord of teachings, as his object of devotion, and adopted the Lotus Sutra and the other sutras as his scriptures. The two parties vied for supremacy, but in the end the gods were defeated, the Buddha emerged victorious, and just as had happened in India and China, the land of the gods for the first time became a land of the Buddha. The passage in the sutra that reads, "Now this threefold world is all my domain,"<sup>8</sup> was in the process of being fulfilled.

During the twenty-some reigns from Emperor Kimmei to Emperor Kammu, a period of 260 or more years, the Buddha was looked up to as the sovereign, and the gods were regarded as his ministers. In this way the world was governed. But although the Buddhist teachings held a superior place and the gods an inferior one, the world was not well governed.

People began to question why this should be so; and in the reign of Emperor Kammu there appeared a sage known as the Great Teacher Dengyo who pondered over the problem. "The gods have been defeated, and the Buddha has emerged victorious," he asserted. "The Buddha is looked upon as the sovereign and the gods as his ministers; the relations between superior and inferior are correctly ordered in accordance with the rules of propriety, and therefore the nation should be well governed. How strange, then, that there is such unrest in the country! With this in mind, I began to examine all the sutras, and I realized that there is indeed a reason for such a state of affairs.

"The teachings of Buddhism have been guilty of a grave error. Among all the sutras, the Lotus Sutra ought to hold the position of sovereign, with the other sutras such as the Flower Garland, Larger Wisdom, Profound Secrets, and Agama sutras occupying the

position of minister or attendant or common person. And yet the Three Treatises school asserts that the Wisdom sutras are superior to the Lotus Sutra, the Dharma Characteristics school holds that the Profound Secrets Sutra is superior to the Lotus Sutra, and the Flower Garland school holds that the Flower Garland Sutra is superior to the Lotus Sutra, while the Precepts school proclaims itself the mother of all the other schools. There is not a single votary of the Lotus Sutra, and those who do read and recite the Lotus Sutra have been, contrary to all expectations, derided and dismissed by the people of the world."<sup>9</sup>

He proclaimed that, because of this, heaven was angered, and the benevolent deities who would have guarded the nation found their powers weakened. And he declared that, even though people praise the Lotus Sutra, they destroy its heart.<sup>10</sup>

Then the priests of the seven major temples of Nara, of the fifteen great temples, and of all the temples and mountain monasteries throughout the country of Japan, hearing these words, were greatly incensed. "Mahadeva of India and the Taoist priests of China have appeared in our country!" they exclaimed. "They have taken on the form of this little monk known as Saicho! If anyone should encounter him, break his head in two and cut off his arms, beat him and curse him!"

But Emperor Kammu, being a worthy ruler, inquired into and clearly perceived the truth of the matter, and concluded that the six schools of Nara were in error. For the first time he established a temple on Mount Hiei, making it the headquarters of the Tendai Lotus school. And he not only founded an ordination platform for the precepts of perfect and immediate enlightenment, but declared the Lotus school to be superior to the six older schools connected with the seven ma-

gor temples of Nara and the fifteen great temples.

In effect, the six schools came to be regarded as mere expedient teachings leading to the Lotus Sutra. It was like the earlier instance in which the gods yielded to the Buddha and became mere doorkeepers of Buddhism. Something like the same situation prevailed in Japan. For the first time it was made clear in this country that, as the sutra says, "[Among those sutras] the Lotus is the foremost!"<sup>11</sup> A person who "is able to secretly expound the Lotus Sutra to one person"<sup>12</sup> is the envoy of the Thus Come One, it declares, and for the first time such an envoy appeared in this country. For a period of twenty or more years during the reigns of the three emperors Kammu, Heizei, and Saga, throughout the entire country of Japan, everyone was a practitioner of the Lotus Sutra.

But, just as the foul-smelling eranda tree exists in relation to the fragrant sandalwood, and just as Devadatta exists in relation to Shakyamuni, so at the same time as the Great Teacher Dengyo there appeared a sage known as the Great Teacher Kobo. He journeyed to China, studied the Mahavairochana Sutra and the teachings of the True Word school, and then returned to Japan.

While the Great Teacher Dengyo was still alive, Kobo did not forcefully assert his contention that the Mahavairochana Sutra is superior to the Lotus Sutra. But after the Great Teacher Dengyo passed away on the fourth day of the sixth month in the thirteenth year of the Konin era (822), he apparently concluded that the time had come to do so. Thus, in the fourteenth year of the Konin era, on the nineteenth day of the first month, the Great Teacher Kobo produced a document in which he ranked the True Word teachings first, the teachings of the Flower Garland Sutra second, and those of the

Lotus Sutra third. He also asserted that the Lotus Sutra is a doctrine of childish theory, that Shakyamuni Buddha is in the region of darkness, and that the men of the Tendai school are thieves.

In this manner he attempted to deceive Emperor Saga by placing his own True Word school side by side with the seven older schools<sup>13</sup> and asserting that the seven older schools represent mere expedient teachings, while the True Word school represents the ultimate truth.

In the period that followed, everyone throughout the country of Japan became a follower of the True Word school. In addition, a disciple of the Great Teacher Dengyo named Jikaku journeyed to China, where he made a thorough study of the secret doctrines of the T'ien-t'ai and True Word schools before returning to Japan. He wrote commentaries on two works, the Diamond Crown Sutra and the Susidhikara Sutra, and founded a temple called Zento-in on Mount Hiei. In his commentaries he asserted that the Mahavairochana Sutra should be ranked first and the Lotus Sutra second, and he put forth countless other erroneous statements, just as Kobo had done earlier. I have touched upon this matter somewhat in my earlier letters.

This eminent teacher was followed by another, the Great Teacher Chisho, who propagated his teachings from the temple known as Onjo-ji. Among all the temples today, this one appears to me to be causing the greatest damage to the nation.

Among the three thousand priests of Mount Hiei there were some who, if Jikaku and Chisho had not insisted upon the point, would never have acknowledged the superiority of the True Word teachings. But all of them had their mouths stopped and their minds deceived by Jikaku, also known as the Great Teacher Ennin, and no one was able to say a word in opposition.

Moreover, the support lent by the ruler and his ministers surpassed even what it had been in the time of Dengyo and Kobo, so that Mount Hiei, the seven temples of Nara, and indeed the whole country of Japan joined in declaring that the Lotus Sutra was inferior to the Mahavairochana Sutra. In the various temples where the Lotus Sutra had earlier been propagated, the teachings of the True Word school were now disseminated, and hailed as superior to the Lotus Sutra.

Four hundred years or more have passed since this situation developed. These erroneous opinions have continued to spread, and five sovereigns,<sup>14</sup> from the eighty-first ruler of Japan to the eighty-fifth, have lost their thrones. Because the Buddhist way has fallen into decline, the way of the sovereign has likewise declined.

In addition, the major erroneous doctrine known as the Zen school and the minor erroneous doctrine called the Nembutsu school have joined the great evil doctrine called True Word, and these evil schools now stand side by side, holding sway over the entire country. The Sun Goddess has lost heart and no longer protects her charges; Great Bodhisattva Hachiman has been sapped of his power and authority and has ceased to guard and defend the nation. In the end we are doomed to become the prey of a foreign land.

I, Nichiren, viewing this state of affairs and fearful of the warning about one who "is betraying the Buddha's teaching,"<sup>15</sup> and about one who "will fall into hell along with [those evil persons],"<sup>16</sup> have attempted to inform the ruler of the nation of the general situation. But, led astray by erroneous doctrines, he refuses to believe me. On the contrary, he has become a deadly enemy.

Although I try to point out that this country is full of people who would like to do away with the Lotus Sutra,

no one understands me, and so they merely go on committing errors of foolishness. And now, in addition, a votary of the Lotus Sutra has made his appearance, so that the people of Japan, on top of their foolishness, give way to anger, favoring erroneous teachings and viewing the correct teaching with hatred. In a country where the three poisons [of greed, anger, and foolishness] prevail to such a degree, how can there be peace and stability?

In the kalpa of decline, the three major calamities will occur, namely, the calamities of fire, water, and wind. And in the kalpa of decrease, the three minor calamities will occur, namely, famine, pestilence, and warfare. Famine occurs as a result of greed, pestilence as a result of foolishness, and warfare as a result of anger.

At present the people of Japan number 4,994,828 men and women, all of them different persons but all alike infected by the three poisons. And these three poisons occur because of their relationship with Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. So all of these people at the same moment set out to curse, attack, banish, and do away with Shakyamuni, Many Treasures, and the Buddhas of the ten directions. This is what leads to the appearance of the three minor calamities.

And now I wonder what karma from past existences has caused Nichiren and his associates to become the proponents of the daimoku of the Lotus Sutra? It seems to me that at present Brahma, Shakra, the gods of the sun and moon, the four heavenly kings, the Sun Goddess, Great Bodhisattva Hachiman, and all the major and minor gods of the 3,132 shrines throughout Japan are like King Rinda of past times, that the white horses are Nichiren, and the white swans are my followers. The neighing of the white horses is the sound of our voices chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. When Brahma, Shakra, the gods of the sun and moon, the four heavenly

kings, and the others hear this sound, how could they fail to take on a healthy color and shine with a brilliant light? How could they fail to guard and protect us? We should be firmly convinced of this!

In the memorial service held this last third month, you donated numerous strings of coins. As a result, this year we have been able to support over a hundred men at this mountain dwelling, and they are able to read and recite the Lotus Sutra and discuss its doctrines all day long. In this evil latter age, this represents the foremost Buddhist practice in all of Jambudvīpa. How pleased your departed ancestors must be! Shakyamuni Buddha said that a person who observes filial piety deserves to

be called a World-Honored One. Are not you yourself just such a World-Honored One?

The matter of the late Acharya Daishin<sup>17</sup> was surely most regrettable. But we should consider that what has happened will serve to further spread the teachings of the Lotus Sutra.

If my life is spared, there are many other things I want to write to you about on some future occasion.

Nichiren

The seventeenth day of the eighth month in the second year of Koan (1279), cyclical sign *tsuchinoto-u*

Reply to Soya Doso



## Background

This letter was written at Minobu in the eighth month of 1279, when Nichiren Daishonin was fifty-eight years old. It was addressed to Soya Doso, a son of Soya Kyoshin, one of the leading believers in Shimosa Province. As this letter describes, in the third month of the same year Doso had taken the opportunity of a Buddhist memorial service to make a large donation to the Daishonin. At the time the Daishonin was living in the wilderness of Mount Minobu. Doso's donation had supported over one hundred disciples in their practice at Minobu that year; thus it seems likely that Doso's determination to protect and support the Daishonin was quite strong.

The Daishonin opens his letter by referring to the two sacks of parched rice he has received from Doso. Parching was a method commonly used during the Kamakura period (1185–1333) to preserve rice, and parched rice was frequently taken along as food on journeys. Noting that rice is something

that supports life, the Daishonin praises the greatness of lay believers who support the life of the votary of the Lotus Sutra.

Then the Daishonin employs the metaphor of the five flavors, stating that, while the various sutras represent the five flavors, the Lotus Sutra is the "lord who rules over the five flavors." While the five flavors are something that nourishes life, he explains, the Lotus Sutra represents life itself. The Daishonin further reveals that the daimoku of the Lotus Sutra is the soul and the eye of all the sutras; through the Buddhist parable of King Rinda and his white horses, he teaches that the benevolent deities use the voices of people chanting daimoku as sustenance to increase their power and energy.

He continues by relating that the growing influence of misleading Buddhist schools, such as the True Word, Zen, and Nembutsu, has caused the various gods and deities to cease their

protective functions. Because the people of Japan, by practicing these teachings, slander the correct teaching and Nichiren Daishonin, the votary of the Lotus Sutra, the three disasters of famine, pestilence, and war occur. He teaches that those who chant daimoku should be confident that they will never fail to receive the protection of the benevolent deities.

The Daishonin thanks Doso for his generous contributions, which had made it possible for many of the Daishonin's followers to concentrate on the recitation and study of the Lotus

Sutra. Because this form of practice of the Lotus Sutra constitutes the greatest kind of Buddhist practice in the Latter Day of the Law, the Daishonin says that Doso's deceased ancestors would be extremely pleased with his act of benevolence. He suggests that Doso's actions therefore represent the highest form of filial piety. Citing Shakyamuni Buddha's statement that one who practices filial piety must be a World-Honored One, the Daishonin praises Doso highly, saying, "Are not you yourself just such a World-Honored One?"

## Notes

1. *The Annotations on "Great Concentration and Insight."* "Opening the provisional and revealing the distant" refers to the two doctrines of "opening the provisional and revealing the true" and "opening the near and revealing the distant" (see Glossary). The Chinese character *myo* means not only wonderful, but mystic and unfathomable.

2. *Ibid.*

3. "Opening up and incorporating the expedient means" indicates incorporating the provisional teachings in the one vehicle teaching of Buddhahood. This teaching is contained in the Lotus Sutra. The perfect teaching, which sets forth the concept of attaining Buddhahood in one's present form, appears in both the pre-Lotus Sutra teachings and the Lotus Sutra. The pre-Lotus Sutra teachings, however, introduce this concept without providing the principle required for its realization, while the Lotus Sutra not only provides this principle, but also offers examples of those who attain Buddhahood through its practice.

4. The aspect-free nature is here used synonymously with the true aspect of all phenomena. The Immeasurable Meanings Sutra reads, "These immeasurable meanings are born from a single Law, and this Law is without marks. What is without marks is devoid of marks and does not take on marks. Not taking on marks, being without marks, it is called the true mark [that is, the true aspect of all phenomena]." The Daishonin defines "the true aspect" as the Mystic Law.

5. This pronouncement appears in the "Teacher of the Law" chapter of the Lotus Sutra.

6. Lotus Sutra, chap. 2. It reads, "The Buddha himself dwells in this great vehicle, and adorned with the power of meditation and wisdom that go with the Law he has attained, he uses it to save living beings."

7. An imaginary tapir-like beast, according to Chinese tradition, which is said to eat nightmares. The source of the "baku eating iron" is unknown.

8. Lotus Sutra, chap. 3.

9. This quote is actually the Daishonin's summary, based on Dengyo's works, of what he thought Dengyo would have been likely to say.

10. *The Outstanding Principles of the Lotus Sutra.*

11. Lotus Sutra, chap. 10.

12. *Ibid.* It reads, "If one of these good men or good women in the time after I have passed into extinction is able to secretly expound the Lotus Sutra to one person, even one phrase of it, then you should know that he or she is the envoy of the Thus Come One. He has been dispatched by the Thus Come One and carries out the Thus Come One's work."

13. The seven older schools refer to the six schools of Nara—the Dharma Analysis Treasury, Establishment of Truth, Precepts, Dharma Characteristics, Three Treatises, and Flower Garland—and the Tendai school.

14. Antoku, Gotoba, Tsuchimikado,

Juntoku, and Chukyo. During the Battle of Dannoura (1185), Antoku, at age eight, met his end at the final defeat of the Taira, when he drowned in the sea. In 1221, after the Jokyu Disturbance, the Kamakura shogunate exiled the retired emperors Gotoba, Tsuchimikado, and Juntoku, and deposed Emperor Chukyo.

15. Nirvana Sutra. The full passage reads: "If even a good monk sees someone destroying the teaching and disregards him, failing to reproach him, to oust him, or to punish him for his offense, then you should

realize that that monk is betraying the Buddha's teaching."

16. This phrase is found in a passage from Nan-yüeh's *On the Peaceful Practices of the Lotus Sutra*, which reads, "If there should be a bodhisattva who protects evil persons and fails to chastise them . . . then, when his life comes to an end, he will fall into hell along with those evil persons."

17. Daishin was a disciple of the Daishonin who is believed to have been a relative of the Soya family. The acharya was a rank in the priesthood.